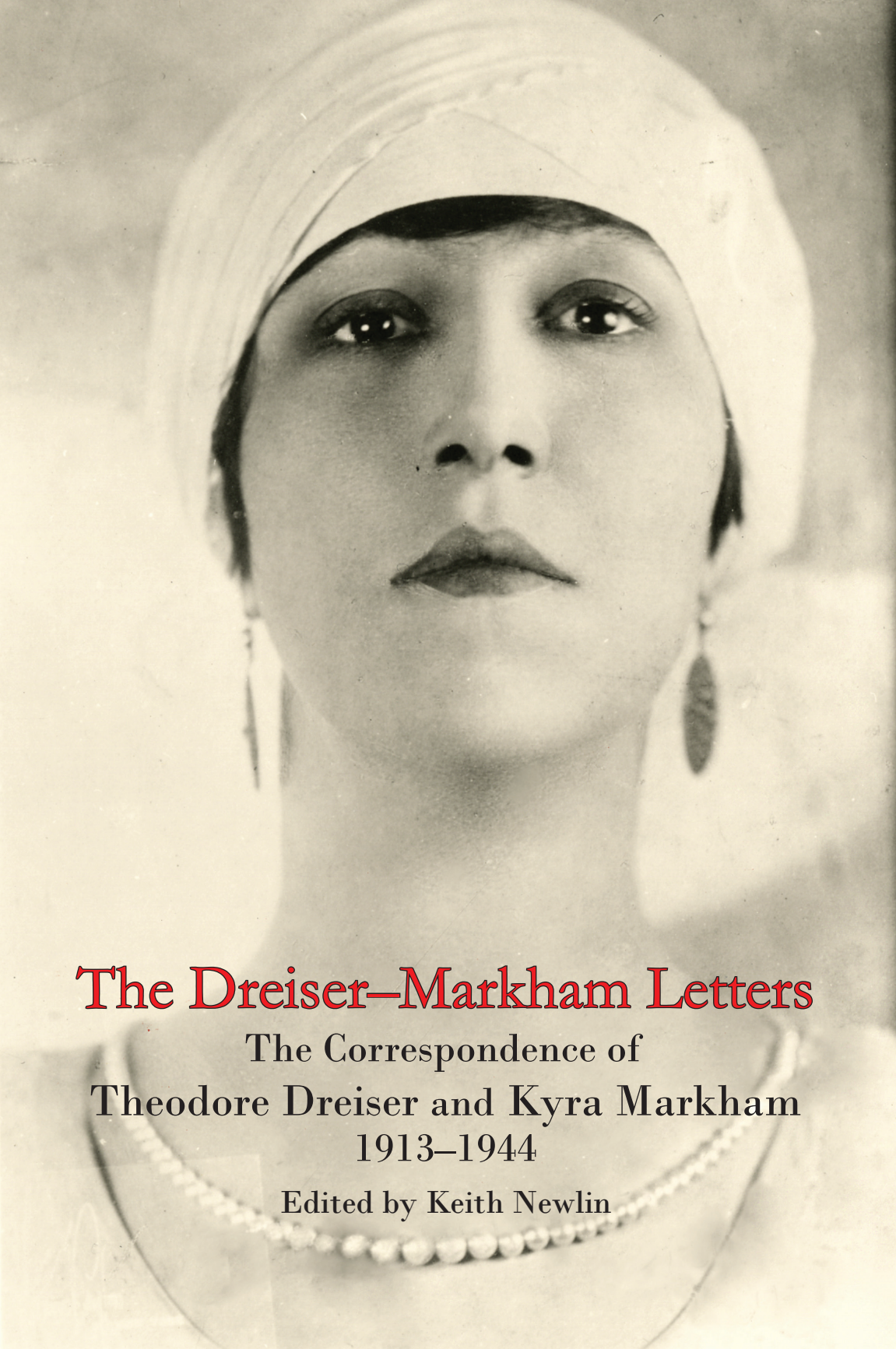


The Dreiser–Markham Letters

The Correspondence of Theodore Dreiser and Kyra Markham 1913–1944

Edited by Keith Newlin

THE DREISER–MARKHAM LETTERS

The Dreiser–Markham Letters

The Correspondence of Theodore Dreiser and Kyra Markham, 1913–1944

The Winchester University Press

The Dreiser Edition

General Editor Jude Davies

Advisory Editor Thomas P. Riggio

The Winchester University Press is pleased to continue *The Dreiser Edition*, the venture begun by the University of Pennsylvania Press and the University of Illinois Press to publish scholarly editions of the complete works of Theodore Dreiser. A principal figure of twentieth-century American literature, Dreiser has a centrality that stems both from the permanence of his best fiction and from his preeminent role in American cultural life during the first half of the twentieth century.

The Dreiser Edition

GENERAL EDITOR

Jude Davies
University of Winchester

ADVISORY EDITOR

Thomas P. Riggio
University of Connecticut

EDITORIAL BOARD

Renate von Bardeleben
University of Mainz

Clare Virginia Eby
University of Connecticut

Richard Lingeman
The Nation

David McKnight
University of Pennsylvania, Emeritus

Roark Mulligan
Christopher Newport University, Emeritus

James L. W. West III
Pennsylvania State University

Sponsored by

The University of Winchester,

The University of Connecticut

and

The University of Pennsylvania Library

GENERAL EDITOR
Jude Davies

ADVISORY EDITOR
Thomas P. Riggio

The Dreiser–Markham Letters

The Correspondence of Theodore Dreiser and Kyra Markham, 1913–1944

Edited by
Keith Newlin



WINCHESTER
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Published by the Winchester University Press 2026

Copyright © 2026

The Author hereby asserts the moral right always to be identified as the author of this work in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form whatsoever or by any method whatsoever without prior permission of the Winchester University Press. Quotations may however be taken for unpublished academic essays and newspaper and magazine reviews. Enquiries should be made to the address below. This book is sold subject to the condition that it shall not by way of trade be lent or resold or otherwise circulated without prior written consent from the Winchester University Press.

First Published in Great Britain in 2026 by
The Winchester University Press
Winchester SO22 4NR

Cover design by Keith Newlin
Cover photograph by Jessie Tarbox Beals, courtesy of the Kislak Center for Special Collections, University of Pennsylvania

Series : The Theodore Dreiser Edition

British Library Cataloguing-in-Publication Data
A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

ISBN (Paperback): 978-1-906113-39-1
ISBN (PDF): 978-1-906113-41-4
ISBN (EPUB): 978-1-906113-38-4
ISBN (Mobi): 978-1-906113-40-7

DOI: https://doi.org/10.21039/book5

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License (unless stated otherwise within the content of the work). To view a copy of this license, visit https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/ or send a letter to Creative Commons, 444 Castro Street, Suite 900, Mountain View, California, 94041, USA. This license allows for copying and distributing the work, providing author attribution is clearly stated, that you are not using the material for commercial purposes, and that modified versions are not distributed.

The full text of this book has been peer-reviewed to ensure high academic standards. For full review policies, see https://www.winchesteruniversitypress.org/

Suggested citation:
Newlin, K. (ed.) (2026). *The Dreiser–Markham Letters: The Correspondence of Theodore Dreiser and Kyra Markham, 1913–1944*. Winchester: Winchester University Press. DOI: https://doi.org/10.21039/book5. License: CC BY-NC-ND

To read the free, open access version of this book online, visit https://doi.org/10.21039/book5 or scan this QR code with your mobile device:



To Thomas P. Riggio

Contents

List of Illustrations xiii
Preface xv
Acknowledgements xxi
Introduction xxiii
Editorial Note xxxvii
Abbreviations xli
Chronology xliii

1. Smitten: 1913 **1**

2. *The Lure*: 1914 **207**

3. *Conscience*: 1915 **353**

4. Breakup: 1916 **467**

5. Aftermath: 1917–1944 **607**

Appendix 1: Annotated List of Omitted Correspondence 667
Appendix 2: "KM to TD" Poem Cycle 673
Index 679

List of Illustrations

1. Theodore Dreiser, 1915 176
2. Elaine Hyman, 1910 177
3. Elaine Hyman, 1911 178
4. Elaine Hyman, age 20 179
5. Elaine Hyman in *The Masque of Montezuma*, 1912 180
6. Floyd Dell, 1913 181
7. Elaine Hyman as Andromache in *The Trojan Women*, 1912 182
8. Chicago Little Theatre acting company, 1912 183
9. Portrait of Elaine Hyman, ca. 1912–1913 184
10. Elaine Hyman with the Chicago Little Theatre in St Louis, 1913 185
11. First page of Dreiser to Hyman, 6 May 1913 186
12. Portrait of Theodore Dreiser, before 1916 187
13. John Cowper Powys 188
14. Kirah Markham in *The Lure*, 1914 189
15. Theodore Dreiser, 1915 190
16. Kirah Markham in *Conscience*, 1915 191
17. Dreiser's eldest sister, Mame Brennan 192
18. Theodore Dreiser in his Greenwich Village apartment, 165 W. 10th St. 193
19. The first two pages of Dreiser's 14 May 1916 letter 194
20. Markham's 16 May 1916 reply 195

21. Theodore Dreiser standing before paintings by Anne Estelle Rice in his studio at St. Luke's Place 196
22. First page of Markham to Dreiser, 6 July 1922 197
23. David Gaither 198
24. Kyra Markham 199
25. The *Cosmopolitan* cover that so distressed Markham, Feb. 1929 200
26. *Elin and Maria*, 1934 lithograph by Kyra Markham 201
27. *Laughing Gas (Theodore Dreiser's Operation)*, by Kyra Markham 202
28. *Lady Macbeth* (1935 lithograph), self-portrait by Kyra Markham 203
29. Frontispiece by Kyra Markham for *Romantic—I Call It*, by Ethel Harriman 204
30. Kyra Markham applying ink on a lithographic stone, 10 June 1937 205

Preface

Between 1913 and 1916 Theodore Dreiser, already known for his realist portrayals of American city life, experienced a period of exceptional creative activity, which saw him radically rethink his literary techniques and expand the scope of his work. At the same time, Kyra Markham (born Elaine Hyman) was pursuing a career in the American "Little Theater" movement, where she appeared in new plays such as *Conscience, The Weavers, Papa*, and *The Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd* in Chicago, Boston, Philadelphia, Los Angeles, and New York. That the pair were lovers, that they inspired, confided in, and criticized each other, and that they could not afford to speak on the telephone while apart, has resulted in a substantial correspondence that illuminates their lives and work against the backdrop of the bohemian, dramatic, literary, publishing, and political worlds of the time. Those letters, along with others from their subsequent friendship, are reunited in this volume for the first time since Dreiser and Markham split in 1916, following their relatively recent accession to the Dreiser Papers at the University of Pennsylvania.

Theodore Dreiser wrote an estimated 20,000 letters over the span of half a century. Only some 1,700 of these have been previously published, mainly in Robert H. Elias, *Letters of Theodore Dreiser* (1959); Louise Campbell, *Letters to Louise* (1960); Thomas P. Riggio, *Dreiser–Mencken Letters* (1986); Yvette Eastman, *Dearest Wilding: A Memoir, with Love Letters from Theodore Dreiser*, edited with an introduction by Thomas P. Riggio (1995); Donald Pizer, *A Picture and A Criticism of Life: New Letters I* (2008); and Thomas P. Riggio, *Letters to Women: New Letters II* (2009). Like its predecessors, this collection reveals intimate aspects of Dreiser's life and provides a full and immediate record of his ideas, beliefs, and activities. Kyra Markham was Dreiser's sounding-board, inspiration, and, occasionally, editor, as he completed and published his fourth and fifth novels, *The Titan* (1914) and *The "Genius"* (1915); wrote plays in both realist and avant-garde forms (*Plays of the Natural and Supernatural* [1916]; *The Hand of the Potter* [1919]); launched his own persona in two travel books, *A Traveler at Forty* (1913) and *A Hoosier Holiday* (1916); and began drafting what would become the novels *An American Tragedy, The Stoic*, and *The Bulwark*. Markham also stands out in his complicated love life, since, among much else that these letters reveal, such were the depth and intensity of their feelings that she was also the only woman with whom we know that he contemplated having children.

Where this volume differs from its predecessors lies in its presentation of the correspondence as a dialogue, albeit one that is incomplete, due to the survival of only a minority of Markham's letters to Dreiser, and most of these in the form of typed transcriptions. This dialogue nevertheless reveals as much about Markham's testing of the limits of American ideas about gender and authentic living as it does about, for example, Dreiser's reading and thinking as he reinvented himself as a writer, his struggles with publishers (over *The Titan*) and censors (over *The "Genius"*), the development of his plays, his views of Walt Whitman, John Keats, and Thomas Hardy (positive) and Hollywood (not so), and his continual struggles to keep his head above water financially. Of further, but

somewhat different interest, are Markham's and Dreiser's perceptions of luminaries such as Maurice Browne and a large cast of "minor characters" from American bohemia and elsewhere—Floyd Dell, Margery Currey, Lillian Russell, Laura Jean Libbey, the painter Anne Estelle Rice, "technocracy" advocate Howard Scott, the brilliant but fragile Fritz Krog, and many others.

Accordingly, volume editor Keith Newlin provides extensive notes on all historical personages mentioned (except the few that it was not possible to identify), as well as explicating social, cultural, and occasionally political contexts. This is particularly richly detailed with respect to the Little Theater world in which both Dreiser and Markham were working.

Accordingly, too, a general introduction and extensive headnotes to each chronological section help readers to orient themselves to the biographical narratives that inform the correspondence. Dreiser's and Markham's careers and relative lack of financial resources conjoined upon them the necessity, for substantial periods in their relationship, of living hundreds or even thousands of miles apart, and it is to this constraint (of course) that we owe the existence of the letters at all. Newlin therefore provides the information necessary to understand the chronological gaps between letters that occurred while they were living together, as well as the issues that prompted them to express their intimate emotions and seek to work out their differences. Taking cognizance of this quasi-autobiographical aspect of the correspondence, Newlin frames it via the arc of the Dreiser–Markham relationship: the lovers' initial attraction, intense "honeymoon period," more considered planning of a mutual life, the hurts caused by Dreiser, Markham's struggle for autonomy and emotional authenticity, and, at a pivotal moment, Markham's devastating criticism of Dreiser's sexual double standard.

The Dreiser–Markham correspondence testifies to a magical, or fetishistic, aspect of love letters that is both strange and familiar: their imperfect capacity to conjure up the absent loved one. At a basic level, both write of remembering, missing, and anticipating the other's physical presence. In one letter Markham tells Dreiser

that she sleeps surrounded by his letters as a poor substitute for his actual presence. In January 1914 Dreiser writes that "Now there is nothing of you to be had save letters and they are so little where we have had so much." By then, their (almost) daily letters had come to help constitute their relationship itself, and any delays or disruptions caused anxiety and (on Dreiser's part) jealousy. A few days later, he asks, "Do my letters satisfy you so that there is no ache to write or are you too involved with other things[?]" By this token, unenvisaged at start of this project, the Dreiser–Markham letters have engaged us in ways that go beyond their documentary status. While this edition rigorously applies the principles of scholarly documentary editing, it seeks to make that further emotional and literary engagement available to readers.

Because neither Dreiser nor Markham wrote these letters for publication, the edition has been prepared in conformity with widely accepted principles concerning the editing of private documents. As with other private papers published in the Dreiser Edition, the holograph letters have been edited diplomatically, with an eye toward preserving the preliminary, personal nature of the original texts to the extent that this is possible in a typeset medium. Accordingly, nearly all original misspellings, grammatical mistakes, and other idiosyncrasies are retained and presented in a clear text. Very obvious slips of the pen (for example, words repeated, or a missing "not") have been silently corrected, if in the editor's view to retain them would cause needless confusion for the reader. The few typographical errors in the typewritten versions of many of Markham's letters, transcribed by a third person, have been silently corrected. These editorial practices are more fully discussed in the "Editorial Note."

This volume is part of an ongoing series in the Theodore Dreiser Edition. It continues the Dreiser Edition's tradition of publishing texts that are not easily accessible, even to the specialist. Such an undertaking would be unimaginable without the sponsorship of three institutions: the library at the University of Pennsylvania, the University of Connecticut, and the University of Winchester. Historical funding from the University of Connecticut and

financial support from the University of Winchester have enabled the publication of this volume. The goodwill and special training of the staff at the University of Pennsylvania Library's Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts have been essential to the progress of the Dreiser Edition. Successive directors, most recently David McKnight and Sean Quimby, have generously devoted the resources of their staff to facilitating the work of the Dreiser Edition. John H. Pollack, curator, Research Services, has consistently and untiringly assisted Dreiser Edition editors in their work and deserves deeper and more extensive thanks than is possible here. Thanks are due to Tim Wakeford, Jacqueline Barlow, and the team at Ubiquity Press for their prompt and energetic work on making this volume available electronically. At Winchester University, huge thanks are due to Professor Emile Bojesen, director of research and innovation, for his support of the Dreiser Edition. At Winchester University Press, it is a pleasure to work with Professor Inga Bryden, Dr. Elena Woodacre, and Debbie Mildenhall. We continue to pull together against the various national and international challenges to the humanities. Finally, and above all, my immense gratitude to Thomas P. Riggio, who has taught me so much, and without whom the Dreiser Edition would not exist in its current form, if at all.

Jude Davies
General Editor
The Dreiser Edition

Acknowledgements

This collection of correspondence had its genesis in a suggestion by Thomas P. Riggio, who had edited a small portion of Dreiser's letters to Kyra Markham for his own *Letters to Women*. My dedication is a small measure of my gratitude for his suggestion and his encouragement, and I am also grateful for his permission to use many of his annotations to those letters and for his comments on a proposal for this volume. The immense Dreiser archive at the Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania, is the source for the correspondence printed in this book, and I am most grateful to John Pollack, the Curator of Research Services, for his encouragement and assistance in the preparation of this volume. I also thank Kyra Markham's grandnieces—Anabel Cole, Barbara Cole, and Lisa Rudnick—for permission to publish Markham's letters, and to Anabel Cole for making available two photographs.

I also thank the efficient reference staff at the Newberry Library for making available to me scans of Floyd Dell's letters to Arthur Davison Ficke and the photograph of Bror Nordfeldt's portrait of

Dell. I am grateful to Jerri Dell, Floyd Dell's granddaughter, for permission to publish extracts from those letters. I'm also indebted to the Manuscripts and Archives Division of the New York Public Library for scanning Markham's letters to H. L. Mencken, as I am to the Special Collections Research Center at the University of Michigan Library for photographs of members of the Chicago Little Theatre.

Finally, I own a special debt of gratitude to Jude Davies and Roark Mulligan, who read the manuscript carefully and offered thoughtful and helpful suggestions to improve it.

Introduction

"Now there is nothing of you to be had save letters and they are so little where we have had so much"
—Dreiser to Markham, letter 104

I.

"It is many years since I asked you to take my Dreiser letters and expurgate, edit—whatever you choose to call it—and you refused," Kyra Markham wrote to H. L. Mencken on 14 September 1950. "Tell me what I should do with these damned letters. I may not follow your advice but I'd still like to have it. After all, you could have had them, taken the matter entirely out of my hands years ago, if you and Theo had not had a mad on each other."[1] Dreiser's letters to the actress and graphic artist Kyra Markham, whom he met in Chicago in January 1913, are an important and only recently available resource. Markham was 21 years old when she met the 42-year-old Dreiser, and the two soon became lovers. As a young actress who was ambitious to develop her career, she

embarked on a busy touring schedule, with the two exchanging letters nearly every day. Dreiser was completely smitten, and his early letters reveal his love, jealousy, and insecurity while at the same time documenting his daily writing activity.

Markham was a talented and spirited individual who was no passive recipient of Dreiser's attention. Born in 1891 as Elaine Bushnell Hyman to a prosperous Chicago jeweler, Harry Sigmund Hyman, and his wife, Arabelle (Belle) Bushnell, she later took the name Kirah Markham when her family objected to her unconventional liaison with Dreiser and her determination to succeed as an actress rather than follow the traditional path for young women of her generation—marriage to a man in her social class. (Later, she changed the spelling of her first name to "Kyra.") She attended the Art Institute of Chicago, where she studied painting and drawing and performed in plays, rather than take the expected path to college, as her younger sister did at Vassar. In September 1912, she caught the attention of Maurice Browne and his wife, Ellen Van Volkenburg, who had just founded the Chicago Little Theatre, an early and influential theater created to showcase innovative plays in opposition to the commercial theater, and she appeared in William Butler Yeats's *On Baile's Strand*, the company's first offering. She also began an affair with the married Floyd Dell, the 26-year-old editor of the *Chicago Literary Review*. She met Dreiser in January 1913, when he attended, at Dell's invitation, a performance of Euripides's *The Trojan Women*, in which Hyman played Andromache, and she soon began an affair with Dreiser. His early letters are marked by his jealousy and insecurity as his imagination created entanglements between Hyman and the younger and more handsome Dell.

She toured with the company when it traveled to eastern cities to showcase the possibilities of the little theater movement, and she appeared in the silent film *The Lure* in 1914 after returning to New York and sharing an apartment with Dreiser while continuing her acting career with Emanuel Reicher, among other innovative directors. In 1916, amid growing tensions in part because of Dreiser's serial infidelities, the two separated, and Markham became

part of the Provincetown Players, first as a play reader and costume and set designer. She then traveled to Los Angeles to act in plays by the Los Angeles Little Theater, where she resumed a childhood romance with Frank Lloyd Wright Jr., who was designing sets for Paramount and supervising some of his famous father's architectural work, marrying him in November 1916 in part in an effort to distance her emotions from Dreiser. The newlyweds returned to New York, where Markham appeared in some of the Provincetown Players' productions while also working as an art director and costume designer for the Metro and Fox film companies. The hasty marriage didn't last and the two soon separated.

After the demise of the Provincetown Players in 1923, Markham joined its successor, the Experimental Theater Company, formed in 1924 in part to provide a venue for Eugene O'Neill (one of its three directors) and innovative European plays. She met the set designer and architect David Stoner Gaither, whom she married in December 1927, and began to devote her creative work to the visual arts. She became an accomplished lithographer, earned the Mary Collins Prize from the Philadelphia Print Club in 1935, and had paintings purchased by the Philadelphia, Whitney, and Metropolitan art museums and by the Library of Congress, and her work continued to receive exhibitions and prizes throughout her life. After her husband died in 1957, Markham moved to Haiti in 1960, where she continued painting and where she died in 1967.

Dreiser's early letters to Markham are marked by his passionate love for her, even as he registered the pangs of insecurity and jealousy, created in part by Markham's touring schedule, the temptations of her theatrical life, and Markham's own questing youth. The letters are unusual among Dreiser's published letters in that they document his daily shifts in mood and aspiration, revealing a lovestruck Dreiser absent from the many biographies, while also recording his efforts to complete *The Titan* and to negotiate with publishers to attain a living. These letters reveal a side of Dreiser not usually seen: a man who needed the presence of a woman to feel complete and one who was keenly aware of the beauty of nature, as he took pains to describe in many of the letters. As

Markham later put it to biographer W. A. Swanberg, "I think what bound me to him was his utter loneliness, and only later when I saw him weep over the sight of a flight of pigeons did I become aware of his sense of beauty."[2]

After Dreiser and Markham moved in together during the summer of 1914, they continued writing letters as Markham pursued her acting career in various locations; these letters reveal Dreiser in the midst of Greenwich Village creative and social life and his work on the composition and staging of his own plays. Beginning in 1915, Dreiser's attention began to turn to other women while Markham was away, and by 1916 their letters had become a battleground as he and Markham debated the meaning of love, constancy, and marriage, ultimately leading Markham to tire of Dreiser's double standard and to break off their relationship.

Even after their separation, Dreiser and Markham continued to exchange letters, this time as friends and not lovers, and Dreiser's letters are marked by affection and a straightforward appraisal of his own ambitions in addition to helping Markham find artistic work during the Depression. In sum, Dreiser's letters to Markham provide a window into one of his two most significant romantic relationships (the other is his long affair with and eventual marriage to Helen Richardson). Markham is the only known woman with whom he seriously contemplated marriage and children. That such a record exists of his romantic longings is due to Markham's own career and the consequent separations that prompted the letters, a record that is significant for its detail and biographical revelation. But it is also significant in that Dreiser records his daily activity, a record that nicely complements the record provided by his *American Diaries*, which largely antedates and postdates his involvement with Markham.

II.

That the letters exist is due primarily to Dreiser's poverty: his years with Markham coincide with some of his most significant creative work, writing that he completed even as he struggled to find a

publisher willing to promote his vision. When he met Markham, Dreiser had just completed *The Financier*; during his time with her he wrote *The Titan, The "Genius," A Hoosier Holiday*, and *Plays of the Natural and Supernatural*; he also began *The Bulwark* and *Dawn*, the first volume of his autobiography. But he earned barely enough to repay advances, and sometimes not even that. His letters are full of his financial worries, even as he struggled to complete *The Titan*, and that lack of money is a main reason he remained in New York despite his ardent desire to be with Markham. His penury also explains why they wrote daily letters rather than taking up the more expedient and fulfilling telephone, which Dreiser had in his apartment. In 1914, a telephone call placed between New York and Chicago cost $6.40 for the first three minutes, and $1.35 per minute thereafter. By comparison, Dreiser's rent was $25 per month. In 2025 dollars, that three-minute phone call would be equivalent to $204, with his rent at $797 per month. Small wonder they chose the more efficient two-cent stamp and occasionally the 10-cent special delivery letter or 50-cent telegram.

At first glance, their relationship would not seem likely. Dreiser was twice Markham's age, only one year younger than her mother, who understandably objected to her daughter's affair with a married man. She had a close and loving relationship with her more tolerant father even as she struggled to remain attached to her mother. Dreiser was certainly no charm-boy. As one of his previous lovers, Anna Tatum, remarked upon first meeting Dreiser, as told to his friend William Lengel, "I didn't know you were so UGLY."[3] Journalist Fanny Butcher, who worked as a secretary at the Chicago Little Theatre, remembered Dreiser as "a big, almost aggressively ugly man who was plainly convinced he was irresistible to women."[4] And Floyd Dell, who despite his rivalry for Elaine Hyman became a good friend, described Dreiser as "a large, cumbrous, awkward, thoughtful, friendly person, with no small talk except a few favorite joshing sillinesses, but with a great zest for serious conversation."[5]

So what did Markham see in Dreiser? She explained to Swanberg, who had asked a similar question: "You speak of Theo's

'charm.' In so far as I am concerned, my friend, he did not have it. He had what I am unable to describe as anything but animal magnetism and his will, but these were powerful."[6] Louise Campbell, who met him in 1917, noted that "I was influenced by a quality Dreiser had that partly explains his attraction for women—he made one feel important and *capable* of realizing one's dreams and ambitions, even though one never did."[7] Helen Richardson Dreiser, whom Dreiser would meet in 1919 when she was 25 and eventually marry in 1944, the year before his death, described his powerful physical and emotional attraction. While she initially resisted his first embrace, "there was something so groping in his movement, so grayish in the tint of his complexion, as a man who had been long confined in a darkened cell and was fumbling eagerly toward a light, that I felt who was I to deny him what I could easily sense he needed most—the love of a young, happy, sympathetic girl. My affectionate nature was so stirred that I did not hesitate."[8] And Marguerite Tjader, who met Dreiser in 1928 when she was 27 and would later help him complete his last novel, *The Bulwark*, described women's attraction to Dreiser: "Women were tremendously stimulated by him, because he always wanted to build them up to whatever superior qualities they might have, wanted them to be their best, most daring, selves."[9]

Markham seems to have responded to the qualities noted by Dreiser's other lovers, and her letters reveal that she was passionately and deeply in love with him. As she wrote two weeks after Dreiser left Chicago to return to New York: "I love you, and the more I love you the harder it is to tell you so, for the thousands of things in my heart pile up on top of each other in their rush to get out when I speak. You are my Titan, otherwise the simplest things seem to bring you nearer to me than anything else could. My lover, you are, and my dearest, and my beloved, and the whole universe could not find names for you that would bring you closer to me" (24 Feb. 1913, letter 15). Two years later, that love had only intensified: "Do you feel anything like the heartache of loneliness that is eating me now?" she wrote from Chicago, where she was performing her first leading role. "Baby, baby! I want to put my

arms around you and hold you close, oh so close, and then curl up and go to sleep, my body curved to yours or yours to mine. Do you want me as I want you, my lover husband?" (28 Feb. 1915, letter 230).

For his part, Dreiser was attracted not just to Markham's youth but also to her bohemian spirit, her varied interests, and her quick-changing moods. Initially, he responded to her dark-complexioned beauty that he praised in his first letters. "Your body is in my arms now, your mouth is to mine," he wrote on 17 February 1913. "I feel your warm breath. You glow like an opal to me—a rich smouldering opalescent soul. Oh, Myrtles of Damascus! Oh, roses! roses! You are they. Write me honey Egypt. Write—and tell me how much you really love me Asia Lamb—my own Peaches Elyhon" (letter 7). "Elyhon," a contraction of "Elaine-honey," soon morphed into "Cryhon" as Dreiser came to understand her emotional responses, a term of endearment that he retained even long after their affair had ended and she had married another.

In addition to her acting, Markham sketched, painted, sculpted, wrote (mostly poetry but also some fiction and drama), and sewed. In part she was following the usual explorations of a talented young woman of 21, and the elder Dreiser marveled at her changes of focus and temperament, what he referred to over and over in the 1913 letters as "moods." He saw in her a kinship, a link to his own questing for understanding (an effort that would occupy the late years of his life and be posthumously published as *Notes on Life* [1974]):

> If you knew what an inlay of moods and colors it is to me—how your mind glows like a mosaic but always with sombre reds, browns, greens blues the rich colors of all great mosaics! You seem to match my own fancies, tastes, emotions to the life. I might be there walking with you as I was myself years ago—as I still am. It is so I brood and meditate and build up strange fancies and then abandon them for others. I love the rich poetic passion of you—your hungry red heart. When I hold you in my arms I can feel how close your blood is to mine—what the kinship of emotion and magnetism & mood is. (20 May 1913, letter 82)

Dreiser was also attracted to Markham's unconventional attitudes. She was part of the Chicago bohemia that centered on a south-side artists' colony facing Jackson Park—attracted by the cheap rents for box-like former shops for the 1893 Columbian Exposition—and whose members regularly attended events in the Fine Arts Building. In addition to the members of the Chicago Little Theatre, Markham met the artists Bror Nordfeldt and Raymond Jonson, both of whom painted her portrait; and the writers Arthur Davison Ficke, Lucian Cary, Margaret Anderson, Sherwood Anderson, Edgar Lee Masters, and others. Dreiser noted Markham's lack of convention in dress, what Fanny Butcher would call "the bizarre clothes she affected," and what Dreiser later described as "The sinuous rhythm of her torso and hips—wholly uncorseted as I afterwards learned—and the smallness & lightness of her sandaled feet. To think of anyone wearing sandals in February—and in Chicago."[10] Later, the more staid H. L. Mencken would describe his discomfort at parties hosted by Dreiser and Markham at their 165th Street flat: "I objected to the kind of parties she staged. She lighted them by arty candlelight, which I detested, and she invited so many guests that there were not enough chairs for them, and many of them had to sit on the floor." He also noted that "[t]he furniture was all arty and half a dozen paintings by Kirah hung on the wall."[11]

Later in life, Markham mused on her lack of conformity: "Sometimes I wonder if I could have been so unconventional had I come from a happy home, but witnessing my parents unhappiness I grew up with a complete contempt for conventional marriage, literally believing that a good marriage was made in Heaven."[12] Dreiser was mostly honest with Markham about his marital status—although married, he had separated from his wife, Sara White Dreiser, though he apparently concealed from Markham that he was still living in their flat at 3609 Broadway since he could not afford two domiciles until his lease ended in fall 1913. But Markham was not eager to marry, given her parents' experience, and she seems more interested in living with her "lover husband" than marriage. As she wrote about Sara Dreiser's demand for alimony at a time when Dreiser was having difficulty making rent,

> My lover husband! We don't need anything more telling than that, do we, precious? Don't worry about the madame. I know it is impossible not to feel sorry for her, but for ourselves—we can get along very well. Don't worry, baby mine. It doesn't matter whether we ever marry or not, so long as this heavenly happiness lasts. (26 Feb. 1915, letter 227)

For the first two years of their relationship, 1913 and 1914, their letters reveal the two as being deeply in love, with the separations difficult to bear, for both. As Markham concluded one letter while she was performing in Chicago, "Oh boy, baby, boy, my heart beats all the time, come, come, come. My heart cries out and I weep as usual, but oh, such lonely, lonely tears!" (31 Jan. 1914, letter 127). Dreiser poured out his loneliness in letter after letter, as in this one from February: "I'm so lonely for you and this letter is written in the full swing of a lonely house. I have been trying to write a short story this P.M. so as to expedite matters for us both and have been getting along fairly well only I get so lonely in between moments of composition that I nearly die" (22 Feb. 1914, letter 161).

With Markham away, Dreiser came to realize he needed a woman to give him a sense of completeness. His 1915 letters are marked by expressions of loneliness and he recounts his attempts to fill the evenings until Markham returns. Dreiser began to spend evenings in the company of other women, most of them not potential romantic partners, and he enumerated his outings in his letters. Eventually Markham learned that he had violated their agreement to remain faithful to one another. And the epistolary battle began as Dreiser attempted to justify his behavior and Markham undercut his justifications, until finally, after a series of hurtful letters, Dreiser collected himself and concluded, "there is something in connection with me which seems to smother and decay unless I feel absolutely free to come and go as I choose. You know I do not ask you to accept this situation. If it pains you greatly to do it I would prefer that you wouldn't. Living alone would be much better" (30 May 1916, letter 327). And, with that, their love affair ended. Markham had endured too much emotional pain to continue, and she returned to New York to live in the home of a friend.

When the end came, it was devastating to Markham, and she never quite got over the feeling of betrayal, for she had given all her love with an expectation that it would be returned and not parceled out as one part among others. Years later, as she was responding to biographers, that emotional pain still resonated. To O'Neill biographer Louis Shaeffer, she confided, "In a story about me Dreiser actually wrote that I died of a broken heart when I left him. A great deal of me died then but it was not because of him, but because of those best parts of me that had died in having to give up a dream."[13] And to Swanberg she explained, "That summer I had no idea of anything, nearly finished by Theo having found out where I was living and coming to the Duncans continually to beg me to come home. I was nearly destroyed, loving him as I did, and weeping until I was blistered down to my cheek-bones."[14]

III.

This collection of correspondence between Dreiser and Markham is also, in part, a biography of a talented and representative woman of the first decades of the twentieth century. While the biographical details and professional accomplishments of Dreiser's life have been well documented in five full-dress biographies,[15] only the outlines of Markham's life have heretofore emerged, and many of the details have been inaccurate. The introductory essays and notes, in addition to presenting contextual information necessary to understand the letters, therefore tend to emphasize the details of Markham's activities.

As readers will see, Markham and Dreiser were avid letter writers, and Dreiser especially became anxious if an expected letter was late or was briefer than he thought it should be. Markham retained all of Dreiser's letters, with their envelopes, but the Markham side of the correspondence is incomplete. For the years 1913 to 1916, only a selective typed transcript exists, presumably made by Estelle Kubitz, Dreiser's lover subsequent to Markham who made a similar transcript of Dreiser's diary for 1917 and 1918

and sent it to Mencken. As with the diary transcript, the original letters are no longer extant. For the years subsequent to 1916, some but not all of Markham's letters exist. Markham's letters mattered greatly to Dreiser, and he records several times that he would read over her letters. So what happened to the letters? One can only speculate among possibilities: that Estelle Kubitz tossed the letters after transcribing them, or that one of Dreiser's subsequent lovers purged the letters, or even that a box containing them got waylaid during one of Dreiser's many moves.

Markham's involvement in the bohemian circles of Chicago and New York, as well as her desire to make a living as an actress rather than follow the conventional route of marrying a suitable man, distressed her parents, as did especially her relationship with the still-married Dreiser. After her parents discovered the two were living together sometime in the summer or fall of 1913, Elaine assumed the stage name of Kirah Markham (later morphing to "Kyra"), in part to decrease her parents' embarrassment, especially since she had relatives and other family friends living in New York. But there was also an element of maternal rebellion, as she explained in a letter to Swanberg, referring to the spelling she was then using: "[W]hen I was in New York with Theo, still concerned with theatre, I took the name of Kyra Markham because I thought my family felt me a disgrace. My Vasser sister never failed to point out that I was just that and only in later years confessed to friends, though never to me, that my defiance had given the whole family a glamour. So life goes!"[16] She amplified that explanation in a later letter: "Kyra is a name I assumed, wanting something that sounded dark, for my mother, who was very beautiful and blonde, loved to tell me what an ugly little black brat I was. I had been named after Tennyson's Elaine and love to think of the fair maid who, in his version, died of love. How much of a fool can one be?"[17]

In her later recollection of that turbulent time, when she had tired of Dreiser's infidelities and, emotionally distraught, before she left for California, she made one final change to signal her emancipation, as she explained to H. L. Mencken: "A bunch of friends got together shortly after I left Theo and, by virtue of

numerology, changed the spelling of my name from Kirah to Kyra. I liked the old one best but, at that time I did not care much about anything, nothing mattered."[18] But Markham's memory compresses the years, though the sentiment remains and perhaps also refers to her effort to distance herself from her unhappy marriage to Lloyd Wright, for newspaper articles reporting on her acting show that she retained the spelling "Kirah" until December 1924 and that she began using "Kyra" in August 1925. But this was a public name: official records show that she remained Elaine Hyman, then Elaine Wright, and then Elaine Hyman Gaither in her personal life.

In the letters and essays that follow, I have referred to Hyman/Markham by the name she was using when writing the letter. Although biographers have mostly referred to her as "Kirah Markham" during her time in Chicago, well before she thought to invent the name, doing similarly in this volume for letters written in 1913, all of which antedate her change of name, would introduce an air of artifice. Accordingly, all letters and discussion follow the spelling of the name preferred by Hyman/Markham, which in most cases is easily determined because the envelopes addressed by Dreiser are intact.

The correspondence is arranged chronologically, with Dreiser's letters on any given day presented first, followed by Markham's. Since they wrote each day they were separated, their letters often crossed in the mail, creating a two-day lag in replies with several letters intervening and often prompting intemperate responses from the impatient Dreiser. Since they were writing for each other and not posterity, both often referred to previous letters ambiguously—as "yesterday's letter" or "today's letter," for example. When needed for clarity, I have supplied identifying information in notes. To aid the reader in understanding the context of the correspondence, I have presented the letters in five sections, each with an introductory essay: Smitten (1913), *The Lure* (1914), *Conscience* (1915), Breakup (1916), and Aftermath (1917–1944), with occasional narrative segments placing groups of letters in context.

Notes

[1] Markham to Mencken, 14 Sept. 1950 (Mencken Papers). Mencken advised her to send them to the University of Pennsylvania to join the immense Dreiser archive, then under development. For reasons that are no longer known, Markham (and after her death in 1967, her relatives) retained possession of Dreiser's letters to her until 2005, when a niece arranged to deposit the letters in the University of Pennsylvania Dreiser collection to join the surviving letters from Markham.

[2] Markham to Swanberg, 29 Feb. 1964 (Swanberg Papers).

[3] Notes on interview with William Lengel (Swanberg Papers). Swanberg would later emend the comment to "I didn't know you were so homely" (Swanberg, *Dreiser*, 162).

[4] Fanny Butcher, *Many Lives—One Love* (New York: Harper, 1972), 46.

[5] Floyd Dell, *Homecoming* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1933), 268.

[6] Markham to Swanberg, 29 Feb. 1964 (Swanberg Papers). Earlier, she had written Swanberg that "Dreiser was a steamroller emotionally, riding down any woman's opposition and taking what he chose, quite often beneath him" (10 Dec. 1963; Swanberg Papers).

[7] Campbell to Swanberg, 22 April 1965 (Donald Pizer, ed., *Theodore Dreiser Recalled* [Clemson, SC: Clemson University Press, 2017], 61).

[8] Helen Richardson, *My Life with Dreiser* (Cleveland: World Publishing, 1951), 25.

[9] Qtd. in Donald Pizer, "Dreiser's Relationships with Women," *American Literary Realism* 50 (2017): 69.

[10] Fanny Butcher, *Many Lives—One Love* (New York: Harper, 1972), 48; Dreiser, manuscript draft of "The Book of Sidonie" under its original title, "Geralda Lyle," Folders 12363–12374 (DPUP).

[11] H. L. Mencken, *My Life as Author and Editor*, ed. and intro. Jonathan Yardley (New York: Knopf, 1993), 141, 153.

[12] Markham to Swanberg, 8 Feb. 1964 (Swanberg Papers).

[13] Markham to Shaeffer, 22 March 1963 (Kennedy and Pettit, 129). The story is "The Book of Sidonie."

[14] Markham to Swanberg, 29 Feb. 1964 (Swanberg Papers).

[15] See Dorothy Dudley, *Forgotten Frontiers: Dreiser and the Land of the Free* (New York: Harrison Smith and Robert Haas, 1932; rpt. as *Dreiser and the Land of the Free* [New York: Beechhurst Press, 1946]); Robert H. Elias, *Theodore Dreiser, Apostle of Nature*

(New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1948; emended edition 1970); W. A. Swanberg, *Dreiser* (New York: Scribner, 1965); Richard Lingeman, *Theodore Dreiser, At the Gates of the City, 1871–1907* and *Theodore Dreiser, An American Journey, 1908–1945* (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1986, 1990); Jerome Loving, *The Last Titan, A Life of Theodore Dreiser* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

[16] Markham to Swanberg, 19 Jan. 1964 (Swanberg Papers).

[17] Markham to Swanberg, 8 Feb. 1964 (Swanberg Papers).

[18] Markham to Mencken, 5 Aug. 1945 (Mencken Papers).

Editorial Note

This book gathers the complete correspondence between Theodore Dreiser and Kyra Markham. The letters are presented chronologically by year, month, and day. The total count of Dreiser's letters is 289 and they are being published for the first time, with the exception of 42 letters published in *Letters to Women*, by Theodore Dreiser, edited by Thomas P. Riggio (2009), which are indicated with "[Publ. *LTW*]" at the head of the letter and which are reedited from the originals to make them consistently edited and formatted. All but ten of Markham's 90 letters are typed transcriptions, presumably made by Estelle Kubitz about the time she transcribed Dreiser's Greenwich Village diaries of 1917–1918 (see Riggio, *American Diaries*, 47–48, 147). The transcripts of Markham's letters, with few exceptions, are dated and contain salutations but lack addresses and closings. The transcripts are generally well punctuated and contain few typographical errors or misspellings; there are no corrections. Ellipses are as recorded in the typescript: it's not clear whether the ellipses are Markham's or whether Kubitz replaced some words with the ellipses.

All but four of Dreiser's letters to Markham are handwritten. For this edition the guiding principle for holograph and typed letters is to maintain their integrity as private documents. They consequently are printed as they were received. The chief exceptions to this rule are in the silent correction of obvious slips of the pen (inadvertent duplication of letters or words, unintentional word substitution [e.g., "the" for "to" and the like]) and in the positioning of the place of origin, the date, and the complimentary close, all of which are silently regularized. Ornamental underscoring of signatures and inconsistent underscoring of addresses have been omitted. Missing dates or parts of dates have been supplied in brackets. Dreiser was inconsistent in the use of the apostrophe: when in a hurry he often added an ambiguous tic to serve either as a "t" cross or as an apostrophe, and sometimes both. Contractions that end in a "t" and "it's" have therefore been regularized as a conventional contraction. In the matter of end punctuation, Dreiser was consistently careless in omitting the period, which has been silently added as a convenience to the reader. His equally consistent use of periods in place of question marks, however, has been retained. Printed letterheads are uniformly centered, adjusted to follow standard capitalization, and shortened to retain the name and city, but other details—such as telephone numbers, names of proprietors and the like—have been omitted. Holograph addresses are placed flush left and transcribed in their entirety.

Readers should experience no difficulty with this format. Dreiser tended to be consistent in his peculiarities of punctuation and spelling. For example, one soon begins to adjust to and even anticipate such idiosyncrasies as *your* in place of *you're, then* for *than, here* for *hear*, and easily identifiable misspellings such as *opourtunity, thousend, rediculous*, and *accross*. As often as not he reversed the correct positions of i's and e's, used British forms of words such as *colour* and *labour*, used dashes and commas interchangeably, and frequently omitted the comma or dash when it coincided with the end of a line. Errors of fact or dating are corrected in the notes. Whenever words were inserted above lines, they are included in the text without comment. Notes record all

marginalia. Illegible cancellations and slips of the pen are omitted, but legible cancellations that have substantial value are cited in the notes. Words underlined by Dreiser are underscored. When a word is impossible to decipher, *illegible* has been placed between brackets. When a word or letter necessary for the understanding of a sentence has been omitted, the omission has been placed within brackets at the site of omission.

All letters are in the Dreiser Papers at the University of Pennsylvania Library. Since including an abbreviation identifying the nature and location of each letter would introduce unneeded clutter, only those few letters that diverge from this pattern are headed by an abbreviation identifying the form of the document.

Notes at the ends of letters identify events, allusions, titles of books, plays, films, and historical facts needed to understand Dreiser's and Markham's references and ideas. When known, people referred to in letters, as well as their birth and death dates, are identified. When appropriate, citations from the letters of Dreiser's correspondents are included in the notes. Names in letters are identified only the first time they occur, but a complete list of persons and works appears in the index.

Abbreviations

Description of Letters:
H—Holograph
tel—Telegram
TLS—Typewritten signed ribbon copy

Other Abbreviations:
Clayton, *Floyd Dell*: *Floyd Dell: The Life and Times of an American Rebel*, by Douglas Clayton (Chicago: Ivan Dee, 1994).
Dell Papers: Floyd Dell Papers, The Newberry Library, Chicago.
DPUP: Theodore Dreiser Papers, Ms. Coll. 30, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania.
Elias, *Letters*: *Letters of Theodore Dreiser*, 3 vols., ed. Robert H. Elias (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1959).
Kennedy and Pettit: "Kyra Markham: Letters to Louis Shaeffer (1962–63)," annot. Jeffery Kennedy and ed. Alexander Pettit, *Eugene O'Neill Review*, 43.2 (2022): 126–52.
Lingeman, *American Journey*: *Theodore Dreiser, An American Journey, 1908–1945*, by Richard Lingeman (New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1990).

LTW: *Letters to Women: New Letters*, vol. 2, ed. Thomas P. Riggio (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009).

Mencken Papers: H. L. Mencken Papers, Manuscripts and Archives Division, The New York Public Library. Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations.

Newlin, Rusch, and Davies, *Plays*: Theodore Dreiser, *Plays, The Critical Edition*, ed. Keith Newlin, Frederic E. Rusch, and Jude Davies (Winchester, UK: Winchester University Press, 2023).

Pizer, *A Picture*: *A Picture and Criticism of Life: New Letters*, vol. 1, ed. Donald Pizer (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2008).

Riggio, *American Diaries*: Theodore Dreiser, *American Diaries, 1902–1926*, ed. Thomas P. Riggio (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983).

Riggio, *D-M Letters*: *The Dreiser–Mencken Letters: The Correspondence of Theodore Dreiser & H. L. Mencken, 1907–1945*. 2 vols., ed. Thomas P. Riggio (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1986).

Rusch and Pizer, *Interviews*: *Theodore Dreiser: Interviews*, ed. Frederic E. Rusch and Donald Pizer (Urbana: University of Chicago Press, 2004).

Salzman, *Critical Reception*: *Theodore Dreiser: The Critical Reception*, ed. Jack Salzman (New York: David Lewis, 1972).

Swanberg, *Dreiser*: *Dreiser*, by W. A. Swanberg (New York: Scribner, 1965).

Swanberg Papers: W. A. Swanberg Papers, Ms. Coll. 48, Kislak Center for Special Collections, Rare Books and Manuscripts, University of Pennsylvania.

Chronology

The following chronology emphasizes the performance history and major events in the life of Elaine Hyman/Kirah Markham/Kyra Markham. Dates are opening dates; roles, when known, are included. Set off in a different font are major events in Dreiser's life.

1871	
27 Aug.	Theodore Dreiser born
1891	
18 Aug.	Elaine Bushnell Hyman born
1898	
28 Dec.	Dreiser marries Sara Osborne White
1900	
8 Nov.	Dreiser publishes *Sister Carrie*
1910	
	Dreiser separates from Sara White Dreiser

1911

16 May	Hyman writes and performs in *The Master Painter*, Art Institute of Chicago
19 Oct.	Dreiser publishes *Jennie Gerhardt*

1912

20 Feb.	Hyman performs as the First Priestess in *The Masque of Montezuma*, by Thomas Wood Stevens and Kenneth Sawyer Goodman, Art Institute of Chicago
25 Oct.	Dreiser publishes *The Financier*
12 Nov.	Hyman performs as the Second Woman in *On Baile's Strand*, by William Butler Yeats, at the Chicago Little Theatre

1913

7 Jan.	Hyman performs as Andromache in *The Trojan Women*, by Euripides, translated by Gilbert Murray, Chicago Little Theatre. Meets Theodore Dreiser

Hyman performs with Chicago Little Theatre in repertory on road tour:

24–28 Feb.	in St Louis: The *Trojan Women; Anatol*, by Arthur Schnitzler as adapted by Granville Barker; *A Power of Darkness*, by Orrick Johns; *Creditors* and *Pariah*, by August Strindberg; *Joint Owners in Spain*, by Alice Brown
3 March	in Keokuk, IA: *The Trojan Women* and *Anatol*
10–14 March	as guests of the Toy Theatre, Boston: *Creditors, Anatol* (as Mimi), *Joint Owners in Spain, The Trojan Women* (as Andromache)
30 April	Hyman performs as Mademoiselle Y in *The Stronger* at the Chicago Little Theatre
May	Hyman moves to New York City
25 Nov.	Dreiser publishes *A Traveler at Forty*

1914

Markham begins road tour as an understudy in *The Lure*, by George Scarborough

12 Jan.	at the Teck Theatre in Buffalo, NY
18 Jan.	at the Princess Theatre in Chicago
22 March	at the Shubert Theatre in St. Louis
6 April	at the Adelphi Theatre in Philadelphia
25 Feb.–23 March	Dreiser travels to Chicago to be with Markham
April	Markham returns to New York City while Dreiser remains in Philadelphia, until 25 April
22 May	Dreiser publishes *The Titan*
July	Markham has an unspecified role in film version of *The Lure*, directed by Alice Guy Blaché. She moves into a flat with Dreiser at 165 West 10th Street
13 Oct.	Markham performs in *Panthea*, by Monckton Hoffe, at the Majestic Theatre in New York
Dec.	Markham visits family in Chicago for Christmas holiday while Dreiser visits with Poultney Bigelow in Malden-on-Hudson

1915

Feb.	Markham travels to Chicago to performs the lead, a streetwalker, in *Conscience*, by Oren Taft Jr., at the Art Institute of Chicago (Players Producing Co.), on 3 March
14 March	Markham returns to New York City
11–27 Aug.	Dreiser makes road trip with Franklin Booth to gather material for *A Hoosier Holiday*
1 Oct.	Dreiser publishes *The "Genius"*
Sept.–Oct.	Markham performs in a number of plays by Floyd Dell at the Liberal Club, New York, among them *Enigma, A Domestic Conversation*, on 5 Oct.

Nov.–Dec.	Markham joins cast of *When the Young Vine Blooms*, by Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson, as Marna Arvik, at the Garden Theatre (Modern Stage). She then joins cast of *The Weavers*, by Gerhardt Hauptmann, as Mother Hilse, at the Garden Theatre (Modern Stage)

1916

2 Jan.	Markham performs in *The Dollar*, by David Pinski, at the Garden Theatre (Modern Stage)
26 Jan.	Dreiser travels to Savannah to work on *A Hoosier Holiday*
11 Feb.	Markham performs the lead, a streetwalker, in *Copy* (new name for *Conscience*) at the Belasco Theatre in a benefit performance for the Twelfth Night Club
18 Feb.	Dreiser publishes *Plays of the Natural and Supernatural*
20 Feb.	Markham joins Dreiser in Savannah
2 May	Markham returns to Chicago
5 June	Markham returns to New York and separates from Dreiser
22 July	Dreiser meets Estelle Bloom Kubitz and soon begins an affair with her
Aug.	Markham joins the Provincetown Players in Provincetown, MA. She publishes the poem "Mid-Summer" in *Smart Set*
Sept.	Markham moves to Los Angeles
31 Oct.	Markham performs as Marie in *Nju, An Everyday Tragedy*, by Ossip Dymow, at the Los Angeles Little Theatre (Players Producing Co.)
17 Nov.	Dreiser publishes *A Hoosier Holiday*
18 Nov.	Elaine Hyman marries Frank Lloyd Wright, Jr
21 Nov.	Markham performs the lead in *Papa*, by Zoe Atkins, at the Los Angeles Little Theatre (Players Producing Co.)

12 Dec. Markham performs as Dectora in *The Shadowy Waters*, by William Bulter Yeats; and in *Conscience*, at the Los Angeles Little Theatre (Players Producing Co.)

26 Dec. Markham performs the lead in *The Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd*, by D. H. Lawrence, at the Los Angeles Little Theatre (Players Producing Co.)

1917

9 Jan. Markham performs as the Mother in *Everyman*, adapted by George Sterling, at Trinity Auditorium, Los Angeles (Players Producing Co.)

1918

27 Feb. Markham performs the lead in a revival of *The Silent Assertion*, by Butler Davenport, at the Bramhall Playhouse in New York (Bramhall Players)

Feb. Markham publishes the poem "Moods" in *Smart Set*

16 Aug. Dreiser publishes *Free and Other Stories*

Oct. Markham publishes the poem "Love" in *Smart Set*

1919

17 Jan. Markham performs in *From Portland to Dover*, by Otto Liveright, at the Provincetown Playhouse (Provincetown Players)

13 Sept. Dreiser meets Helen Richardson and one month later moves with her to Los Angeles

20 Sept. Dreiser publishes *The Hand of the Potter*

1920

15 March Markham designs costumes for the film *Kathleen Mavourneen* (Fox)

9 Sept.	Markham publishes poem "The Bridge" in *One Big Union*
24 Sept.	Markham produces an Egyptian pageant for the Liberal Club

1921

21 April	Markham performs as Mrs. Hale in a revival of *Trifles*, by Susan Glaspell, at the Provincetown Playhouse (Provincetown Players)
21 Sept.	Markham performs as Mrs. Caroline Robbins in *The Spring*, by George Cram Cook when it transfers to the Princess Theatre (Provincetown Players)

1922

2 Feb.	Markham divorces Lloyd Wright
8 May	Markham performs as Elizabeth in *The Red Geranium*, by Ruth Woodward at the Princess Theatre (Greenwich Village Producing Company)
15 Dec.	Dreiser publishes *A Book about Myself*

1923

9 March	Markham performs as Regan in *King Lear* at Earl Carroll Theatre
8 April	Markham performs in *The Woman of Bronze*, by Paul Kester, at the Strand Theatre, Newark, NJ (Mabel Brownell Stock Co.)

1924

3 Jan.	Markham designs costumes for *The Spook Sonata*, by August Strindberg, at the Provincetown Playhouse (Experimental Theatre Co.)
3 Feb.	Markham designs costumes for *Fashion*, by Anna Cora Mowatt, at the Provincetown Playhouse (Experimental Theatre Co.)

16 April — Markham performs as Madame de Sotenville in *George Dandin (or the Husband Confounded)*, by Moliere, at the Provincetown Playhouse (Experimental Theatre Co.)

5 May — Markham performs as An Old Native Woman in a revival of *The Emperor Jones*, by Eugene O'Neill, at the Provincetown Playhouse (Experimental Theatre Co.)

24 July — Markham performs in *Paolo and Franzesca*, by Stephen Phillips, at the Guild Hall, Rose Valley, PA (Hedgerow Players)

28 Aug. — Markham performs as Caterina Corwin, the pianist, in *The Artist*, by Virginia Farmer, at the Guild Hall, Rose Valley, PA (Hedgerow Players)

29 Sept. — Markham performs as Mrs. Daniel Webster in *That Awful Mrs. Eaton*, by John Farrar and Stephen Vincent Benet, at the Morosco Theatre

1925

17 Dec. — Dreiser publishes *An American Tragedy*

1926

1 July — Dreiser publishes *Moods, Cadenced and Declaimed*

6 Sept. — Markham performs as Mrs. Blaine in *Not Herbert*, by Howard Irving Young, at the Riviera Theatre (Playshop, Inc), and then goes on tour

Sept. — Markham illustrates *Romantic I Call It*, by Ethel Harriman, for Boni and Liveright

1927

30 April — Dreiser publishes *Chains*

10 Dec. — Elaine Hyman marries David Stoner Gaither

1928

3 Sept.	Markham performs in in *The Lion and the Mouse*, by Charles Klein, at the Orpheum Theatre, Reading, PA (Roberson-Smith Players)
8 Oct.	Markham performs in *My Lady Friends*, by Emil Nyitray and Frank Mandel at the Orpheum Theatre, Reading, PA (Roberson-Smith Players)
1 Nov.	Dreiser publishes *Dreiser Looks at Russia*
19 Dec.	Markham exhibits paintings, including *White Monkeys*, at Seven Arts Club, in Reading, PA

1929

Feb.	Dreiser begins publication of "This Madness: An Honest Novel about Love"
30 Nov.	Dreiser publishes *A Gallery of Women*

1930

	Markham studies at the Arts Students League in New York
25 April	Markham and Gaither design sets for the children's play *The Forest Ring*, by William C. DeMille and Charles Barnard, at Roerich Museum, New York (Adrienne Morrison's Children's Players)
2 July	Birth of son, Harry Eugene Gaither, who dies on 6 July of intercranial hemorrhage and acute peritonitis caused by intestinal volvulus. Later, Markham has radium treatment for cancer of the uterus

1931

8 May	Dreiser publishes *Dawn*
10 Oct.	Markham designs costumes for *Rackety Packety House* at Bushfield Memorial Hall at Hartford, CT (Adrienne Morrison's Children's Players)

1933

11 Jan. Markham designs costumes for *Foolscap*, by Gennaro Mario Curci and Eduardo Ciannelli, at the Times Square Theatre (John R. Sheppard and Frank A. Buchanan)

1934

9 Dec. Markham exhibits *The Scenery Shop* at Philadelphia Society of Etchers and Graphic Artists Exhibition, Newman Galleries, Philadelphia

1935

20 Jan. Markham wins Mary S. Collins Prize for *Elin and Maria* lithograph, Philadelphia Print Club

1936

19 Jan. Markham exhibits *Lady Macbeth* at Philadelphia Print Club's annual exhibition of lithography

1937

13 Oct. Markham decorates House of Fu Manchu nightclub, New York

8 Dec. Markham's mural *The Dictator's Band* unveiled at the Famous Door, a New York jazz club

1939

30 April Markham prepares 40 dioramas for the Hall of Invention, New York World's Fair

30 June Markham exhibits 39 prints at the Club Woman's Bureau in the Mandel Brothers department store, her first Chicago show

1942

1 Oct. Sara White Dreiser dies

1943	Markham is Artist-in-residence, Cherry Lawn Preparatory School, Darien, CT
1944	
13 June	Dreiser marries Helen Richardson
1945	
28 Dec.	Theodore Dreiser dies
1946	
21 March	Dreiser publishes *The Bulwark* posthumously
1947	
	Markham illustrates *Here Comes the Peddler!* by Marion McCook Moodey, for Holiday House
6 Nov.	Dreiser publishes *The Stoic* posthumously
1957	
9 Oct.	David Gaither dies
1958	
24 Sept.	Markham exhibits paintings at WHAI galleries in Greenfield, MA
1960	Markham moves to Haiti
1967	
13 May	Elaine Hyman Gaither, aka Kyra Markham, dies in Petionville, Haiti

Smitten
1913

"the sweet companionship we have only just begun to know"
—Dreiser to Hyman, letter 40

Dreiser traveled to Chicago in December 1912 to do research on Charles Tyson Yerkes for *The Titan*, the second volume in the Cowperwood saga. For an evening's entertainment on 7 January 1913, Floyd Dell, the editor of the *Chicago Evening Post*'s *Friday Literary Review*, poet-lawyer Edgar Lee Masters, and his former secretary, William Lengel, took Dreiser to see a performance of Euripides's *The Trojan Women* at the Chicago Little Theatre, its first performance in the United States.[1] That evening was to have a number of repercussions that would shape the trajectory of his personal and professional life. One was that he witnessed an art theater in action, which would stimulate Dreiser to begin writing one-act plays that he would collect, after publication in magazines, as *Plays of the Natural and Supernatural* (1916), and he would see a number of them produced, culminating with the production of his only full-length play, *The Hand of the Potter*, by

How to cite this book chapter:
Newlin, K. (ed.) (2026). *The Dreiser–Markham Letters: The Correspondence of Theodore Dreiser and Kyra Markham, 1913–1944*. Pp. 1–205. Winchester: Winchester University Press. DOI: https://doi.org/10.21039/book5.a.
License: CC BY-NC-ND

the Provincetown Players, in 1921. More importantly, he would meet 21-year-old Elaine Hyman, who played Andromache in *The Trojan Women* and who would go on to become the most important woman in his life until he met Helen Richardson in 1919.

Dreiser's interest was not confined to Elaine Hyman; he was also quite interested in the goals of the Little Theatre, and the theater world would become an integral part of his life for the next four years. The Chicago Little Theatre was at the forefront of a movement that began partly as a revolt against the restrictions imposed by two rival organizations that controlled bookings and playhouses in virtually every city. The Theatrical Syndicate, formed in 1896, regulated bookings in Syndicate-owned theaters and by 1903 held a virtual monopoly in nearly every major city in America.[2] In 1905 the Shubert Organization (established by brothers Lee, Sam, and Jacob) formed a rival organization and embarked on an ambitious program of theater construction and by the next year controlled over 50 theaters. Since the economics of the booking system demanded that managers maintain full houses in generally large theaters to ensure their profit, play selection and production methods remained conservative. Managers took few chances with controversial or challenging plays, preferring instead the reliable draw of melodrama, farce, social comedy, and musicals. Equally important was the star actor who could be counted upon to fill theaters.

Reaction to this stranglehold began in 1906, when early independent theater groups such as Victor Mapes's New Theater of Chicago (1906–1907), the Donald Robertson Players (1907–1909), and Winthrop Ames's New Theater of New York (1909–1911) experimented with means of subsidizing plays considered too risky for the commercial stage. Although their methods of staging and acting differed little from those of the commercial theater, they were interested in "uplifting" the drama by providing a forum for controversial European and domestic dramas.

By 1912 at least nine non-commercial theaters had been formed to foster the ideals of the art theater,[3] and the Chicago Little Theatre, during its five years of operation, became one of the most

significant of the movement, both in terms of the productions themselves and because the actors and others involved in the productions went on to influence other theater groups, such as the Provincetown Players.

The director of the Chicago Little Theatre was Maurice Browne, an English poet who in Italy had met a young Chicago woman, Ellen Van Volkenberg, and followed her to Chicago, married her, and together founded the Little Theatre. Browne's poetic sensibility shaped his ideas of theater as had fellow Englishman Edward Craig's influential *The Art of the Theatre* (1905). Unlike the prevailing methods of the commercial theater, Craig advocated for the primacy of the artist-director whose vision unified play, acting, setting, and lighting into an impressionistic whole. Plays should be imaginative and symbolic rather than realistic; actors should be amateurs who can be trained to fulfill the director's artistic vision rather than professionals, Browne explained, who have been "carefully trained in certain stage conventions, which after a time become second nature to them; these conventions are different from the new stage conventions which the leaders of the Art Theatre movement are inventing."[4] Sets tended to be symbolic rather than realistic, which also reflected the spare economies of an art theater with little budget for sets, props, and costumes. The volunteer, mostly unpaid amateur actors were taught to speak naturally and conversationally, without the stilted and mannered diction of the conventional stage.[5] The theater itself, on the fourth floor of the Fine Arts Building at 510 South Michigan Avenue, was quite small, with 93 seats and a stage measuring 15 feet in width, 18 feet in depth, and 11 feet, nine inches in height, with wing space of two feet on one side and three feet on the other.

"This Little Theatre movement—or gesture—was certainly one of the most interesting art efforts I had ever encountered anywhere," Dreiser recorded in a manuscript draft. He met with other members of the company and talked at length with Browne. "It was a lesson in aesthetic zealotry which I most earnestly contemplated and took to heart." He attended a subsequent performance of *The Trojan Women*, in large part to observe Hyman's acting but also

to examine the details of the production more closely: "Indeed as I sat in this very little theatre and meditated on the lovely groupings of these mournful victims of ancient Troy, I said to myself, here truly, I am witnessing, and for the first time in America, in my experience, an earnest and honest and, in the main, necessarily profitless, effort to foster the beautiful for its own lovely sake."[6]

The Little Theatre was also renowned for the youth and beauty of its mostly female members. Dreiser was immediately attracted to three and dined with each: 30-year-old Elizabeth Goodrich, who had been with the Brownes in Italy and was widely regarded for her beauty; 23-year-old Mary Elizabeth Titzel, a recent graduate in classics from the University of Chicago who occasionally published poems in the newspapers;[7] and 21-year-old Elaine Hyman, whose performance in *The Trojan Women* was widely regarded as the troupe's finest and whose photograph tended to accompany news reports of the Little Theatre productions.[8]

He was inordinately attracted to Hyman's dark beauty: "something about her face, the dark smiling eyes and lovely, if full & even heavy bowed lips suggested passion of an oriental shade," he recorded in his manuscript. Later, when he began writing to her after he returned to New York, he would rhapsodize over what he perceived as the exotic nature of her beauty, calling her, in one of many such letters, "Memphis Iris," "Pretty Asia," "honey Egypt," and "Asia Lamb" (17 Feb. 1913, letter 7).

Elaine Hyman was born on 18 August 1891 to Harry Sigmund Hyman, a wealthy Jewish jeweler who ran the Chicago firm started by his grandfather, Hyman, Berg & Company, and Arabelle ("Belle") Bushnell, the daughter of a prosperous Connecticut family. She had two younger siblings: sister Dorothy (b. 1893) and brother Robert (b. 1896). As she explained to Dreiser biographer W. A. Swanberg, "I was brought up as rich Jewish girls of that period were brought up; I was to be versed in the arts but never stoop to earning money for anything I could do. These talents I had, whatever you want to call them, were to be the dressing of some rich man's drawing room when he brought business friends home to dinner."[9] She attended the University of Chicago High School, a preparatory school for the

university, and was editor of the school magazine, the *Midland*, but dropped out in 1910, after failing mathematics and Latin, and began to take classes at the Chicago Art Institute.

Hyman was avid about painting and sculpture and later, after her relationship with Dreiser ended, she would concentrate on art and become an accomplished lithographer and painter. While at the Art Institute, she wrote a play, *The Master Painter*, and saw it staged in Fullerton Hall on 16 May 1911.[10] Sometime the next year, Maurice Browne saw her acting at the Art Institute in the drama class of Thomas Wood Stevens (who later started the first degree-granting school of drama at Carnegie Institute of Technology, in 1913) and invited her to audition for his theater.

Hyman and the actors of the Little Theatre were part of a Chicago bohemian crowd that gathered in a group of studio apartments clustered at the corner of Stony Island Avenue and 57th Street, directly opposite Jackson Park. The buildings had been erected to house shops supporting the 1893 Columbian Exposition and had been converted into makeshift single-room apartments with large windows and cheap rents, and they promptly attracted a number of writers and artists, including Floyd Dell and his wife, Margery Currey, who each occupied an apartment, with the artist Bror Nordfeldt in a room sandwiched between them. Margery Currey was often the host of parties, and Dreiser remembered one of them: "I met [Dell's] wife—and as interesting a group of talented beginners as ever it was my privilege to behold. The smart, sharp and very liberal and even radical arguments and conversations indulged in. The isms, plans, dreams explained and advocated. The authorities quoted. The poetry recited and applauded; the songs sung. The glances and emotions that passed between the sexes evoking what responses and passing into what intense actualities."[11]

During this party Dreiser learned that Elaine Hyman had been involved with Floyd Dell, and, since he had designs of his own, his jealousy was instantly aroused, as he wrote more directly in the manuscript of "Geralda Lyle": "Hell! Zounds! God damn it! and here I was dreaming a dream of complete innocence in her case, afraid to speak, thinking to let her go unspoiled—her youthful

bloom and innocence to be retained, sacrificed to another. Christ Hells Bells. Well so much for being a God damned romantic ass."

Elaine's parents worried about the company their daughter was keeping: first, the married Floyd Dell, who had an unconventional marital arrangement with Margery Currey, ten years his senior. The Dells believed in equality in marriage, with decisions being joint and both contributing to the finances (this at a time when most married women did not work and indeed for some occupations, as in teaching in New York, were forbidden to work after marriage). They also believed in communication and openness in sexual matters. After Floyd had confessed to affairs with Augusta Cary (wife of his friend Lucian) and Mollie Cook (former wife of friend George Cram Cook), Margery agreed to tolerate the affairs and then embarked on her own. The upshot is that Floyd entered into a number of affairs after, in effect, receiving permission from Margery.[12]

When Elaine introduced her father to Dell, Harry Hyman requested that Dell and Elaine cool it until he divorced his wife and married Elaine. As Dreiser summarized the interview in "Geralda Lyle," with the name of Dell changed to Webb Collins and Elaine, who had become Geralda, now appearing as Sidonie Platow,

> A part of a gay, pagan circle that as anyone could see held chastity and even the emotions relative to home, children, husband & wife rather lightly and yet shot through with a kind of honesty which made a relationship between her and Webbs wife and Webb and her father and Webb and his wife still possible. . . . Platow had merely stipulated that if friendly relations between himself and Webb and Webb and Sidonie were to continue the troublesome and unsanctioned relations between Webb and Sidonie were to be discontinued until such time as Webb was not only free to but had married her. And yet as I now saw this relationship had not been discontinued—save as—and if—it had been discontinued on my account.

Elaine arranged for Dreiser to meet her parents, and he recorded a similar interview; he warmed to the father, who had heard of Dreiser but hadn't read any of his books: "I liked him. He was

so sleek, trim and yet so carefully dressed. And yet withal so naturally affectionate toward as well [as] fond of his child, a reserved, stable, and cautious pride." But Belle Hyman remained distant, and he described her as "a prim New England school marm or her type at least, severe, and very stately and orderly as I afterward learned." The Hymans weren't at all pleased with the direction of their daughter's romantic life: first an affair with the married Dell, and now another interest in the married Dreiser, who, at 41, was only one year younger than Belle and seven years younger than Harry.

As Dreiser was to learn during their correspondence, Elaine had a troubled relationship with her mother, who much preferred that Elaine enroll in Vassar, as her sister had done, and not follow her acting and artistic dreams amid a dissolute bohemian crowd. Her involvement with Dreiser would only exacerbate their quarrels. In part this was because of Elaine's desire to make her own way in the world and not become the appendage of a husband. As Christine Stansell observes, for those women determined to escape traditional gender roles, "the disavowal of the mother came to be almost a trademark of female modernism," and "work was the object of desire, the redemptive force that would save them from their mother's fate."[13] And, as Hyman explained in an interview following a performance, "'All women . . . were not meant to wash, scrub and iron and rear families. Bernhardt, Duse, Helen of Troy did not rear families. They lived full lives in their ways.'"[14] But the Hyman marriage was also in trouble, and her parents would begin to live apart in 1913 and separate by 1914; by 1920 they would be divorced, with her father remarrying that year and her mother committing suicide in 1922.[15]

According to Dreiser's recollection in "Geralda Lyle," he was relentless in his pursuit of Elaine, eventually persuading her to rendezvous at a place of assignation rather than his room because she knew too many people in the vicinity.

> At last it came to a much secreted and protected resort which had but a single automobile entrance and to which one gained access

> by introduction, a name or a card—given for presentation—or telephone, a really mysterious business and with the appearance and all of the interior comforts of a residence. It was interesting even to me at the time, but more so to [Elaine] who observed the entire process, as I could see, with wide-eyed curiosity. How did one come to know of such a place and in this neighborhood. "Well-wishing friends," I smiled. "But she had seen the house and never thought—" "Even so." And then alone with me in a suite she waited—a certain real or histrionic shyness & curiosity coupled with resignation governing her every gesture. Must she? Should she? Was it best? I had to undress her (and after Collins)—because—~~she had now hoped not to do this again. And besides she was afraid.~~ [Dreiser's strikethrough.] And even in my arms & to my surprise a certain shy inexperience coupled with perhaps fear or unawakened desire,—I could not tell which.

But what began as a deliberate seduction soon morphed into love as Dreiser grew to understand Elaine's unconventional temperament. "The angle of your dreams and your logic mystifies me," he wrote on 12 April 1913, "but you are none the less delightful for that—rather more so. I always wonder what new marvel of this to you new world is to take your fancy next" (letter 39). In many letters he refers to her as his "wild Elyhon" as he attempted to keep up with the cascade of her interests.

Dreiser left Chicago on 10 February to return to New York, and Lengel remembered that when he and Elaine saw him off at the train station he was struck by their dramatic departure: "She threw herself into his arms."[16] Dreiser and Hyman agreed to write to each other every day—a pattern that would continue during their periodic absences until 1916, when the relationship ended. In the early letters Dreiser is clearly head over heels, writing with passion tempered with insecurity "Peaches, your so sweet," he wrote the day after he left. "I wonder if you sense in any way the wonder of your charm to me. You are naturally so broad minded tolerant and sympathetic in your views. You're the sweetest kindest, sanest thing" (11 Feb. 1913, letter 2). Four days later he hadn't had a reply and worried whether his love was illusory: "What's the

trouble anyhow Elaine? Why don't you write me? You promised faithfully you would and here it is Saturday and not a word. . . . If I don't hear by the middle of next week I will know that my Elaine doesn't exist except as an artistic illusion and that the real one flourishes like a green bay tree" (15 Feb. 1913, letter 4).

Elaine was similarly smitten, writing in her first extant letter, "Half the time I simply ache for you all over" (18 Feb. 1913, letter 8) and in her second, "Oh, my dear, big lover, my Titan, if you knew how good it felt to know that you love me and that you want me! I feel, somehow, under your big tenderness like a child taken into a wonderful home, surrounded with beautiful pictures, and made sweetly, mournfully happy" (20 Feb. 1913, letter 11).

The pattern of unrealistic expectations—mail then took two days for delivery between New York and Chicago, if on time—leading to uncertainty about the stability of their relationship continued during their four years of correspondence. In part it occurred because Dreiser was mindful of their difference in age and life experiences that increased his always latent tendency toward jealousy. "I wonder sometimes when I write to you so fully whether after all you are really old enough to know your own mind & your own heart," he wrote on 13 May 1913, after they had been corresponding daily for nearly three months. "You are so young—just twenty-one" (letter 76). Two days later he amplified that concern, casting himself in the role of Pygmalion: "Of course, Elyhon, you are very young yet. You can wait years for your true maturity without harm. But it would be such fun to be with you and help define your art for you. I wish when you come you would never leave me anymore. I don't want to be alone anymore" (15 May 1913, letter 79).

But there was also the specter of Floyd Dell, who continued to pursue Elaine. Dell, at 26, was certainly closer in age, and he also cut a dashing figure. At this time he affected a stick and gloves and was the influential editor of the *Chicago Evening Post*'s supplement, the *Friday Literary Review*, at the time Chicago's foremost venue for reviews and criticism of contemporary literature. Indeed, Dell had reviewed *Jennie Gerhardt* in 1911 and in 1912 praised Dreiser's portrayal of Chicago in *Sister Carrie*.[17] Dreiser

respected Dell as a critic even as he despaired at Dell as a romantic competitor—before he left Chicago he gave Dell a copy of the manuscript of *The "Genius"* for his comment. In April Elaine had written that Dell was continuing his pursuit. Her letter is no longer extant, but Dreiser's reply is suggestive: "This letter of April 12th (No 2) written at midnight tells of the Dells Studio and a storm of tears which it caused but not why. The exaggerated Bohemianism and the rapid intimacy—what were these? How did they manifest themselves? How did they come so close to you as to make you cry? Were you compelled to do something you did not want to do? And who made you?" (15 April 1913, letter 42). Dreiser's insecurities raged in the next several letters; later letters confirm that Elaine and Dell had had at least one sexual encounter (see Dreiser to Markham, 2 Feb. 1914, letter 131; and Markham to Dreiser, ca. 4 Feb. 1914, letter 136). He reiterated in several letters that, unlike Dell, he demanded constancy—"I would not want to be one of two or three or more" (7 April 1913, letter 34)—and finally, on 23 April, issued an ultimatum:

> If there is anyone who means more—or I do not mean quite enough—throw me—"can me" as you once expressed it and let me go. . . . And I am jealous, exacting, angry, stormy at time. I have repressed even in these several days a thousand times as much as I have said. I could have written you things which would have stung your pride so terribly as to make reunion quite impossible or nearly so but I did not. And yet I love you. (letter 49)

By 26 April, his suspicions had abated, though he would never be confident when Hyman was away.

As it turns out, Dreiser had good reason to be worried about Dell. Amid the Elaine–Dreiser drama Dell had been confiding in his friend, the poet Arthur Davison Ficke. Dell had been writing letters to Elaine after she moved to New York at the end of May, and she had rebuffed him but he was still determined:

> I just said that I am not a happy lover. One fact will convince you of that. I just got back a packet of unopened letters yesterday from

> New York, another packet today. Indirectly I learn that an "irretrievable" decision has been reached. Under the circumstances you could hardly call me a happy lover. But this sense of power remains. I may not get the girl; but I can have the fun of trying, which is all anybody can ask. At least I don't have to estop the flow of action at its source with any damn "[illegible]" which is the grandest thing in the world.
>
> As for this business of the "irretrievable" decision, it is distinctly annoying. But it is still more amusing. And I thank God that I am not a masculine idealist, or I would write cynical verses. But I know too much about decisions in general, and a certain damn fool girl in particular, to take the situation seriously. You may bet with anyone you like, giving odds of 8 to 5, that I will marry said d.f.g. [damn fool girl] in two years—and live happily ever after. And you may also offer odds of 80 to 1 that she will never marry the "greatest living novelist." (7 June 1913)

Twelve days later, Dell had resigned himself to the loss of Elaine's affections: "By the bye, if you have laid any bets on me marrying Elaine, hasten to hedge—I think that is the term. I have withdrawn unconditionally from the field. Not that I have told T.D. so, or Elaine, for that matter. I think the Elaine-T.D. arrangement will automatically go to smash. I hope so. But in any case I shall let her alone" (19 June 1913).[18]

When they parted in February, Dreiser and Hyman's plan was for Elaine to finish her commitment to the Chicago Little Theatre in May and then journey to New York to be with Dreiser while she looked for further stage work. From her parents, she either concealed or minimized the Dreiser part of the plan—her father would continue an allowance while she looked for work, with the understanding that she would return to Chicago if she failed to find a role. Her immediate concern was a suitable living arrangement. On 3 May Dreiser wrote: "In regard to the apartment I don't want to interfere with any ideas you may have. My idea was to take it and vacate whenever there was something else on—or only appear there on stated occasions" (letter 59). In her reply Elaine explained,

> I will only remind you that Father is letting me come to New York to find work, and that it is only on condition of having found work that I shall remain. . . . Of course he does not know that I have a precious lover-child there, but I have been terribly doubtful and quavery of late. (6 May 1913, letter 63)

Dreiser sounded out various options with her, from staying at the Martha Washington, a hotel exclusively for women, to subletting an apartment, to sharing an apartment with friend and fellow actress Marjorie Jones, who was also planning to try her fortunes in New York; all the time, Elaine was mindful of the need to keep her parents from learning of their intention to be together. He worried about one of her friends spilling the beans, and he was concerned about the effect of the arrival of his daily letters—"Don't you think for one thing that you had better, now that your mother is home let me send these letters to the General Delivery where you can get them or take a P.O, box" (8 May 1913, letter 66). Then on 21 May came word from Elaine that her parents' marriage had deteriorated to the point that now her mother planned to travel with her and share an apartment in New York. Finally, on 27 May, the day before she was scheduled to entrain, her mother changed her mind and Elaine wrote that she would be coming alone.

Elaine Hyman took a room for a time on East 59th Street. Dreiser was still committed by his lease to paying rent on the flat at 3609 Broadway, which he still shared with his wife, Sara, though they had been estranged since 1910, and when the lease expired he planned to move in with Hyman. It's unclear how much he told Elaine or Sara about his tangled affairs. About this time, Dell, who had still not given up on promoting Elaine's affections, wrote to Ficke with a fantasy:

> Elaine has tried (and failed) to put over an apartment on her father. She reports herself very happy. I have no doubt she is. But I have a hunch she is coming home next week unexpectedly, and then things should be interesting. I wonder if T.D. will try his little blackmail stunt? "It is only fair to tell you that I am keeping a copy of this" (compromising) "letter in Elaine's handwriting."

> What do you know about that! I . . . I am nearly crazy with jealousy: and I am perfectly certain we shall marry and live happily ever after. What a change do you believe in me! (n.d.)[19]

In September Dell, who had decided to leave the *Friday Literary Review*, entrained for New York on a scouting expedition, and he visited Dreiser and Hyman, finally realizing that his pursuit of Elaine was finished. As he wrote to Ficke, "I am looking for a job in New York. . . . I came, saw & was conquered by the Elaine-T.D. menage. It is all right, and has my full approval" (before 13 Sept. 1913).[20] By December Elaine had settled into an apartment at 23 West 58th Street, where Dreiser joined her. In December also Dell moved to New York, where he shared an apartment with Marjorie Jones at 106 West 13th Street, and the four, with their affairs temporarily reconciled, often socialized together as part of the Liberal Club, for which Dell wrote plays designed for Hyman's acting talents.[21]

Also by December the Hyman parents had finally figured out their daughter's living arrangements. When Elaine wrote to express her condolences over Mother Hyman's ill health, Belle Hyman responded, "Always I think it would be better if I did not try to write you. If ever you could know the utter sickness of heart that overcomes me, when I think of your present position, you would realize that mere physical ills are nothing. It is especially heavy at this Christmas time, when I think of the disrupted home, as the result. I am utterly undone, and know that you can never know the price paid for your illicit love."[22] In response, Elaine adopted the stage name of "Kirah Markham" to distance herself from the disapproval of her many relatives while retaining "Elaine Hyman" for legal documents,[23] seeking also to express her divided heritage, with "Kirah" deriving from Jewish origins and "Markham" from English.

Notes

[1] Dale Kramer, *Chicago Renaissance: The Literary Life in the Midwest 1900–1930* (New York: Appleton-Century, 1966), 194.

[2] Jack Poggi notes that in 1904 "the Syndicate controlled over five hundred theatres," including "all but two or three first-class houses in New York City and all but one each in Boston and Chicago"; other major cities "were completely in its hands" (*Theatre in America: The Impact of Economic Forces, 1870–1967* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1966), 13.

[3] "Non-commercial theater" loosely describes three distinct areas of emphasis comprising the movement. Some theaters referred to themselves as "independent theaters" to stress their economic independence from the commercial stage; others called themselves "art theaters" or "experimental theaters" to underscore the artistic excellence or experimental nature of their productions; most, however, preferred "little theater" as the term most expressive of both financial and artistic independence. Common to all was a desire to present plays of artistic or social merit considered unprofitable by commercial managers.

[4] Maurice Browne, *The Temple of a Living Art: A Plea for an Art Theatre* (Chicago: Chicago Little Theatre, 1914), 12–13.

[5] Bernard Dukore, "Maurice Browne and the Chicago Little Theatre" (diss., University of Illinois, 1957), 58.

[6] Quotations are from a manuscript draft of "This Madness: The Book of Sidonie," under its original title, "Geralda Lyle," folders 12363–12374, DPUP. In the course of this introduction, I shall on occasion rely upon unpublished details in this manuscript about the Dreiser–Hyman relationship. Although he subtitles the This Madness series "an honest novel about love," Dreiser is not writing fiction so much as he is selectively presenting autobiographical details, with actual names disguised.

[7] Pasted into Dreiser's scrapbook (folder 14140, DPUP) is a poem by Titzel, dated Jan. 1913, reflecting on their encounter:

To Theodore Dreiser

God gave you of his greatness: I have caught
  A glimpse of what we mortals deem divine
  In him we fashion from our own design,
Within the pages of the book you wrought.
And when I saw you, eagerly I sought
  To trace in you that understanding fine
  That unawares had linked your life to mine,
By the light, chafeless chains of common thought.
I saw you—and you looked into my eyes—

You did not see the mind that cries for food,
Nor the blond soul that struggles toward the skies:
You only saw my naked womanhood.
Yet even that light look of yours I prize,
Because I know you something have of God.

[8] In "Geralda Lyle" as well as "Sidonie," Goodrich appears as "Miss Y." Dreiser's romance with her was short-lived, as she was engaged; and his attentions to Titzel were also short-lived, soon being supplanted by Hyman (see also Dreiser to Hyman, 6 April 1913, letter 33). While Richard Lingeman identifies "Mary Elizabeth Barry" as the person to whom Dreiser directed his amour (Lingeman, *American Journey*, 77), he likely misrecorded the last name, for Titzel was the only member of the company with the name "Mary Elizabeth" and she is the secretary referred to by Lingeman's source: Fanny Butcher, *Many Lives—One Love* (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), 47. Dell also told Swanberg about Dreiser's brief romance with Titzel (Swanberg, *Dreiser*, 169).

[9] Markham to W. A. Swanberg, 19 Jan. 1964 (Swanberg Papers).

[10] "Art Institute Students Will Enact Play Written by Young Student," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 14 May 1911: 5.

[11] "Geralda Lyle."

[12] For more on the Dell marriage, see Clayton, *Floyd Dell*, 50–51, 62–64, 68–70.

[13] Christine Stansell, *American Moderns: Bohemian New York and the Creation of a New Century* (New York: Henry Holt, 2000), 247, 249.

[14] "Little Theatre Girls Make Talk," *The Daily Gate City* (Keokuk, Iowa), 3 March 1913: 3.

[15] U.S. census and marriage records show that Harry S. Hyman married Beatrice C. Stafford on 25 Nov. 1920. For Belle Hyman's suicide, see Riggio, *LTW*, 88. n. 1, where Riggio cites correspondence from Dorothy Ruddick, the daughter of Elaine's sister Dorothy.

[16] As Lengel recounted to Swanberg (Interview notes with Lengel, folder 226, Swanberg Papers).

[17] See Floyd Dell, "A Great Novel," *Chicago Evening Post Friday Literary Review*, 3 Nov. 1911: 1; rpt. Salzman, *Critical Reception*, 64–68; "Theodore Dreiser's Chicago," *Chicago Evening Post Friday Literary Review*, 23 Feb. 1912: 1.

[18] Correspondence between Dell and Ficke are from the Floyd Dell Papers, The Newberry Library, Chicago.

[19] Dell Papers.

[20] Dell Papers.

[21] See Lingeman, *American Journey*, 81–82; and Clayton, *Floyd Dell*, 134–36. Dell dedicated his play *Legend* to Kirah Markham, and she acted in its debut as *My Lady's Mirror* in 1915; he also dedicated to Dreiser *Enigma: A Domestic Conversation*, which also debuted in 1915. See Dell, *King Arthur's Socks and Other Village Plays* (New York: Knopf, 1922).

[22] Belle Hyman to Elaine Hyman, 10 Dec. 1913 (DPUP).

[23] Her father, Harry Hyman, was the eldest son of 11 siblings; her mother, Belle Bushnell Hyman, was the middle daughter of six siblings. Elaine was thus mindful of her extended family's response to her unconventionality.

1. Dreiser to Hyman

The New Leland
Springfield, Ill.

Feb. 5, 1913

Elaine

The Myrtles of Damascus when they smile
Exalt my soul to some remote high place
But oh, thy face!

Roses of Baghdad, wet with moonlight dew
Make drunk the heart when of their joy it sips
But oh, thy lips.[1]

[1] Dreiser is quoting stanza VII of "A Baghdad Lover," by Charles Hanson Towne (1877–1949), from *The Quiet Singer: And Other Poems* (B. W. Dodge, 1908). There, the lines read,

> The myrtles of Damascus, when they smile,
> Exalt my soul to some remote, high place—
> But O thy face!
>
> Roses of Baghdad, bathed in moonlight dew,
> Make my heart drunk when all their joy it sips—
> But O thy lips!

2. Dreiser to Hyman

Hotel Rennert
Baltimore, Md.[1]

Tuesday Feb. 11th—1913

Lovely Elaine

My honey sweet, honey peaches, honey lamb. I'm so lonely without you. Do juice love me, E-li-hon.[2] All last evening coming east and all today skirting picturesque mountain views I thought of you and wished, & wished & wished. Peaches, your so sweet. I wonder if you sense in any way the wonder of your charm to me. You are naturally so broad minded tolerant and sympathetic in your views. You're the sweetest kindest, sanest thing. (Curse this pen)[3] I can see you now looking at me with those uncertain eyes of yours which I could never puzzle out. Oh Elaine I wish I might come back right away—I truly do. I would be so happy near you. I have so much to do now & I need just the thing you give me. When I think of our lovely walk Monday I sigh & sigh. Isn't separation in this way hell, anyway.

I arrived in Baltimore on time last night & had a late evening with Mencken[4] & others. He's fighting the vice-reformers down here tooth & nail. He's so brilliant. He told me a saying of Mark Twain's which will make you laugh.

"I would rather sleep with Mary Anderson, naked and as God made her—without a rag to her back—than with General Grant in full uniform".[5]

I think that's a scream. I'm going to stay here until evening & then take the night train for now that I'm so near New York I'm anxious to see if I can't straighten out my affairs & come back. I wish I could Elaine peaches. I lovely you so—I really do. I'm so hungry for your affection. Aren't you going to love me truly and wait for me—awhile anyhow. We could be so happy together. Write me peaches—3609 Broadway New York & be my sweet, lovely El-li-hon of "once upon a time."

The Bookman.

[1] Dreiser had left Chicago on 10 February and stopped in Baltimore to see H. L. Mencken on his way home to New York (see Dreiser to Mencken, 8 Feb. 1913; Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 115).

[2] Dreiser used a number of endearments based on "Elaine," most frequently "Elyhon," and later "Cryhon." Dreiser often used "juice" as a playful version of "you," and he may be playing on the New Yorkism "youse."

[3] Here Dreiser changed his pen.

[4] H. L. Mencken (1880–1956), writer, editor, critic, and Dreiser's friend since 1908.

[5] It's not clear where Mencken came across this anecdote, but the origin may stem from James Montgomery Flagg, who recorded in his autobiography a friend telling him, "Mark [Twain] and [W. D.] Howells were in the front row at the old Academy hearing Adelina Patti in some opera. Howells noticed the wicked leer in Mark's eye and questioned him. Mark, heaving a big sigh, said through his teeth in Howell's ear: 'I would rather sleep with that woman *stark naked*, than with General Grant in full uniform!'" (*Roses and Buckshot* [New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1946], 169). Mary Anderson (1859–1940) was a Sacramento-born actress noted for her Shakespearean roles.

3. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway
N.Y.C.

Feb 13—1913

Elaine Sweet:

I expected a letter from you today & I didn't get it—alas, alas! Am I forgotten so soon—or is it just delayed. I am here & wishing hourly I were back in Chicago and for just one reason. How lovely you are Elaine & how little good it does me to tell you at this range. I was thinking tonight how different the city would be for me if you were only here. The house in Forrestville Ave.[1] & Elyhon in her morning gown & cap haunt me. I can hear your coaxing voice over the phone & feel the sympathetic pressure of your hands. Dear little Elaine.

Peaches Lamb why can't you arrange to come down here? I could be so happy with you. Your such a soothing, encouraging soul to me & I need you—really I do. If you were only here now! Every hour that we were together comes back to me with great force—rich and clear.

Honey Sweet, send me a copy of the Little Theatre pamphlet[2] and also see if you can get me the full name of that Mr. Callan[3] at Madison. And do write me, Lamb. Mencken is going to give your company a mention in Baltimore.[4] I will see what I can do here later. Please write.

The Bookman

[1] Hyman was then living with her parents at 4830 Forrestville Ave. in Chicago.

[2] That is, the Chicago Little Theatre. At this time Hyman was planning to tour with the company as they performed in St. Louis, Keokuk, Iowa, and Boston.

[3] Horace Kallen (1882–1974, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Wisconsin-Madison until 1918, when he was forced to resign because of his support for pacifists; he then co-founded the New School of Social Research. His interest in theater led him to publish *The Book of Job as a Greek Tragedy* (1918). Maurice Browne briefly describes a debate between Kallen and Dreiser during a soiree at the Little Theatre in *Too Late to Lament* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1956), 134.

[4] Mencken devoted four paragraphs to publicize the Chicago Little Theatre's Eastern tour in his "Free Lance" column in the Baltimore *Evening Sun*, 28 Feb. 1913: 6. While he mentioned New York City as one of the tour's stops, the company did not play in that city.

4. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway
N.Y.C.

Feb. 15—1913

Honey Sweet:

(Peaches Elaine) What's the trouble anyhow Elaine? Why don't you write me? You promised faithfully you would and here it is Saturday and not a word. That sounds like the lady I used to complain of, but when I indicated her temperament you cried. Is she really in existence after all. I can scarcely believe it. But a few days more will tell. If I don't hear by the middle of next week I will know that my Elaine doesn't exist except as an artistic illusion

and that the real one flourishes like a green bay tree. I won't have anything to do with the latter though. She isn't nice—merely a feverish tea-taster and life can have her—all the noble company I mentioned. Only I don't want to be rash and go my way too quickly. Just a little longer I'll wait but I won't write any more unless I hear. Good bye, pretty. I thought all the wonder of you was for me. I wish you all that your heart craves.

Th.D

5. Dreiser to Hyman

[Feb. 16, 1913]

Ah me! Oh, me! Tis a mad world.[1]

Very.

ThD

[1] Dreiser likely alludes to Charles Dickens's novel *David Copperfield* (1849–50), in which Mr. Dick tells David, 'How does the world go? I'll tell you what,' he added, in a lower tone, 'I shouldn't wish it to be mentioned, but it's a—' here he beckoned to me, and put his lips close to my ear—'it's a mad world. Mad as Bedlam, boy!'" Floyd Dell remarks that it was one of Dreiser's favorite expressions (see Dell, "The Rise and Fall of Greenwich Village," *Century* [Oct. 1925]: 651). Variants of this expression appear elsewhere in Dreiser's writing, including "A mad world, captain!" (Dreiser to Mencken, 8 Jan. 1914; Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 129); and "What if it is all a mad, aimless farce, my masters?" (*A Hoosier Holiday* [New York: John Lane, 1916], 28).

6. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway

Monday. Feb 17—[1913]

Pretty Elyhon—

Peaches Sweet: Your first letter came today or rather your second telling me there had been a first which I have not yet recieved. It may have gone back to Chicago,—if so Lengel[1] will send it on. There is a strange langour about this letter which speaks of much experience.

You haven't told me very much, Elyhon. I wonder at times why you didn't. It makes so little difference to me what you've done. It makes so much if you don't tell me. Between kindred souls there can't be any secrets. They just have to fess up—do naturally—or seeds of difference are eventually sown. I wonder what, for instance, there was or is between you & W.R. Why don't you tell me. If you knew how inexpressibly sweet & dear you are to me you would write me at once. Do—and address me care of P.O. Box 26—Station I (116th & Lenox) and I will get it.[2] You needn't address all letters there unless you want to. It is my private mail box—for the present.

Peaches Elaine I think of you so much. Your black hair with the red band and your dark eyes make a kind of a cannea or gorgeous tropic flower.[3] I miss the sweetness of your mouth and the baby feel of your hands. Do juice love me, Elyhon—very, very very much. I see you so often as you were that first afternoon I called, and that last Sunday—and Monday in your cape and feathers. What a dandy girl you are anyhow—how sweet & wise. Be faithful to me—will you peaches? Or do I need to ask. Your path will be strewn with admirers from this time on.

It's springy & bright here. Yesterday was a heavenly day though I worked part of the time on The Titan. Then I went calling. I wisht, I wisht, I wisht I might have been walking on the drive with Elyhon. I wish I could finish my novel in your house. Today (this A.M. just now) I had three letters from strange admirers but their words make me weary. I shall not answer. If I can have you—If I can just have Peaches Lamb—my dark Egyptian. Write me, honey.

The Bookman.

"Her neck is like white melilote
Flushing for pleasure with the sun
The throbbing of the linnets throat
Is not so fair to look upon."[4]

[1] William C. Lengel (1885–1965), editor and author. Lengel first met Dreiser in 1910 and was his secretary when Dreiser was editor of *The Delineator*. He provided lodging when Dreiser visited Chicago in 1912–13 and acted as his agent throughout Dreiser's life.

[2] While Dreiser and his wife Sara had separated in 1910, they were still sharing an apartment at 3609 Broadway. Dreiser did not want Hyman's letters to arrive and further complicate his unconventional marriage: if Sara happened to have friends or family coming, he would leave immediately.

[3] Dreiser probably means cannas, more commonly canna lily.

[4] Dreiser is quoting a stanza from Oscar Wilde's "La Bella Donna Della Mia Mente" (1881), the last line of which reads, "Is not so sweet to look upon."

7. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway

Feb. 17—1913

Peaches Sweet:

Oh, you darling girl! Just now a telegram came from you[1] & I have replied by wire, but I love you so much for this expression, direct. It's like my Elyhon to wire & solve all my doubts. I have only had one letter so far. Perhaps the others will come. Anyhow, for the present address me c/o P.O. Box 26—Branch Station I $^{(eye)2}$—116th & Lenox and I will get all you write. Some may have been sent to my address in Chicago.

Oh, Sweet—you Memphis Iris—I'm afraid I'm entangled in your coal black hair short as it is. I'm literally crazy to come to you & take you once more in my arms. And yet Lamb, I have so much to do. It would be your duty to make me work—not dream always in your arms. I want to come back but I'm almost afraid—wonder girl. I love you, Egypt. Pretty Asia—be faithful to me—will juice? I will come back yet, or you are sure to come to me and then—and then—!

Your body is in my arms now, your mouth is to mine. I feel your warm breath. You glow like an opal to me—a rich smouldering opalescent soul. Oh, Myrtles of Damascus! Oh, roses! roses! You are they. Write me honey Egypt. Write—and tell me how much you really love me Asia Lamb—my own Peaches Elyhon.

Th D

Forgive my other bad letters Peaches Sweet[3]

[1] Hyman's telegram of 1 Feb. 1913 read: "SENT FIVE LETTERS THIS WEEK I DONT UNDERSTAND PLEASE REPLY"
[2] Dreiser inserted the superscripted "(eye)" to distinguish between letter and numeral.
[3] Written at top right above the date.

8. Hyman to Dreiser

Feb. 18, 1913.

. . . . Half the time I simply ache for you all over.[1] When I sit down to write to you I am just stunned by a longing to tell you everything, and then can't tell you anything.

What did you mean by your sentence: "There is a strange languor about this letter which speaks of much experience?"[2] There have been a number of more or less unimportant flirtations. You didn't think an emotional—and I sometimes think completely uncontrolled—girl could reach twenty-one without them, did you? When I was fifteen I thought I loved our dear Mr. Hinckley, the treasurer of The Little Theatre, but he never knew it.[3] But such affairs were like an interesting book, intensely absorbing while they lasted, but leaving only their biggest moments for the after-thought. I was entirely too romantic always, and in thinking of these men and boys, whoever they were, was only happy when I had imagined them into something entirely different from the actual, a thing which could not be done in their presence but which required solitude and all my dreaming-power to create. What you take for experience, dear, is, I think, dreams, dreams undoubtedly of actual men, but not as men actually are; merely an overflow of admiration for the only thing I knew to adore. I often thought of being a nun, and my schoolday writings are full of nothing but religion, but my atheistic rearing constantly threw me back into adoring men instead of God and Jesus and Mary. Only some one who can read into the heart of a girl who set up Maeterlinck's "Sister Beatrice"[4] for her holy of holies can

know what a good Catholic I could have made, and also how I longed for something to adore. Now I have you, dear lord and master mine.

[1] This, the first of Hyman's letters, begins with an ellipsis by the transcriber.
[2] See Dreiser to Hyman, 17 Feb. 1913, letter 6.
[3] Theodore Ballou Hinckley (1880–1930), in addition to being the treasurer of the Chicago Little Theatre, was Hyman's English and drama teacher at the University of Chicago High School and the editor of *The Drama, A Quarterly Review of Dramatic Literature*.
[4] Belgian playwright Maurice Maeterlinck (1862–1949), author of *Sister Beatrice* (1901), a play about a nun who is about to elope but who is saved by the timely intervention of the Virgin Mary, who impersonates Beatrice and distracts her lover.

To promote the ideals of the little theater movement, the Chicago Little Theatre embarked on a road tour, first to St. Louis, where they would play for four nights, from 24 to 28 February, offering The Trojan Women *(Euripides)*, Anatol *(Arthur Schnitzler)*, A Power of Darkness *(Orrick Johns)*, Creditors *and* Pariah *(August Strindberg), and* Joint Owners in Spain *(Alice Brown). They then traveled to Keokuk, Iowa, where they presented a matinee and evening performance of* The Trojan Women *and* Anatol *on 3 March. The company then returned to Chicago before entraining to Boston, where they presented four plays in eight performances as guests of the Toy Theatre from 10 to 14 March*: Creditors, Anatol, Joint Owners in Spain, *and* The Trojan Women. *Although Dreiser had written to Mencken to help schedule performances in Baltimore and Philadelphia (Riggio*, D-M Letters*, 117–18), the company had to cancel potential bookings because of demand for performances in Chicago. Dreiser planned to join Hyman in Boston and was having difficulty discerning her travel schedule.*

9. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway

Thursday. Feb. 20 [1913]

Honey Sweet:

I had your first letter at P.O. Box 26 and I was so glad to get it. I cannot understand what has become of your first 3 letters—but never mind the three I have help some. What a strange girl you are & how swiftly you act. To wire and then send a letter by a friend is active propaganda, I should say. My Elyhon is no baby dreamer except between times which is just right. Peaches sweet your so cute and gracious and lovely. I'm crazy to see you again. This last letter of yours announces with a general air of everybody knows that you are coming to Boston but if by this same morning I had not recieved a note from Miss Titzel[1] asking me for my opinion I would not know when you are coming. You give no date—nothing. But now listen, Peaches. If I can get the Chicago Theatre Company brought here I will do so. I shall come to Boston of course, but I do not care to appear on the scene—at the theatre I mean unless I must. It's not wise is it? Will you plan now, by hook or crook, to spend a night with me and will you Write and tell me so. If you come to New York give an excuse—concoct an invitation & give me one night here. I am so crazy to see you again. If you really love me you will try hard to do these things. We might come down from Boston on a different train from the Company, or is that possible.

But sweet write me please—often. You have such a charming soul and it comes out in each note. I mailed you one letter to St. Louis yesterday but I am addressing this there. Hope you get it sure. I wish I could tell you how gentle and sweet your letters seem to me. I artist baby mine—an artist, Peaches—but I think your very bad, or have been. Nevertheless I forgive you—I don't care. You couldn't be much worse than I have been in spots. But I'll be very good if I can have you. You answer so many lovely things that I seem to need. Are you going to be my true Elyhon from now on or are you going to look at every gallant with side long glances and forget me—between mails. Peaches Elyhon—the wonder girl! I'm living here in simplest state, writing eight hours a day and seeing

really no one—a publisher now and then—a male disciple and my gallant relatives.

Write me honey. I wish you so much praise. I wish I might be with you every hour and I hope I shall not lose any available hour when you come East. Be my Memphis Lilly. Be my nice brown Asia girl. Be my Myrtle and Rose of that old Mesopotamian World.

The Lonliest Man.

[1] Mary Elizabeth Titzel (1889–1986), the secretary of the Chicago Little Theatre. She married Rudolf Riefstahl in 1924 and became a noted anthropologist and archaeologist, specializing in the art of the Near East, eventually becoming the Curator for Ancient Art for the Brooklyn Museum.

10. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway

Feb. 20—1913

Peaches, Peaches:

I'm afraid this won't reach you before you go to St. Louis but if it does heres luck and much applause and many nice compliments but no adoring lovers. I hope they choke—each and every one. Please write me & tell me how you did and how much you love me and all about everything.

The Lonliest Man

11. Hyman to Dreiser

Feb. 20th 1913

Oh, my darling, was he so very lonely? It hurts and hurts and makes me lonely too, lonelier than ever, but happy too, also. I cannot give him a name for the letters. The Bookman I love, and it will do part of the time, and the loneliest man I love, but it made me cry, and he mustn't be too lonely all the time. Oh, my dear, big lover, my Titan, if you knew how good it felt to know that you love me and that you want me! I feel, somehow, under your big tenderness like a child taken into a wonderful home, surrounded with beautiful pictures, and made sweetly, mournfully happy. For

no matter how dear and tender father and mother have been, and how happy I have always been, it is nothing to the happiness of my little dream-letter world into which I have just moved.

Oh, dearest, I dream all the time of coming to Boston. Think, lover, it will be in less than three weeks! In sixteen days I will be in Boston, and maybe my pen-armed warrior will be there too. Oh, I am so happy! With your letters, sixteen days will not be dreadfully long.

12. Hyman to Dreiser

Feb 21, 1913

"She said, I am aweary, aweary,
I wish that I were dead!"[1]
Just then Mr. B[2] said "We will play in Boston," and she decided to wait until she had seen her loved one. Oh, but she was weary and lonely! No one had called her Elyhon for two weeks, and no one had babied her and played with her. She had been a woman to the world and all the time there was the child underneath, longing for tenderness and for her beloved's kiss. Dear heart of mine, even now I don't know whether I want to see you in Boston. Separation has been so intolerable that I don't know whether I can fight my stand for composure all over again, or not.

Goodnight, sweet lord, and love me always. I pray deep in my heart that whatever God there be, at least whatever power of Fate, that you are safe. When I think of all the terrors and disasters of these two great cities, and how we cannot tell what moment we may be torn from each other, I would give the world to merely touch you or be near you.

My blessed mother got so homesick for her first baby that she came in to see me yesterday. It was a risky business,[3] but she was only a little wearied. She said to tell you that the house was yours for as long as you want it. Goodnight again.

[1] Hyman is quoting two lines from Alfred, Lord Tennyson's "Mariana" (1830), which read: "She said, 'I am aweary, aweary, / I would that I were dead!'"

[2] Maurice Browne (1881–1955), English-born director of the Chicago Little Theatre.

[3] Hyman had a difficult relationship with her mother, Arabelle ("Belle") Bushnell Hyman (1870–1922), who disapproved of her daughter's relationship with Dreiser and was increasingly estranged from her husband.

13. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway

Saturday, Feb. [22, 1913][1]

Honey Sweet:

I've been writing all day, barring two hours when I went out to lunch and to the Post Office (to find it closed!) from 9 A.M. until 6:30 which it now is. Now I'm writing this letter and then I am going to send a telegram[2] to a certain Elyhon, wishing her luck and then—well then I'm going to wish that she were here. Poor me—I get so lonely for my Elyhon. I wish I might see your strangely characteristic face. I love the things that you don't know about yourself at all, Elyhon—the things you may never see. You can not grasp the chemistry of your own being as yet, but it suggests itself to me, by many signs—and lines.

Pretty Elyhon—vague girl—doesn't know yet who she loves or what or why. Nevertheless I love you sweet, in a fine way. If the stage is going to take you it must. I cannot prevent the drift of life. I can only greive and go my way. Others will gather the sweets. Perhaps that is the way life should be. It never looks so to one who desires passionately. But when was hope or passion or love ever ultimately significant or regarded?

But I won't get too dreary and grim. I went to the P.O. yesterday & found two charming letters—one a very little one telling me that Miss Goodrich[3] might have liked me if she hadn't been so strong for Mr. Reckitt. I could a tale unfold saith the cat. Be that as it may. She is a charming woman and will probably make him a good wife. If she ever notifies me I'll congratulate her.

And so your in St. Louis tonight playing. Would that I were there. I wrote to Reedy[4] to attend & report.

My sweet you write charming letters—the artist always. They have a strange coherence and just what I said—a strange languor. They express you exactly. I'm glad to have your explanation of your youth but somehow it doesn't explain you, though I know it's true. I need to ask you some other things—to take you in my arms and make you analyze yourself. You stagger me at times. I don't get you. Your so nebulous and vague. What a cad that W.R. is not to have let you alone. He might have seen—if he hadn't been (isn't) a plain cheap creature,—the vague, pathetic drift of your temperament. Damn a man like that. I would deal with him in a very open way if you belonged to me. And some one else did more than I would have done, for I would have given you time to think. You reproached me once for taking you somewhere but I was really doing the wisest and best thing. I know more than some, at least.

Peaches honey I'm very lonely tonight and it's so strange when I think of you. I have so few things to treasure—considering all that I might have—just a few days, a few lunches, a few conversations, a few wonderful visions of you and then you end for me, except for letters. But like every miser I take my jewels out and count them all over—my gold. I test each single peice and weigh it. Fine gold! fine gold! fine gold!—that is all I can say.

Egypt sweet, you are like a lovely song to me, some strange sweet poem. An opal, glowing with changing colors, a flower that is now red or brown, now blue like an iris, now rich and varied, like a tulip. Your a beautiful picture—a Monticelli, glowing with the mysteries of a fiery palette, a Sorallo, all light, a Manet, sad and remote; you are something that I will not attempt to explain a fugue out of Bach; and aria out of Beethoven, a strange sweeping glittering thing from Wagner or even Strauss, the wild one.[5] You are natures mysterious concoction, a formulae out of her darkest crucibles or alembics. Never mind you are just Elyhon and if you can't always love me, as you think, because of the stage, never mind that either. I want you to be happy and I think perhaps that would make me happiest of all. But I wish I could see you, just the same. Oh, don't I!

The Lonliest.

Let me say just one thing. For your own peace of mind be careful not to lay yourself open to comment too freely. You are out in the world now. People are vicious, jealous, cruel—uniformly so. They will do everything to injure you. Be wise and thoughtful. Manage the appearances. Beyond that—But I don't want to be too pessimistic sweet. You must see that there is much in what I say.

[1] Dreiser misdated this letter "Feb. 21" and sent this and the following letter to Chicago, where they were redirected to St. Louis because by that time Hyman had left.

[2] Dreiser's telegram stated, "MISTAKEN AS TO LENGTH OF STAY LETTERS SENT TO CHICAGO."

[3] Elizabeth Goodrich (1882–1938), actress who played Helen in the Chicago Little Theatre production of *The Trojan Women*. She married Charles Colby Reckitt Jr. in June 1913.

[4] William Marion Reedy (1862–1920), editor of the St. Louis newspaper *Reedy's Mirror*. He promoted *Sister Carrie* and published Dreiser's "Butcher Rogaum's Door" on 12 December 1901.

[5] Dreiser refers to the painters Adolphe Monticelli (1824–1886), Joaquin Sorolla (1863–1923), and Édouard Manet (1832–1883); and the composers Johann Sebastian *Bach* (1685–1750), Ludwig van *Beethoven* (1770–1827), Richard Wagner (1813–1883), and Richard Strauss (1864–1949).

14. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway

Feb. 24—[1913]

Honey Sweet:

I'm wondering how you did at St. Louis, of course. I'm also wondering whether you are going to be very specific and accurate and tell me when your train leaves for Boston & when it arrives and what time you are actually going to be there, & whether you are coming back via New York, and so on. I ought to know as definitively as possible as soon as possible. You are so cloudy at times, Elyhon. You seem to be quite sure that the winds and birds will distribute information. But they won't. Only letters, telegrams,

phones & talk do that, so I'm afraid youll have to tell me, Peaches, sooner or later & Id rather it would be sooner. Don't feel badly honey—I'm only teasing anyhow, but I am anxious, too.

I had two very little notes from you today so small they were just rumors but they were good to get. It's no fun being separated is it. I think when I see you—when I learn what your plans are for the spring & summer that I may come back to Chicago, for awhile. But you'll probably be planning something else by then. There was such a funny item in B.L.Ts column on Feb. 17th about myself & Lorado Taft but it's true enough today.[1] It's just the way I feel. I want so much to be with you I suppose I ought to be able to arrange it but there are so many things. Just now theres no use worrying though for your coming the eighth. Do send me word. I wish I had you in my arms now.

Mr. Lonelyman

I have a bad cold. This letter shows it, doesn't it?

[1] In his *Chicago Tribune* column "A Line o' Type or Two," Bert Leston Taylor described an encounter between Dreiser and Chicago sculptor Lorado Taft: "'I like your work, it is so melancholy,' remarked Theodore Dreiser to Lorado Taft the other evening. Mr. Taft tried to cheer up the novelist and showed him a group typifying joy. 'You wouldn't call that melancholy, would you?' he asked. 'No,' said Dreiser, 'but it will be.' And he went out into the night, exclaiming, 'Life is hell! Life is hell!' A gay dog, Dreiser" (17 Feb. 1913, p. 10.)

15. Hyman to Dreiser

Feb. [ca. 24] 1913

Dearest:

I don't like your saying I have been bad,[1] because I haven't and as for my being expeditious when you were cross because you hadn't heard from me, that letter sent by a friend was not my idea at all. My ideas just weren't. I, in fact, cried once again—like a silly fool—and did everything under Marjorie Jones' direction,[2] being very nearly as helpless as a loon. Also regarding my neglect with regard to the

Boston dates, I did not know the dates when I wrote you, and you have doubtless since received the letter in which I gave them.

And now, dearest chuck, to continue the litany of Elyhon:

When the Elyhon saw the big writer man she wondered what sort of specimen he was, having met writer-pups but never writer-men before. Then when he turned on her his keen and tender look that saw way down inside of her, she began to be afraid. But she listened while he recited the litany of Elyhon, and then she gave him her hand and said: "I don't know how to talk to you like that. I know that you are so strangely wonderful that in spite of your knowing so much I am not afraid of you. In fact, I love you, and the more I love you the harder it is to tell you so, for the thousands of things in my heart pile up on top of each other in their rush to get out when I speak. You are my Titan, otherwise the simplest things seem to bring you nearer to me than anything else could. My lover, you are, and my dearest, and my beloved, and the whole universe could not find names for you that would bring you closer to me, though I love the litany of Elyhon."

And now I think I had better stop, for I find myself getting very serious when I try to tell you all that is in my heart to say. This is all for now, but there is a never-ending supply where this comes from.

[1] See Dreiser to Hyman, 20 Feb. 1913, letter 9.

[2] Marjorie Jones (1885–1954) was a photographer and a member of the Chicago Little Theatre. On 31 December 1918, she married Charles Ryan (b. 1890), a copyeditor for an advertising agency.

16. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway, N.Y.C

Wed. Feb. 26—1913

Fairest Egypt:

No letter today—heigh ho!—and yesterdays opened with a scolding (much applause) so that I am putting in these interpellations to cheer myself up. A letter from Marjorie Dell[1] tells me

the Company leaves the 8th & remains in Boston until the 15th but may stop in places on its way East so I'm still in doubt; but not entirely. A letter from Lengel encloses your picture which he clipped from the Examiner I presume[2] and a letter from Miss Titzel gives me no news of you at all, but no matter. Once more, heigh ho! I can always fall back on my work and do my best not to think.

I laughed yesterday out loud at the "writer-pups". You're the naive girl, all right. I wonder who they were. I smile every time I think of them and of "Bobbies" steam engine.[3] I should worry. I fancy he might be permitted to run with the radicals after all. He'll take care of himself.

It's snowing here a little tonight and all day from 9 A.M. until 5 P.M. without even lunch I've been sitting at this blessed table writing & occasionally looking out on the Hudson at the ice in the river—thinking and building. A novel is very much like a great house or temple—one builds and builds—wings, towers, rooms, courtyards. I finished chapter 11 today and began on chapter 12. I'm wondering to myself as I go along whether it has any grip or merit.[4]

Tonight I'm wishing—but whats the use. There 900 good long miles between us and even thought can't do much with that. But 4830[5] is so close to me just now and the settee before the gas log and Elyhon in her dreamy peculiar mood. I can hear myself calling you—Elaine—Elaine—and then I can see you looking. Tis a mad world! Love is a fume of the brain. Beauty is an illusion, self induced or superimposed. The whole world goes round like a moonlight dance but—ah, me—let me still be a part of it. I would so gladly give over the so called realities for those moments of delight that I had with you. Your letters bring them back in a way and create new thoughts but when you come then—why then there will be a whole world of new things happen. I wish—I wish—I wish—that there were a magic carpet and that I had it and that all I had to do was to clap my hands and presto—there you are and I'm saying "are juice my true Elyhon" and you are saying—???

Mr. Lonelyman

[1] Margery Currey (1877–1927) married Floyd Dell (1887–1969) in 1909, separated in May 1913 because of his involvement with Hyman and Marjorie Jones (see Hyman to Dreiser, 8 May 1913, n. 1, letter 68), and divorced in 1915.

[2] The *Chicago Examiner* does not include of photo of Hyman for February 1913, but the *St Louis Post-Dispatch* does for 23 Feb. 1913, p. 26. It is likely a publicity photo from the Chicago Little Theatre (see fig. 10).

[3] Perhaps a reference to her brother Robert.

[4] In this and in subsequent letters, Dreiser records his progress on the manuscript of *The Titan*.

[5] That is, 4830 Forrestville Ave, the home of Hyman's parents in Chicago.

17. Hyman to Dreiser

Feb. [26] 1913

Dearest:

I just tingled all over when I received the letter written after receiving my telegram today. Oh, my beloved, it was such a good letter! I have thought of it all the time, and it has kept my heart singing.

We had a special performance of Trojan Women today for a packed house, but my blessed Astyanax[1] had to cough and sneeze all the time, and it was very trying. Oh, such a surprise as I will have for you when the pictures of the baby and me are done. I think you will like them, dear, at least a teeny weeny bit. Poor baby went home ill after the performance, and I know it is the measles.

I wish you could take me away right now, dearest. I seems as though the longer I stay in this work the deeper I shall get, until I will have myself so entwined with the tinseled world of the footlights that I can never break away.

This is all for tonight. I have not slept for three nights. Pray that I do, and that the dreams will be happy ones.

[1] Astyanax is the young son of Hector and Andromache (played by Hyman), and, as suggested in this letter, he was played by a child actor.

18. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway, NYC

Feb. 27—1913

Poor Little Elyhon:

It's my fault I suppose. Anyhow I'll take the blame. I fancied you were to be in St. Louis only one night—Saturday. Who told me that, anyhow? I made all my calculations to have at least one letter & a telegram for you there on that day but alas, alas! Then I sent a letter or even two I think to Chicago so that you would find them there on your return Sunday night or rather Monday morning. Instead all my good resolutions & efforts went wrong which shows you there is no balance for justice—merely a blind chance—and that our fates depend upon the care we take—and favorable chance. Isn't it so peaches sweet. The Gods are many and indifferent. But honey-Egypt, if the Gods are careless they are sometimes good fare because of your disappointment (out of evil as it were) comes this very charming letter today full of as rich as sentiment and tenderness as could be. Does terrible Elyhon want me so much? Well, well, heres endless love for my peaches-Asia and caresses and kisses and smoothing of her black hair and pinches of her round Egyptian chin, and looks into her inscrutable eyes and petting of her soft, provocative, sensuous, coddling body. I think Elyhon ought to bear up a little with all this for I'm going to come back to her one of these days and make her over into my sweet peaches-lamb with her arms around my neck, and her body coddled up in my lap & her head on my shoulder—and, and, and. Peaches Asia will then get whispered to and kissed and teased and petted even as much as peaches Asia could want, I think. Don't you?

Well, terrible Elyhon, I'm hard at work on my story as I wrote. I've reached chapter 13. It's a grim tale in a way but I hope interesting. I'm working here at 3609 for the present; looking out on the river & dreaming at moments of all sorts of things—Elyhon things, principally. I'm studying out interesting characters to introduce & interesting situations & then getting blue at times because I decide they're not interesting at all. Isn't that very bad of me. Today I had

to stop though & go down town to the Century Co to look after my travel book[1] & to pay a bill & to get some money at the bank and to get Elyhons lovely letter and to see Harper & Brothers about my typewriting. It's been raining pitch forks and I have had on only a tan rubber coat, Eversticks[2] and no umbrella. Just my old derby. I rather like the rain that way. I feel rather free & easy & walk cheerfully where I please, dripping water as I go—shedding it.

Elyhon sweet I never got the first 3 letters or the one sent to Mr. Cournettes (?)[3] was it? If he got it he never produced. I think perhaps it's not wise to have any mail come here because letters do go wrong at their old address at times. I go to the P.O every day. I think I shall arrange a place for telegrams at once and let you know.

By the way you know, I think your destined among your other nine arts to be a writer. You have the handwriting of one and better yet you have the style of one. No particular difficulty in-so-far as I can tell of Elyhon expressing herself effectively. I wish you always felt keen enough to pour forth your heart fully as you did today but that is not to be expected. We none of us succeed in doing that. If so everyone of my letters would be stirring pictures at great length of my own moods.

Well, Elyhon-lamb-peach-sweet this is enough for tonight. I scarcely know where to send it now but at this late date will risk Chicago. You can scarcely be in St. Louis yet. Send me any other out of town dates you have and be sure & give me correct data about Boston & I'll meet you where you say. But indicate a day, a time, a place—a hour and a minute—before hand. No need to indicate the girl.

Asia! Egypt! Myrtle Blossom! Memphis!

All the litany of Elyhon.

The Lonliest Man.

[1] *A Traveler at Forty*, published by the Century Co. on 25 November 1913.

[2] A brand of rubber overshoe.

[3] In his letter to Hyman on 13 March 1913, letter 24, Dreiser spelled the name as "Courmettes."

19. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway—

Feb. 27—[1913]

Elaine Sweet:

Just a word to say there must be at least four or five letters at 4830 waiting for you. If you are still in St. Louis can't you get your brother[1] to send them on. I'm so sorry. Have written again tonight to Chicago feeling sure that by now you must have returned there. Am so sorry. And I love you very, very much.

T.L.M.

[1] Robert S. Hyman (1896–1960). He became a mural painter and began using his mother's maiden name, Bushnell, as his surname after 1945.

20. Dreiser to Hyman

3609—

Friday, Feb. 28. [1913]

Honey Girl:

I'm wondering where you are, anyhow, and how long your going to be there, wherever it is. It's so late in the week now—I presume Chicago—but as no letter came today and nothing was said in the last one as to your probable movements I can only hope for the best—i.e. that you are back in Chicago and that this reaches you promptly. I half expected a telegram saying where to write or giving me your additional days in St. Louis, but—. Well, Peaches sweet, it's allright. I won't mind so long as you don't worry though I naturally suffer for want of word and tender thought, always. I me. Your last letter was so lovely though that I can make it do over several days, in a pinch. Won't you please, like a good girl, write me your itinerary for the next 15 days—thus—Monday, March 3—; Tuesday, Mch 4—; Wed. Mch 5—etc. Then I can't make any mistakes. Please do, and don't be angry with me for suggesting it.

I'm very tired tonight. I've worked all day and I'm half through chapter 13 which I hope to finish tomorrow, and more. I've reread

& worked over good portions of the earlier chapters, so I'm getting on, but as this book will probably have a hundred or nearly so you can see how much I still have to do.

It's so beautiful here today—just like spring. The sun is (or was) out; the river was silvery gray, the birds & gulls beautiful & people all in an idle, sauntering mood. Upper Broadway takes on a very charming dawdling atmosphere about now. Florists trim their windows; the shops all spruce up and new hats & dresses gewgaws & furbelows are shown in so many places. The women of New York dress so smart and spring like and suggest all sorts of delicious idleness. Oh, me!

What a wonderful thing a beautiful, tasteful woman is anyhow when she has the means wherewith to dress. They suggest all the flowers & green growing things & jewels & heaven knows only what. It's like walking in a conservatory. The few days I saw you you always looked to me so fresh and varied and graceful. I brought away the most delightful memories—things that haunt me and suggest so many more possible variations. That lovely boudoir costume! Shall I ever forget it? And to think I had to go down & leave you & it, when you were all alone & waiting for me! I could weep now.

However, it's no use to cry over spilled milk. Merely wait & hope. It won't always be so. Things do take a turn. Write me, pleasum, Asia Roses, and tell me how much you love me. Nile Iris, be my one true sweet & I'll remain

The Lonliest Man.
(I can't help it)

21. Dreiser to Hyman

[Publ. *LTW*]

3609 Broadway

Mch. 1—1913

Elaine Sweet:

I've been in such a quandary ever since I learned on Thursday that you were still in St. Louis & might be for days more as to where to send mail. I didn't know and you didn't say whether you

would be in St. Louis for the remainder of the week or longer and even now I don't know and can't know until Monday and not even then unless you tell me or your letter head shows whether you are to be in Chicago or St. Louis. I've not wanted to send any more letters to 4830—I've sent enough there—for your father to forward & speculate over & so I can only address this care of the little theatre at Chicago.[1] I wish sincerely I had known or knew now. It makes me feel restless and disturbed. Please give me your itinerary for at least two weeks or three, by return mail, when you get this.

I was so glad to get a letter from you today enclosing notices of your week in St. Louis. It seems to me that neither you nor the company have any cause for complaint. Some of the comment is, of course, vapid. It always is. But in the main you have been well treated and as time goes on you can hope for so much more. You are young and enthusiastic and naturally artistic. What more could you want.

I have to smile at your depression over my willingness, as you say, to surrender you to the stage. I didn't say that, you know. I said if I couldn't keep you I couldn't. That is all. Neither could I. But there is no need to tell such a philosopher as you how it all works. If love is to endure it will. If it dies, it dies. I love the opera Carmen for the picture it gives of hapless anguish, rage, revenge but I could not share in any such mood as that.[2] I am too fatalistic. My life has always seemed as though it were something willed to me—things given or taken away—and that in all things where I have put up the best fight—made the most brilliant struggle I have lost. So I, speaking for myself at least—and solely—might well say what will be, will be. You may come of a different order and by struggle create and retain the things that you want.

This sound a little gloomy perhaps but I am not so pessimistic as to permit myself to cease struggling. I like life—even its losses on occasion—and make a virtue of them. Defeat can easily be turned into a kind of victory though not the victory in the thing that was first sought. We progress quite as much through disaster as through success. So when I say, if I lose you, I do, I merely mean that I should stop all complaint and wish you luck. I would be like your monk in the story of the Monk and the Dancer who returns to his

monastic cell.[3] I often think that unless my life soon shall take on a very definite direction fixing me permanently in this wonder of affection & companionship I shall wind up in a Trappist or some other monastic order. It is almost the only way. I crave affection of a high order so desperately that unless I can have it only complete resignation & withdrawal from the sight of women & the world will help me. It is, with my temperament, all or nothing and I am not so hopeful of life as to be sure that it will be *all*.

But, Elyhon, sweet, you represent so much that is wonderful to me that I wish—I wish—I wish. I crave the tenderness that used to make you—almost unconsciously it seems—take my hand. I remember one day—or several days in fact—you were phoning, and standing in the booth, waiting, your hand sought mine, to hold it. I might have been a five year old child then snuggled by its mother, for all the difference I felt between me and it. I fight quite freely and vigorously without affection but when I get it it does strange things to me. It somehow makes it clear to me what it is I need. A true confession this.

So you looked so nice in your boudoir costume and yellow cap! Would I had been there. Did you ever get my letter asking you to make plans to stay with me a day or two in the East.[4] You never said. Remote Elyhon! I wish you would answer and indicate what you hope for at least. I have never recieved the 3 first letters nor yet the one sent via the New York friend. I would give a lot to know what became of the first three anyhow—or should I say three first?

The novel goes apace. I work & work & wait for letters from you. Don't let this letter depress you, if it has any such tendency. Tomorrow is another day. I will write and try to be very cheerful. When I stop to think I know I have reason to be for I believe you love me in a rich tender delicious way. Would you were in my arms.

T. L. M

[1] At this point in their relationship, Dreiser was becoming concerned about the number of letters he had sent to her parents' address, for her parents disapproved of the affair. Instead, he began to address his letters in care of the various theaters at which Hyman performed.

[2] George Bizet's opera *Carmen* (1875), which tells the story of a spurned lover whose jealousy after being rejected by Carmen leads him to kill her. In his autobiography Dreiser recalls hearing selections from *Carmen* at the Warsaw Opera House in Indiana, and even in his early teens "they smacked of romance" (*Dawn*, 360).

[3] Hyman's gift of Arthur Cosslett Smith's collection, *The Monk and the Dancer* (1900), named after its title story about a monk tempted by a dancer, remained in Dreiser's library throughout his lifetime.

[4] See Dreiser to Hyman, 20 Feb. 1913, letter 9.

22. Hyman to Dreiser

ST. LOUIS-COLORADO LIMITED

[before March 3, 1913]

Dearest Mine

A very tired and very angry little girl is trying hard to write you on a hiddledy-piggledy train. I am on my way to Keokuk, where we play Monday, and my wrath is directed against the Boston trip. They have taken about the poorest train there is, to save a little money. It is the Grand Trunk, and it leaves Chicago at 3:30 Thursday afternoon and reaches Boston at 8 Saturday morning—41 hours! Bess[1] and I have been quite provoked, and yet I don't know if they will even give us so much and let us add from our own pocketbooks. Then when we get there we play two performances the same day. I think it is an outrage. If the trip hasn't even enough in it to prevent our being killed off by weariness I think we had better stay in Chicago.

[1] That is, Elizabeth Goodrich, who was from Keokuk.

23. Hyman to Dreiser

March 5th 1913.

Dearest Lonely Man:

The lonely girl is no longer lonely. She is all excited and trembling and gay with the thought of her lover. She is counting the hours until she is with him.[1] It shouldn't be more than seventy.

Seventy hours! And at eleven it will be sixty-nine, and at twelve it will be sixty-eight, and Saturday morning it will be none at all. I am so happy, so happy! You will make me all well again, make me forget that I ever felt as I have been feeling, or that there was ever such a thing as pain. Oh, my wonderful, the longing—no longer the loneliness—but the longing, like Veronika's in The Piper: "My longing shall bring my own back to me."[2] I think it has. I do not think Fate could have kept us apart any longer. I am not going to write any more now. If I did I would be telling how unhappy I have been, and I don't want you to be unhappy even over my fool troubles. So goodbye for now, dearest. You will get this on Friday, and on Saturday we will be together. As I said before, you have better have word waiting at The Toy Theatre as to where I can phone you.

[1] Dreiser and Hyman arranged to meet on 8 March 1913, in Boston, where The Chicago Little Theatre troupe was performing as the guest of the Toy Theatre. Hyman performed as Mimi in *Anatol* on 10 and 11 March and as Andromache in *The Trojan Women* on 13 and 14 March.

[2] Hyman refers to Josephine Preston Peabody's verse drama *The Piper* (1910), which opened at The New Theater on 30 January 1911. In the play, Veronika's line is "My longing will bring back my Own."

24. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway

[March 13, 1913]

Lovely Elyhon:

Just a word this A.M. to let you know I reached here safely. I slept poorly wishing for someone alongside of me. When I stopped for mail I found one delayed letter from Chicago & the letter sent to Mr. Courmettes[1] returned from the dead letter office. In lieu of one from Boston—which of course couldn't be—these served very nicely. I had also a letter from Mr. Browne[2] saying he intended reorganizing the company and two from Mary Elizabeth[3] to say nothing of about 15 others. I've unpacked my belongings & am going down town soon.

What a banquet of delicious memories you have given me. You come so close to me this time revealing yourself in your unintentional and curiously casual way. Never mind—Elyhon Lamb—I understand you better and I'm even more fond of you, if that were possible. It isn't natural for you to storm or explode but you feel deeply and I get it. Your heavens own child—to say nothing of T.L.M. and we'll do many a dandy thing together. Write me & come down Sunday A.M. but either let me meet you—or mail me your address for the day before hand. I'll look after your finances.

Peaches sweet, Baby honey! Do juice love me much?

Th.L.M.

P.O. Box 26

[1] In his letter of 27 February 1913, letter 18, Dreiser spelled the name "Cournettes (?)."

[2] In his letter Maurice Browne explained that the demand for additional Chicago engagements had led to reorganization and postponement of performances in Baltimore and New York (5 March 1913; DPUP).

[3] Mary Elizabeth Titzel. Subsequent references to "Mary Elizabeth" are to Titzel.

25. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway
Phone 1980 Audubon (In case you must)

Mch 14—1913

I haven't been down to the P.O. this A.M. so I don't know whether there is a letter awaiting me or not, but I hope so. You are with me almost all the time, Elyhon, your gracious and graceful spirit self, walking about. I can see you coming in the door and throwing off your cap, looking at your pretty hat questioningly in the mirror, moving about in your noiseless way which isn't cat like but more like the movements of a hama-dryad.[1] I miss you so—oh, really very much! You suggest so much of the art of life to me that it is hard to be parted from it. I can feel your hands and hear your voice and see your beauty—those strange etchings of beauty that your various positions so often suggest. The vain, self-conscious Elyhon.

Oh, I do wish you could get a position here. It would be so nice. I would get a room somewhere—a studio & put my books in it and rig up an alcove for a sleeping room and put in a writing desk and you could put in anything you choose and look after its mood. Then we could meet there & live there and if things would have it so entertain there. Oh, me! Oh, me! Elyhon—why can't this all be done at once? I know why, too, but it can't be fixed just now—but it may be soon.

The more I think of Boston & Hanover Street & Beacon Street & Revere Beach & the old hotels the more I want to return. Boston has atmosphere in its way, hasn't it? I think of our walks and love and embraces in an eager, flushing way. What moments those were—talking to you madly while I held you solidly in my arms. My Elyhon! You certainly are. Life could not give me more of you. It can only extend the delicious duration.

I don't know what I can say, really. I long to see you so that talking is almost folly—futile. I almost prefer to think. But when I remember what your notes mean to me and how I wait I am glad enough to transcribe my feelings. Write me Elyhon. I feel more like singing some strange, adoring litany to you, long, mystic words that signify beauty and art and soul and a thousand mystical things that my Elyhon is. Peaches Elyhon—Asia Roses My Brown Damascus girl—write a letter yet come Sunday.

The Loneman

[1] In Greek myth, a hamadryad is a female spirit connected to a tree.

26. Dreiser to Hyman

P.O. Box 39.
Hamilton Grange Branch.[1]
N.Y.C.

Friday—Mch. [28 1913][2]

Elyhon:

I think my thoughts have been with you unbrokenly since you stepped down on the lower step of the car for one last look. Lovely Elyhon! I had to smile at the comedy enacted at the station.

I think I recognized your sister[3] well enough for she was the one you kissed at the car step wasn't she? I went south on that Vassar Special after all. They finally opened the smoker to men—otherwise I might have been waiting at P- until evening. No train, as I understand it, appeared for hours. The papers indicated that your train would be delayed at Albany. I sincerely hope not.

But it isn't that so much that I want to talk about as just the woe of losing you. I am obsessed by a kind of mystery belonging to you. You seem to get what you want—to do much as you will. Nature serves you interestedly and freely. I did not expect to see you any more—but there you were. I did not think things could be so easily adjusted at the Inn but it all worked like a charm. Fix it so, then, Elyhon, that you come back soon and that we live together. I want to be with you so—oh, so very much today.

It is very beautiful here today, Elyhon, warmer and bright. I have been working (Saturday—I was called off yesterday P.M.) all morning on my travel book—editing the typewritten pages. I wish you were here to smooth it out for me. Your taste is so accurate. I wish you and I might do a play together or that you might inspire me to do one. I need the result as much as I would like the pleasure. I would like to travel with you. I wish I were out in Chicago now or anywhere, where you are, Black haired Elyhon. Like a refrain I hear over and over your quaint reproach when I was teasing of "oh, you." You cannot know how foolishly sweet you say that.

Peaches Elyhon, I wish, I wish, I wish we were together. I want to walk with you in the Spring. Come back soon to me. It will be so lovely here in a few days—and then—and then. Well I shall be patient and wait but it will be hard. I wish I might kiss your mouth and feel the tender pressure of your hands. The Wild Elyhon—what a creature of infinite fancy she is! I await my only delight now—I think—your letters. Be good sweet & write.

The Lonliest Man.

[1] Dreiser mailed this letter from the Hamilton Grange Branch Post Office on West 146th Street, where he had now moved his P.O. Box—a convenient three blocks from his flat at 3609 Broadway.

[2] Dreiser apparently began the letter on Friday, 28 March, and completed it on Saturday in time for 5:30 p.m. Saturday postmark.
[3] Dorothy Hyman (1893–1990), then a student at Vassar College. Like her sister and brother, she also became an artist, focusing on collage.

27. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway

Mch 30—1913
Sunday

Honey Sweet:

I had your letter from the high water region and I thought of you all the time wondering whether you were stalled somewhere. I am also wondering how much these letters will be delayed. It is fine here today—very spring like. I have had a sound nights sleep & am feeling excellent. I would give many nights sleep though in exchange for something else. I half dreamed, half thought of you last night, going through all sorts of lovely transports but the waking world is better, when you are near. I would rather have the real Elyhon, alive and warm than any wraith of sleep. Your black hair & brown-black eyes and gracious smile are always with me now. "Oh, you!". (I can hear you say it—baby kid).

Well Elyhon I am hard at work again & shall stay so until I see you once more. I have much to do. This new volume[1] is difficult to do. It puzzles me much. Some hours I wish I could cease writing but I know I wouldn't be happy at anything else. I have about given up thought of bothering with a publishing company since you objected so.[2] I hard master, lady fair.

I wonder how you found the little theatre co & whether you will appear much there & whether you will sure return. If I felt <u>I could</u> I should like to come out to Chicago by N.Y. Would be nicer this summer if you were here. Every now & then some incident of our wanderings here slips into my mind unawares and I find myself pausing & idling over my pen—that bus ride for instance; the woods at Palisade; High Bridge and The Hall of Fame.[3] It was all

so lovely. Write me Lamb—(Elyhon Lamb) tell me anything you please. It will all be interesting to me. I meant to say in my last letter that I saw your sister & thought her pretty but you are in another world my dear. There are ducks and swans and the charms of one are not comparable with the other. You have nothing in common with mere prettiness—that is for the mass. Your beauty to me is stately and every line talks of what the Greek sculptors felt and saw & did their best to portray. I cannot connect you up with average life at all.

The German.

[1] That is, *The Titan*.

[2] Dreiser had received an offer from B. W. Dodge to form a publishing company, with Dreiser having a salaried position as a "consulting editor." Dreiser worried about Dodge's alcoholism and ultimately declined the offer. See Dreiser to Mencken, 23 March 1913; and Mencken to Dreiser, 24 March 1913 (Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 118–20).

[3] The Palisades, an area known for its basalt cliffs and natural beauty, are on the New Jersey side of the Hudson River, across from Yonkers, NY. High Bridge, now a tourist destination and closed to traffic, crosses the Hudson River and connects Washington Heights to the Bronx. The Hall of Fame for Great Americans, an outdoor sculpture gallery built in 1901 to commemorate 102 citizens with bronze busts, is located at Bronx Community College.

28. Dreiser to Hyman

3609—

[March 31, 1913]

My Own Elaine:

I certainly hope you are not longing for me as much tonight as I am for you. I am fairly obsessed with the thought of you. It seems to me I now see fifty graces where I first saw one and all because I know you better. I am haunted by the rainy day at V- and all that it meant. It was so lovely to be with you all alone and talk and talk the hours through. What a babbling thing love is and how idle and how sweet are most of the things that are said. The beauty of life

and of love is then the subject and that is all there is. When I think of your face and grace it does not matter what we talked of. I had those. Why talk.

It has turned cold & blowy again here today but I am hoping for better weather. Have just begun chapter 24. Out over the river this afternoon, against a black storm cloud I saw fully a hundred gulls—perhaps 200 or more—floating like snow flakes. The Palisades looked weird in a yellow-ish light in one place. I thought of the beauty of it—the sheer momentary beauty—and then I thought of you. All such fine moments suggest you to me now. And the worst of it is I shall not get any letters now for a day or two perhaps—and there are to be two whole months to intervene. Oh, woe is me! And it is so useless to groan. I must just wait and hope. But I am thinking all the time and wishing, wishing, wishing. What more can I say for today?

The L. M.

29. Dreiser to Hyman

[Publ. *LTW*]

39—Hamilton Grange

April 2—1913

Elyhon Lamb:

What a wild kid you are! My, my, how this letter describing your career at the Futurist exhibit[1] does indicate your spirited temperament. Don't get too wild, Elyhon. We all have to live at best amid a rather commonplace drift of things and the nearer we remain, conscientiously to the bed rock facts of life the better. I like to think of you though whipping yourself into a foam over the significant reaction against a too much formalized art. We need everything that the Futurist exhibit represents and more—much more. I agree with you that the long limbed body has a feeling of line & spirit which has nothing to do, and should have nothing to do with the idea of the so called perfect human form as we know it. It is a peice of form beauty in itself like that of a wasp or any other wonderful shape. I felt that way when I saw it. I liked also the Cubist presentation of nuns walking which some people saw

only as strange cubes and squares and cones.[2] It has its place & the idea will no doubt be much used in the future. I wonder how you would like Gertrude Steins writing?[3]

Well my lady-lady, oh—enjoy yourself. I'm glad, truly, that Chicago offered you so much wherewith to divert yourself immediately on your return. I do not want you to feel lonely or broody. I am temperamentally much given to that sort of thing and I saw there is small profit in it. As a literary mood it sometimes has uses—not always. Joy felt and expressed is probably more wonderful. The curse of some of us is that we cannot always intellectually share it.

I am afraid this letter is going to seem dull to you though I do not feel dull toward you. My arms—spiritually—are conscious of an emptiness all the while. I cannot have today or tomorrow or the next day or any day soon the things that I most want: looks in your eyes, the smile of your mouth, the sound of your voice—that something about you that always told me you were glad to be with me. I feel like saying "ah, well a day—so must it be." I can only work now & wait & wish. But don't you let me depress you. We must all take this world as we find it. Have a good time, write me and know that I—what?

The Mourner.

I do not know what "seared" means unless it relates to the result of the flame of passion. The position might suggest as much wouldn't you say?[4]

[1] Chicago held a "Futurist Exhibit" at the Victory Gardens Theater, which consisted of the works displayed at the New York Armory Show from 17 February to 15 March 1913. The more experimental of the painters (such as Duchamp, Picabia, Matisse, and Picasso) were lambasted by the National Academy of Design and the Art Institute of Chicago (where Hyman had studied) with accusations of immorality, quackery, and anarchism. Dreiser had seen the painting he mentions in this letter at the Armory Show.

[2] Dreiser had become interested in the cubists during his 1911–12 tour of Europe, when he had seen in London's private salons his first Picasso, as well as postimpressionists such as Cezanne, Matisse, Gaugin, and Van Gogh (see his response in *A Traveler at Forty*,

edited by Renate von Bardeleben [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004], 133–39, 232–34).

[3] Dreiser is correctly associating the experimental writing of Gertrude Stein (1874–1946) with cubist and futurist works. Stein had been a patron of modern art and helped to make American painters aware of various postimpressionist movements. Like the futurist F. T. Marinetti, who advocated "words-in-freedom," Stein promoted the breaking of conventional syntax as an aesthetic goal that is in keeping with modern urban and technological realities.

[4] Dreiser seems to be responding to a query from Hyman, apparently about a figure in one of the paintings.

30. Dreiser to Hyman

Wed. Eve. 9:30 P.M.
April 2 [1913]

Elyhon Lamb:

I went to the P.O. just now & got two letters—one evidently delayed—the one about your arrival in Chicago. But the love in them was so lovely. I cannot write more than a word now but "your breath on my cheek as you slept" haunts me. Would that I were there now—in your arms. Oh, those arms! How they shut me from all care or memory or forethought. Like a garden of flowers. Like a dream. Like nothing in life save love that is not life but a vague, narcotic, exhalation. Oh peaches sweet you are such a girl—such a dream, such an unreal touch of the wonderful. Love me much. Say you dear soul to me in letters so that I may be happy reading.

The Lonliest Man

31. Dreiser to Hyman

3609

April 3rd 1913

Elyhon:

I can scarcely say a word to you today because you surround me like a mist. There isn't anything else in my consciousness much

except you. I am working—but somehow through you—as though you were the soul of me. Are you an obsession—a dream. I am living in certain things that were in your letters because you express yourself as the artist always does—almost perfectly at times.

Yes sweet I think the love of anyone strengthens anybody. You remember the old Psalm—"The Lord is My Shepherd." It was originally written "Love is My Shepherd."[1] Read it that way and you will see that it was originally a love song—a cry of delight—and you will understand also the meaning of "Thy rod & that staff." The old Hebrew literature was terribly perverted by the Christian annotations. Also I think it gives you power over other men. We live by eating each other—by adding to ourselves and when you add an experience such as this you are the stronger if you have eaten. And you have. I see you gaily looking about suddenly finding yourself attractive to many and experiencing a supreme delight. Be calm, Elyhon. Not so wild, please. Life is all before you. There is something in faithfulness too, if there is much in change. Go your way gaily but remember someone who loves you much.

This is a heavenly day. Over the river the gulls are flying. A little town, Undercliff, is nestled at the foot of the Palisades where is an inn I know with a porch over the water. There is a pretty church steeple there and a brown road and sweet paths leading to lovely nooks. Oh to walk with Elyhon—to kiss her sweet mouth by the way—to love her much and come by evening to the inn! The gulls and the sun & the blue water & the green grass are in my heart & my soul. And Elyhon.

The Writer Man

[1] Probably a reference to Mary Baker Eddy's *Science and Health with Key to the Scriptures* (1875), which includes her version of Psalm 23, which replaces the name of the Lord with "Love." A copy resides in Dreiser's library at the University of Pennsylvania. For Dreiser's interest in Christian Science, see Ashley Squires, "The Tragedy of Desire: Christian Science in Theodore Dreiser's *The 'Genius'*," *American Literary Realism* 45 (2013): 95–117, especially pp. 97–102.

32. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway. N.Y.C.

April 5—1913

My Elyhon:

I went last night to dine with the Ellsworths[1] (he is President of the Century Co) and somehow in that frozen atmosphere I thought of you all the time. The Ellsworths!—you ought to see them with their fixed notions of how things ought to be, their gentle (half baked) thoughts concerning sweetness & light, their Pecksniffian references to people with whom one may not associate—all the ear marks in fact of smug-manity. He finally said to me that he was so fortunate—he only dealt with nice people! Then I sighed.

And Miss Ellsworth—21, snippy, sniffy, with a firm belief that she was born to shed happiness on all by her mere pie-faced presence. Great God. Police! Help! The wagon! The wagon! I came away finally—at 10—it seemed about four A.M. and walked through the park cool and spring like. Outside was life; the poor; boys & girls, courting; men going solemnly home;—here and there just plain common people;—street cars, autos, rascally taxi-cab drivers & I said to myself thank God life is so much worse or better than they dream—commonplace, natural, honest frank, not snippy and not sniffy. And all the time under the spring stars and in the earthy spring wind I thought of you and how simple you are in your soul & how direct and how really nice. I had a letter from you with old roses & all about the yellow jacket & then one about an early morning burst of passion. My Elyhon! How real you are. No beating about the bush for you. A lovely woman you are, a great girl, a big mind. I have looked past your girlishness at times to that age old window that lights your face in moments—my poet girl.

Don't fail to come back to me peaches-sweet. Make yourself some pretty clothes and come on. How I should love to take you in my arms this day—to breathe my breath in sleep on your neck. I want to talk silly, sweet nothings to you—babbling nonsense—but all the while feeling the wonder of your presence and my own.

Well Elyhon-wild give your dinner & good luck to it. When the 12 sit down a thirteenth will be with you in spirit. I will be fondling your black hair. Goodbye for now. Dells[2] talk sounds naive as you describe it. Are you really sure you want me most of all.

The 'Lyhon Hunter',

[1] William Webster Ellsworth (1855–1936) became president of the Century Company in 1912 and was the publisher of *A Traveler at Forty*. With him at this dinner was his wife, Helen, and daughter, Elisabeth.

[2] That is, Floyd Dell, whose book *Women as World Builders* was published in February 1913. At this time, Dell was offering lectures about the notable feminists profiled in this work.

33. Dreiser to Hyman

3609

Sunday, April 6 [1913]

My Lover Girl:

Truly I named you rightly—the wild Elyhon. Such a delicious tempest as this love poem is. And some of these letters! You want me much, don't you honey sweet? Not any more than I want you. And when we are together it ascends to such a thrilling sex rage. But I dare not think of that too much. I get a little raving—lost in bubbling, foaming abstraction.

You know my mind runs quite constantly over particular delicious moments with you—always!—the night I came up to Riverside & found you waiting (Mrs. Gouleds)[1]—so charming in black and red; the night or afternoon we sat in the little restaurant where the sparrows were like leaves on the tree—those hard bare trees by the subway; the night we stood on High Bridge; walked about the Hall of Fame[2]—saw the boat with the tall mast rocking in the water; the afternoon I bought you the three roses; the one where we walked in Central Park where all the colored

boats were; the afternoon we spent in the woods at Palisade. Boston is somehow more remote now because New York was so much more intimate. But it comes back. And then that last rich day! I think I must be rather wild minded and as for Elyhon! Oh, sweet—I should like to take you in my arms now and devour you with my lips—and teeth.

It is cold here again today. Windy, gray, raw—with flecks of sunshine. I am troubled about my story—struggling with it—but shall get it right eventually I am sure. I wish so often I might work with you here near me—I think you might love me into getting it all straight and clear & strong. Your soul seems so selective and sensible.

My black lamb—I wish I had your black head here before me, to kiss. Your such a provocation to sweet idling and dreaming. But if you don't make me work hard how will we do? I want you—all that you mean in love and your working aid too. I want those graceful arms about me all the time. Is that voluptuousness carried to excess?

Please don't settle to family in Chicago. I know you can adjust yourself to New York as well and much better. It is such a sea & the talented must stay here. You should come and do splendid sometime. You say you are just beginning to live. Didn't you ever think that before—of another, say? Don't be teased though. It's merely an idle thought.

I haven't had a word from Mary Elizabeth and really never expect to. I tried—from one cause & another—a source and another she finally realized that the field was occupied. Have you talked to her.

The Shepherd
(for one Lamb)

[1] Probably Felix Gouled (1875–1952) and Marie Heilbron Gouled (1879–1943), who were friends of the Hyman family. Felix was a clothing manufacturer (Gouled Embroidery Works) who was later convicted, in 1918, of bribery in pursuit of Army raincoat contracts.

[2] Hall of Fame: see Dreiser to Hyman, 30 March 1913, n. 3, letter 27.

34. Dreiser to Hyman

3609—

Monday, April [7]—1913[1]

Honey Sweet:

I had two such dear letters from you yesterday—one complaining over your troubles with Floyd Dell and one describing the visit to Dr. Foster.[2] In the first matter I could have nothing to say except this—that if you present the local atmosphere correctly it is strange that the others should think you owe him a debt of gratitude sufficient to make you affectionate and condescending. Has he done so much for you critically in times past? If I had my way of course—my wish—but you know what my wishes would be. Love is jealous and I love Elyhon. At the same time I will say this that if a woman is not naturally monogamous in spirit and the binding pull between two is not sufficient there is no answer but freedom and freedom she will have and get, all woes to the contrary not withstanding. My one wish would be—if I felt as I do about you—would be to be excluded from the first—to be told and left. I would not want to be one of two or three or more. I might and probably would retain the friendliest spirit but it would not go beyond that.

It isn't that though that I wanted to talk about today. Your letters breathe such tender affection that I have neither doubt or complaint. I might fear that sometime your intense sympathy and good nature would make you nicer than you ought to be to someone—or permit them to take advantage of you—but I am hoping that by degrees you are coming to see the significance of yourself and that you can rest at peace in that. The weight of your own soul Elyhon entitles you to a sense of pride and sufficiency—not unkind but remote—somewhat. When I think of the appalling self satisfaction of the average soul and then think of you I gasp. My own suggestion to you would be to see yourself as you are, do the intellectual things you think you ought to do and do not permit yourself to be used—too much. All of us are used some. In my judgement you cannot fail though life may

compel certain compromises from time to time which you do not now contemplate.

I was so lonely for you last night Elyhon (that was all Sunday evening). I had the intensest depression. You know what they are for you speak of them often. We are much alike in that. I wished and wished & wished & finally came home early and went to bed. I was out visiting with three women—once of Wellesley—one of whom teaches at Barnard, another of whom works for Harpers and the third teaches at Swarthmore. Isn't that an odd company. And so unsophisticated in some ways. I was thinking afterwards life goes by some people in such a tremendous, swelling tide but they are not of it. They get side tracked in pathetic little shore angles where the water is still and go round and round like straw in a pool. One of them has written a play but I fear me much. Still I understand it is very favorably considered.

And Saturday night I went with a man playwright—Edward Laska,[3] one of whose comedies is being brought out here and a Rita Weiman[4] (also aspiring playwright) to see some dancing at Reisenwebers[5] and to talk. The lady has hair as black as yours and looks very much like Maxine Elliott[6] did years ago—big eyed and solemn. I had to smile for Laska has been very much to her, unless I am mistaken, and took me around largely to show her off or me off—I don't know which. But alas, alas. She was entirely too attentive to suit him and I won't be invited again by him—that I know—not there. There was a fourth person a girl—who came in and read hand writing for us, telling me I had a remote, investigating scientific disposition—very hard, very determined, very persistent.[7] After that I was glad to go and forget—to think that anyhow you don't find me so that I have your love. Tonight I'm going to a show of some kind—but alone I think. I haven't called up Mrs. Gouled yet and I am wondering whether I shall. I would like the lone of that suppressed Chicago society volume.

Theo-dear.

By the way that is really a new one. I never knew anyone to work that out before. But now that I am done you know I feel as though

I had not written you at all for I wanted only to talk of love and your beauty and your form and the sweet body of my graceful girl—my baby—and I haven't at all.

The L-M.

[1] Dreiser misdated this letter as "April 6," which fell on a Sunday in 1913. The envelope is postmarked at 5:30 on April 7.

[2] George Burman Foster (1859–1918), Professor of Philosophy and Religion at the University of Chicago. Foster was an influential and popular lecturer regarding a liberal interpretation of the bible. In 1917 and 1918, he received much attention for his debates with Clarence Darrow on the topics "Is Life Worth Living?" and "Resolved: That the Human Will is Free." In his autobiography *Homecoming* (New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1933), Floyd Dell briefly describes a gathering with Foster in spring 1913 (237). In this and in other letters, the context suggests Foster compromised his professional relationship by becoming romantically attracted to Hyman (see Dreiser to Hyman, 7 May 1913, letter 64).

[3] Edward Laska (1894–1959) was a lyricist and playwright who began as a collaborator with Jerome Kern ("How'd You Like to Spoon with Me?" 1905). His play *We've Got to Have Money* was written in 1911, announced for production by Cohan & Harris in 1913, but not performed until 1923, at The Playhouse Theatre.

[4] Rita Weiman (1885–1954) wrote the plays *The Co-Respondent* (1916), *The Gentile Wife* (1918), and *The Acquittal* (1918), among others, which were soon turned into films.

[5] Reisenweber's Café, at the intersection of Eighth Avenue and 58th Street, in 1912 was the first New York City restaurant to introduce dancing for its patrons.

[6] Maxine Elliott (1868–1940) was a highly successful actress who began her career with *The Middleman* in 1890 and opened her own theater in 1908, The Maxine Elliott, at the time the only theater in the U.S. managed by a woman, before turning to film acting in 1913.

[7] For Dreiser's interest in handwriting analysis, and in having Hyman's handwriting read, see Dreiser to Hyman, 15 April 1913, letter 42; and 24 April 1913, letter 50.

35. Dreiser to Hyman

Tuesday, April 8—1913

My Girl Dream:

I'm almost afraid to write you tonight, I feel so depressed. I didn't hear from you today and that is hard but it is not even that so much as the thought that I cannot have you near me. I get into a wild distress—almost tremulous—over absence. Alas, alas that love is so. Now that I have found you you are not—except at long range and I have to grieve for companionship. Your love soothes me so—makes me strong. But to be here alone—God damn! God damn!! God Damn!!

It has been snowing here slightly today & I have been working hard. My soul has been so haunted by the beauty of life and its evanescence—its fleeting nothingness that—oh, I suffer by it. I went for a walk toward evening over the river and along the shore of the Hudson North. The sinking sun (for a short hour shining through a rift) was lighting New York over the way—its long sky line. Some fishermen were coming in in boats, a house boat owner was repairing his floating summer home and at my feet little waves were kissing the shore. A man not far away had brought [h] is rocker and pipe out on his porch to enjoy the spectacle of river and sky and city. But I was alone and melancholy. I love beauty but oh, how much more I love love. I wish if I must be alone that I could die. I have so few who understand or care as I care—but you. Oh Elyhon sweet come back to me. Be faithful to me. Such sweet hours as we can spend together—such long low love talks as we may enjoy. "The breath of my sleep on your neck"—the feel of your arms—the safeness of love in embrace—how I long for it all. But as I say tonight I should not write you for I want you too much & that may make you sad.

The Lone Man.

But here is a funny story—lonely as I am.[1]

[1] With this letter, Dreiser began placing such comments beside comic bits from newspapers or magazines that he attached or included at the end of his letters; this one is a joke about a workman and his dog, partially in dialect.

36. Dreiser to Hyman

Wednesday, April 9—1913

My Poor Little Sick Girl:

(Are you by now)

I've been wondering since I recieved your note [to]day whether by any chance you might be seriously ill. Or was it just a headache? The first would be bad for me. I don't like to think of you ill. You are always so gay hearted. I can see you coming skipping and dancing your face so lighted and smiling. I love the thoughts that most always go with a dancing mood. Just now I was going to begin this letter "My Dear Miss Hyman" for a joke but I decided I wouldn't play even so much of a joke on a sick person (possibly) or trifle with a distance that I should despise.

It is still cold and clear here—Elyhon—not warm and springy as it should be. Every day I think it will begin warm and lure me out but it hasn't so far. If you were only here now when it does we would take long walks but unfortunately that is not to be. It will still be nice in June however when you get here. I keep missing you all the time for I must walk some every day and when I think of what delightful times we had it isn't so pleasant. So I try not to think. Why don't you write me more poems or send me more drawings. I carry those about with me and reread or look at them. That last poem had touches of stinging beauty. It brought you close to me. You know I keep all your letters, poems, pictures, clippings in one place & one group where I can go over them, when I wish. Your letters have a dark violet color to me—I wonder why. They almost seem like blue black pansies or violets. Is your soul like that—rich and full. I think so. But thank heaven it isn't morose & heavy at times like mine. I can become horrible on occasion—even to myself.

But I shan't write you more tonight. How goes the theatre? How did the dinner come out? Do you really always think of me tenderly & faithfully? Or do you smile at that? The fudge hasn't come or the book. But they will. Send me a poem rather than fudge—but I will eat it all & think of you.[1]

The Elyhon Hunter.

[1] Dreiser attached a joke about a German shoemaker who blows up his shop.

37. Dreiser to Hyman

[April 10, 1913?][1]

Elyhon—Baby Mine:

I think truly you are the sweetest thing that ever was. Your letters suggest always full rich bunches of violets. They breathe of you and you are like that—rich deep odourous—distillments of delight. What roses find in the ground your soul finds somewhere and writes down or draws or sings or plays. You darling darling kid. I wish you were here.

Today, after my misery of last night I had two letters. If I had only had one then! I get so angry when I don't hear from you. Actually I get into a kind of rage. I could give you a good beating and yet I could take you in my arms and hug you tight—hold you close—a heaven of delight. When I read today how bad you felt at not recieving a daily letter and I was still smarting from my ache of yesterday I promised you faithfully one each day and it will come. Count them and see. Or I'll number them as well as date them. I love you so much that I don't want you to fail me. I can't stand it. I can't work. You've poisoned me. I'm locoed—as they say out west. Write me each day.

You talk about my letters being short. They are never as short as yours. I write on a big page and small. They just seem so. Tonight because your letters cheered me up so—sad as they were—I went down town and had a good meal at Reisenwebers & watched the turkey-trotting. I wished all the time—all the time—every single moment that you were there. Oh dear—absence makes me so lonely.

I am so sorry about the little Theatre Co and Mr. Browne.[2] Will he start a new company & will the Little Theatre go on or what. Do you expect to stay with them until June. Are you truly, truly coming? Oh, but I want you so! Oh, the day that you arrive—that night—or the first lone, long delicious hours. It is too much. It makes me wild.

But I'll stop now—I could go on and write and I write. I could babble silly nothings like I do when I am with you—mere sounds but I won't. I saw the new moon tonight & one wonderful star with it. The sun went down and left a heavenly pink

and white light—a swimming etherial glow in which towers & spires & sky line stood out as sharp as deep filigree. The trees are budding so sweetly—very gingerly because of the cold and the birds are few. But oh the promise of it all. In Central Park I watched the ducks & the ripple of the wind on the water and thought of you, you, you. You are art to me—You are like the ripples on the water. You are like the wind in the grass. You are like spring tinklings and mumurings. I wish you would write me long, long letters but never mind. I will write you. Here is another good story.[3]

The Writer Man
(Yours)

[1] Dreiser inscribed the date as "Tuesday—June 8th 1913"—a date after Hyman had arrived in New York. Unlike the other letters from 1913, there is no accompanying envelope. The date may have been inscribed later (and the following letter has "June" cancelled and "April" written in). Internal evidence and the absence of a daily letter for April 10 suggests the letter was probably written on this date.

[2] Dreiser is referring to a management disagreement between Maurice Browne and the theater company. In an "open letter" to the newspapers, members of the company accused Browne of being "autocratic," of "inexcusable rudeness," "deliberate discourtesy," and of ignoring committee recommendations. Those signing the letter threatened to resign if their demands weren't met; in response, Browne said he would accept their resignations. Hyman was one of six cast members who did not sign the protest and declared the document "to be an outrage and inspired by petty jealousy." See "Players Rebel Against Little Theater Head," *Chicago Examiner*, 7 April 1913: 1.

[3] Dreiser attached a comic clipping about flies in an omelet.

38. Dreiser to Hyman

Friday, April 11—1913

To the Dark Elyhon:

What a picture you must present crawling out of your bed every morning with all of your letters collected in your hands or arms—(there must be about an armful by now) the Venus of the Letters.

I wish sometimes though that you were as eager to write as you are to read. Some days you appear to be—others not. Affection, like everything else goes in waves don't it. Sometimes the tension is high—sometimes low and one could scarcely say why. We sink off into a kind of dullness or stupor at times and then rise to a great height of feeling. Have you noticed it in yourself.

I was thinking the other day after I wrote you a description of the Hudson or the day—I had written two or three—of a woman professor I used to know who had loads of girl admirers—girls who developed a kind of trying crush on her. One day she said with a weary lift of the eyes—"if only Jessica would stop describing how the trees look in Philadelphia." I thought it might be so with you and the Hudson in New York. So I won't describe it any more soon.

The book came and with it the small note and drawing. The lady in the flame-colored gown isn't as attractive as Elyhon. If she looked like that exactly. But the design is charming and I wish I might see it. With your black hair and dark skin I can see what a picture you make. Alas, at this distance, it does me small good. I can't take you in my arms and rumple you up nor carry you to the place where beauty becomes most exquisite. So. But I can and do think of you as I have seen you at one time and another and that is enough. I do not need much more provoction than I have had.

But the suggestion that you may not come to New York is the saddest thing that has come to me recently. I don't know how I shall work through that—although we always do. I[f] I can arrange it I may come out there for a time but I don't know.[1] I may not be able to do it. I should want to be very sure that you hadn't gotten the least bit weary of me—time and distance cooling—and that you weren't interested in someone else. Do you ever feel that way?

The fudge didn't come but thanks for marking the book. I think your corrections are very sound. In a day or two I will go over them & mark them in right. I wish I had you here to read the new book. . . . But I wish I had you here for so many reasons that if listened they would read like the litany of Elyhon. Do you still love me—kiddo? Do you really want me? Say truly—yes or no?

The Original Doubting Thomas.

I wouldn't paste in these stories except that they really amuse me.[2] Your old handwriting is sweeter yet—more characteristic yet but if you can eventually learn to write faster the new way and want to—do so.[3] At present, naturally, I like your old hand best. As for your poem it was beautiful, sweet—rich and deep. I should not want you to change it except in one or two places—the last line for instance. That might be strengthened a little. If I could just kiss you once.

[1] Dreiser originally wrote "I could I can arrange it" and crossed out "could" but neglected to finish his sentence revision.
[2] Dreiser enclosed a joke about drunken miscounting.
[3] Hyman apparently was experimenting with printing her letters rather than writing in cursive.

39. Dreiser to Hyman

[Publ. *LTW*]
Saturday, April 12—1913

Elyhon Sweet:

I might almost say Elyhon Myhon. Two letters came together last night apparently written the same day and quite long ones. Why this sudden burst of speed I asked myself, even as I rejoiced. The box of fudge "Lyhon's Candy" with the card in it was also there and finding it better fudge than usual—better than I have ever had it made for me I ate the most of it. It wasn't broken in any way—not one of the ten peices—not even the nuts were loosened. So your fears were not realized,

But the letters were best—the one greeting Whitman whom I so much admire being the better of the two. I had a crush on Whitman years ago and have cut out and pasted in my scrapbook—"When I heard the Learned Astronomer", "Ah Poverties, Wincings, Shallow Deciets", "Grass," "Camps of Green", "The Noiseless Patient Spider" and others. But the poem of his I most like I think is called "Brooklyn Ferry".[1] That to me is really wonderful.

Your a strange maid, Elyhon. I think of you constantly the peculiarities of your mood. It is so hard to understand anyone in this

world—perhaps least of all one of whom you are fond. The angle of your dreams and your logic mystifies me but you are none the less delightful for that—rather more so. I always wonder what new marvel of this to you new world is to take your fancy next. You are just a kid yet, Elyhon, stepping out of the coop and looking around and yet you are strangely wise too, and resourceful. I sincerely think you are a very exceptional person but I only hope you are big enough not to attach too much weight to any seeming manifestation. Life is always compelling our enthusiasms but it needn't do it to our utter despair in many cases subsequently. I rather think though at bottom that you really are very wise—that you are two persons—one who enthuses and one who stands by and looks on. Or is that so in your case.

But I cannot help but rejoice in your love of beauty. It is poignant and it reaches me. I have suffered so much through my admirations and my love of beauty. Perhaps I always shall. I hope so, anyhow. But you with your dreams of me and my letters in your arms—that is a picture worthy of Keats. I have never heard you talk of him but St. Agnes Eve, The Grecian Urn and Ode to Melancholy[2] ought to be delights to you. Are you not familiar with them.

Yes, all your letters have come—averaging one a day and I have them all together. Those pictures I sat for turned out badly but I sat again & must now go and see. Mary Elizabeth has never written, Floyd Dell dislikes the mss of a novel[3] I let him read—etc, etc. Amid much hard work and dull days your self revealing letters are about all I have—all that is really worth while. They are best because they constantly suggest the wonder of your presence—the feel of your living body in my arms.

Mr. Writer

Apropos of fudge[4]

N.B.

The Princess Theatre here is giving one act plays of the strongest kind—quite brutal at times.[5] They have a capable company. It is a very little place. I wish I could get you in there. I am going to see what I can find out about this. Some of their one act plays are very charming indeed.

[1] Dreiser does not always correctly recall the names of poems by Walt Whitman (1819–1892), but his references are to, respectively, "When I Heard the Learn'd Astronomer; "Ah, Poverties, Wincings, and Sulky Retreats"; "Grass" might be a reference to "The Prairie-Grass Dividing" or perhaps to "Leaves of Grass" collectively; "Camps of Green"; "A Noiseless Patient Spider"; "Crossing Brooklyn Ferry."

[2] Poems by John Keats (1795–1821): "The Eve of Saint Agnes," "Ode on a Grecian Urn," "Ode on Melancholy."

[3] The novel Dreiser wrote in 1911, then called *The Genius* (without quotation marks), was significantly revised and published as *The "Genius"* (1915). For the version Dreiser sent to Dell, see Clare Virginia Eby, ed., *The Genius*, in the Dreiser Edition (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007).

[4] Here, Dreiser pasted a comic clipping of a joke about a little girl wanting a chocolate candy.

[5] The Princess Theater, with 299 seats, opened on 14 March 1913 and was located on W. 39th Street and 6th Avenue. It was originally designed as a venue for one-act plays before becoming known for musicals.

40. Dreiser to Hyman

Sunday, April 13—1913

Elyhon Baby—My Black Lamb:

You're sure my honey-kid. When I read your letters which come so regularly now (perhaps I better not boast though) I get a sense of almost infinite delight. You suggest in the sweetest way—and always unconsciously—however much you might invoke conscious art, the gleaming youth of life. That perhaps, as much as anything, is at the bottom of my love—but who can say what passion—or love appeal is. You invoke a deadly yearning in me at times—almost all the time when I am close to you—a constant, burning desire. Afar you touch me in a hundred remote way that suggest the other. Oh, the sweetness of you, Elyhon—and the feel of your sweet-yearning self.

I had two letters from you yesterday which were however merely complimentary—before and after my letter. I thought of you

rocking your Trojan baby[1] for a long time afterward and "racing home on an express" for my letter. Talk about the wild Elyhon. It is just that richness of feeling that appeals to me so intensely because I am that way. I always think of the way you cried on the L. train. I can understand it better now than I could then—but the significance of your stormy artistic soul is still before me for thought.

I meant to send you the programme of The Princess Theatre the other day.[2] Here it is. The Chicago Little Theatre might well do all of these—particularly "Fancy Free" and "The Switchboard." "Fear" requires no change of scene either—but "Any Night" does. I question the Psychologic Verities of both "Fear" and "Any Night", particularly "Any Night" but by a stretch of chance they might be so. Only by a stretch of chance however. "Fear" is all men. You would be delightful in "Fancy Free"—and in "Any Night" as the Prostitute. I should like to see you.

I have read your letters over and over—but one sentence or thought sticks and comforts me most. Here it is. "Grieve not, lover, for in the end we cannot lose that which we so desire—the sweet companionship we have only just begun to know." Can we not? That is what I hope for. But are you very sure. Passion burns and burns—but soul union!—What is that?

Peaches sweet—honey—it's so nice to think of my picture up and flowers before it. I cannot have yours out here—I might lose it, but when I get into a place of my own all will be well.[3] Oh for a fine literary strike just now or a play. The picture I enclose I do so because the face faintly suggests your grace and then here is one more silly funny story.[4]

The Arthur Man.

[1] Hyman is still playing Andromache in *The Trojan Women*. See fig. 7 and Hyman to Dreiser, 26 Feb. 1913, letter 17.

[2] The program, from 14 March to June 1913, consisted of *The Switchboard*, by Edgar Wallace; *Fear*, by H. R. Le Normand and Jean D'Auguzan; *Fancy Free*, by Stanley Houghton; *Any Night*, by Edward Ellis; and *A Tragedy of the Future*, by William C. DeMille.

[3] Dreiser is still sharing an apartment at 3609 Broadway with his wife, Sara, although they have been living separate lives since 1910.

[4] Dreiser enclosed a comic clipping, punning on immigrant English.

41. Dreiser to Hyman

3609 Broadway

April 14—1913—Monday

My Elyhon:

How did the dinner come out? I am awaiting todays letter to learn? Were you very nice to anyone in particular—or just to all? I can see you smiling wisely at my thoughts but they are not urgent ones. I have more faith than I seem to have for I pin my faith to affection and I know you have that. Where love is the rest is right. But I do hope you had a good time.

We are having a rainy spring here. It rains & rains & rains—every day. I go about in Eversticks & a rain coat all the time. I even wear my dress suit under my rain coat, which is rather pleasant. But a fair day with a walking tour would suit me perfectly. I want to idle along by some stream and read poems to myself and watch the sky and trees and be happy again in the sense of a new spring. I would like to walk two weeks with you and then write a small book about it—The Vagrant Lovers. I took a walking tour all by my lone three years ago and it was wonderful—casual, small towns, quaint hotels—the sweetest country life imaginable. I had thought to keep notes but I didn't. I was too idle.

Peaches Sweet did you look very wonderful in your new dress last might & did you think of me. I long so much for your beauty. Life ought to give me you—loving and all decked out in spring & summer sweetness. I think of you so often as you were that night at the opera and how I thrilled watching you. If I could arrange things financially just now I would pack up & come to Chicago & stay until you came East. As it is I'm tied up by this lease & its current expenses until October 1. After that I'm going to arrange my affairs differently.

But you—I think I walk with you most of the time in spirit. I am in your room, at table with you—at the theatre and watching you always with pleased eyes. I can see you getting up & lying down—your black hair, your curiously peaceful & yet pensive eyes & your fine slim body. I watch you in your bath & when you are planning niceties of costume. But do you ever know that—ever feel it? It is true. It is only when I stir about much that I realize how far you are away.

Th.D

42. Dreiser to Hyman

[Publ. *LTW*]
Tuesday, April 15—1913—No 1.[1]

Elyhon Sweet:
Baby Peaches.

Your letters certainly show your disposition from day to day. They indicate your trials and moods to me—very barometrically to say the least but why aren't you more explicit at times. You tell me just edges of things. Are you afraid to tell me all? Have you never yet? Or do you think you have. This letter of April 12th (No 2) written at midnight tells of the Dells Studio and a storm of tears which it caused but not why.[2] The exaggerated Bohemianism and the rapid intimacy—what were these? How did they manifest themselves? How did they come so close to you as to make you cry? Were you compelled to do something you did not want to do? And who made you? I cannot see a cause for a storm of tears unless the provocation was personal & severe. But will you tell me? I feel so often as though I was hearing but the faintest part and that our seeming intimacy was really not intimacy after all but a kind of lovers illusion. You wouldn't want it to be like that would you?

You see I have followed your lead and began numbering my letters. You need not fear that one will not be written unless exceptional conditions arise but I cannot always write at the same hour & so I cannot guarantee regular deliveries (This sounds rather formal doesn't it). But I'll write & you will know they are on the way. I look forward to your daily word more eagerly than I do to anything else—meals, visits work—anything. I like to see your handwriting (which by the way I am going to have read & interpreted) and to feel that you have written it just two days before. It brings you close to me—close & human.

Are you still wearing glasses? What a shame. I hope your eyes get rested up. I am afraid glasses don't become you—yet. Later on they might look well enough. When you get to the place where you take a very solemn view of life.

You know my mind keeps running on Dell & you & what may be between you these days and I can't somehow shake it off. It seems

rather silly to me at times, too. I have an idea sometimes that because it does and because I cannot quite get rid of it, though I want to, that there is something. Are you really keeping faith with me? I wish you would tell me once more for I want to quit thinking about it. I don't care from one point of view. If you like him—so much that you want to be intimate with him I will promise to be friends with you but I won't be intimate—not for the present, anyhow. I think he is very strong for you. He is no doubt greatly piqued at your tendency to be interested in me. That would make him anxious to win you back. I can stand the knowledge of your continued relation quite well enough—life has made me hardy & stoic—but I can't stand deception—innocent or intended, or being one of two when I don't want to be. I told you that once before and you became angry. I repeat it though now because unlike so many other things I cannot ever for-give it. Something in my nature goes back on anyone who thinks so lightly of my capacity as to think I can or ought to be decieved. I can be—I know that—but if chance unlocks the door on the fact then alas I am no longer the same person. We would get along so much better (so much longer perhaps I had better say) if we were quite frank. I want to be. If you have ever thought of the other way, abandon it for it is no way, if luck should ever turn your seeming awry.

But I won't be so desperately solemn. I am very fond of you but only on one basis and I want you to be fond of me in the same way. I can be friends in many ways and you might like me that way best but I could never be one of two lovers if I knew it. I am too vain I suppose or too individual. You might be the type that would like more than one, but then you surely would not want me for one if I did not want to be and did not want you to decieve me, would you? That would be most unfair. It would be taking advantage of me after I have protested that I do not want to be taken advantage of. So there—I said my final say on this & I'll stop.

It's raining again today. Last night I went to Patterson to get some color for a one act play I am thinking of doing.[3] I believe I have a good idea. I am also working on my book (Chapter 30)[4] and thinking of a short story that I want to write. Tis a mad world

Elyhon and my only hope is that out of its madness I can pluck one flower of sincere, uncold affection & faith. Can you guess who's?

The Grumblier.

Honey Sweet if you want to come as much as I want you to come in June & your father won't arrange it & I can I will see that you come on. I wish we could take some sort of a place together somewhere.

Here's another.[5]

[1] To keep their nearly daily exchange of letters straight, Dreiser began to number his letters, following Hyman's practice.

[2] In a letter no longer extant, Hyman had written that in Dreiser's absence Floyd Dell had continued his pursuit of her. Dreiser's jealousy was inflamed, and he expressed his insecurities in his daily letters. By 26 April, his suspicions had somewhat abated, though he would never be confident when Hyman was away.

[3] Dreiser is referring to a play he would complete in 1913, *The Girl in the Coffin*. For the background of the play Dreiser used the events of the historic textile workers' strike waged at Paterson, New Jersey, which had begun at the Henry Dougherty Silk Company on 27 January 1913. Within a month twenty-five thousand silk workers had joined the strike, and the abuses suffered by the strikers led to wide support among Dreiser's associates in Greenwich Village. On 7 June 1913 such support was dramatized in The Paterson Strike Pageant, written by John Reed and played in Madison Square Garden with a cast that included a large number of the actual strikers.

[4] His novel, *The Titan*.

[5] Dreiser attached a comic clipping featuring misspelling and teaching.

43. Dreiser to Hyman

April 16—1913—No. 2

My Honey Sweet:

I wish you were here. It's raining & I'm all alone and I wish we were as we were up at Poughkeepsie. What a delicious day it would be then. We wouldn't know whether it was raining or not. I am conscious of you almost all the time in some way or other

but the sweetest way is the way we were up there—that full long lovely night when my head was above your shoulder, tucked down between your chin & your arm and your whole sweet self was drawn to me close to feel the warmth and the heart of you. Alas that those things do not stay and stay and stay. I should not want to rise for long and long. My spirit, I think, needs years of you to smooth it out and put it right—to wear away the ruffled surface that time has given it. You might be able to restore a tired heart and displace a weary, philosophic skepticism.

Tell me, why do you have to wait until June 1 to come to New York? If you had the money could you come back now? If you had the money where would you stay when you reached here? With Mrs. Gouled? Surely not! Have you some other friend in mind? I was wondering, too, how much you expect to live on. Would I were truly rich just now. How soon I would adjust all this between us—and other things too. If you don't come until June 1, where do you expect to stay?

I noticed that at your dinner Mary Elizabeth did not appear although the Browns did? Why? Isn't she with the Little Theatre Co. anymore? Have you & she openly broken? I have never had a word one way or another since. I never expect to now.

I am going to end this letter but in spite of the fact that it's only one page[1] you needn't think it's short. See how closely it's written. I'm going to get to work once more on my slow, long task. If you were only here to sit by me. I hated to read the other night in your letter that you had lost courage & that you would rather be dictated to than fight. But I took consolation from the fact that in the particular instance under consideration, in spite of much agony & tears you hadn't been dictated to. That is one sweet peculiarity of yours, one of your artistic superiorities. You may seem to go to peices and the agony is great—a perfect storm of tears but when the blow is over & the tears all down you come up smiling & with most of the coveted property struggled over in one hand. It's a fine trait—cry & fight but win. Excellent. If your tears never prove anymore disastrous than they have your safe. (I'm teasing)

Be good, be sweet, dream of me & write me nice long, informing letters. You're the mostest sweet kid I ever knew. Remember the ground & lofty trembling of the ___.[2] Bye bye honey.

The Dreamer

If you ever see a picture of a really stunning society woman in a paper—something that you approve as as truly representing the superior social soul cut it out & send it to me.[3]

I wish you would tell me accurately what you said to your father that day & what he said to you.[4]

[1] Here Dreiser began and concluded the letter on a second full page.
[2] Dreiser underscored the space and left it blank.
[3] Next to this line Dreiser pasted a comic clipping about a Florida "cracker."
[4] Inscribed at top right of letter.

44. Dreiser to Hyman

Thursday, April 17 [1913]. No 3

My Fair Elyhon:

I think I could give you a good whipping if I had you—my kind of whipping for you—for doing that perfectly lovely picture of you up in such fashion that it arrived broken in three places. I like the face of [word omitted] so much, the modeling & what it suggests of your temperament. You look like that at times—suggest its mood and so I have taken it down to Halling's to see what can be done about it. He's going to try to mount it though he didn't seem to think it would be very right. You can tell how much it looks like you when he said at once "thats the young lady that was here with you that day, isn't it." Can't you send me another.

And your several letters that came with it—two written the same day added to my woes from one point of view for they made me ashamed of the letter I wrote on Tuesday asking if there was anything between you and Dell. I'm a fussy cat at times Elyhon and if you truly love me you'll have to be a little patient. I think you ought to tell me things freely and I presume you do but I don't

think there is anything between you & Dell at least I feel that way now. Not that you aren't free to live your life but only as I said that I oughtn't to be made unwittingly to be one of two—etc. I didn't think to tell you of The Genius because it wasn't in Dells hands then at all. Lengel had it.[1] Opinion seems to vary strangely about that book. I have four Eastern opinions on it which praise it in superlative terms. Dell & Cary[2] didn't care for it at all although Dell claims he didn't read it through. Lengel seemed to think it was amazingly poignant in places—in others too slow. Ray Long[3] seemed to think it was brutal & cold. So there you are. When you come East I am going to have you read it and tell me what you think. Life is going to make you such a fine woman after awhile—Elyhon—so wise and tender and altogether lovely. I love you now because as big as you are your just a baby girl, tearing madly too and fro after toys of the heart and the mind. Dear, darling, lovely precious Elyhon.

You know peaches it's no joke with me—the significance of your personality to me. I'm badly infected with the virus Elyhon. Your moods and feelings are more significant to me than anything you say or do. I get something out of companionship with you—a yearning unity I should call it—which makes life altogether different. I remember the morning you arrived in New York—the city didn't seem the same to me after I actually saw you coming through the gate. It took on a new beauty—far more lovely than it ever had been. You have invested parts of it for me with yourself and the flavor of you is over them. We none of us know what this mystery of personality is but it writes itself accross our skies in great flame letters. A personality changes the whole world for us. There is a new heaven and a new earth. So you see honey lamb, darling black haired actress. I had to smile when you spoke of father pushing the perambulator. Yes, yes—but what a raw first.

Sweetness—in spite of Jessica and the trees in Philadelphia[4] I shall have to report that this morning (I'm writing at 8 A.M.) has broken fair—perfect—after days & days of rain. I wonder for how long? The river is a dream now and the restaurant over the way—on the other bank, inviting. I wish we were going there for breakfast. I am struggling with a character in my book known as Rita

Sohlberg & what she & Cowperwood did. I haven't come to Elyhon but shes going to walk in pretty soon in the guise of an opera singer I think and then Elyhon is to be drawn to the life (as I see her in life)—short black hair, Ethiopian chin and mouth—all. And as many of Elyhons characteristics as I can indicate.[5] But I won't make this letter any longer. I ought to go to work and besides I might save some of my thoughts for tomorrow. It's so nice to know that every day now I hear. Write me, love me, forgive me, tell me everything and be my truly soul-wild Elyhon.[6]

The Arthur.

[1] Floyd Dell and William C. Lengel were then reading the manuscript of *The "Genius."* See Dreiser to Hyman, 12 April 1913, n. 4, letter 39. For Dreiser's letters to Lengel (after 31 March 1913, 14 April 1913) about the manuscript of *The "Genius,"* see Pizer, *A Picture*, 50–53.

[2] Lucian Cary (1886–1971), then the associate editor of the *Friday Literary Review*. He would become editor when Dell left the position in October 1913 to move to New York. Cary had reviewed *The Financier* favorably in "A Big Novel," *Chicago Evening Post Friday Literary Review*, 22 Nov. 1913: 1; rpt. Salzman, *Critical Reception* 109–12.

[3] Ray Long (1878–1935), the editor of *Red Book* until he left in 1918 to become the editor of *Cosmopolitan*.

[4] Dreiser is referring to the "woman professor" he dined with, who had commented on Jessica and the trees in Philadelphia. See Dreiser to Hyman, 11 April 1913, letter 38.

[5] Cowperwood's affair with Rita Sohlberg begins in chapter 14 of *The Titan*. Hyman will enter as Stephanie Platow in chapter 24 as an actress, not an opera singer.

[6] Pasted below Dreiser's signature is a comic clipping about a bartender shaking awake a drunken patron.

45. Dreiser to Hyman

Friday, April 18—1913—No 4.

Elyhon Lamb:

I don't think I ever told you but the morning I was going up to Poughkeepsie on the train a three or four year old baby in the next seat behind me kept reaching over to me (standing on his seat) and saying "you bad boo-oy! you bad boo-oy."

"Oh, no," I said. "I'm not so very bad. This is most unkind this morning."

"You bad boo-oy!" he continued. "You bad boo-oy!"

"Oh, no," I repeated. "Please not. I'm really very nice."

"You bad boo-oy!"

Just then his father reached over and took him.

"We don't teach him to say that," he smiled.

"I'm sure of it," I answered. "It's early instinct. He knows the human race."

He smiled again and the incident was closed. But I thought it had some faint application. What?

I am expecting hourly now a letter from you in answer to my querulous one of the other day. Im hoping you took it all in good jest but perhaps you didn't. In which case there will be more explanations in order. Tis very sad & very mad. "It's prittes haad!"

Do you know I have never been to see the Gouleds since you left. I suppose I ought to call her up, particularly if you expect to go there much when you return. I'm really not very much interested though & I'm afraid they'll bore me.

By the way what has become of the Brownes and The Little Theatre. Who's in charge at the latter place and what are the Brownes going to do. You know, if they are completely out in Chicago they might do well in Philadelphia though I doubt whether any field outside of New York, Chicago & possibly Frisco are important in that way. But I would like to hear of them for I think he is an able man.

Elyhon I wish so much I could once more see you actually—in the flesh—sitting opposite me at dinner or here where I walk. This letter writing at long range certainly has its drawbacks. It is so easy to see how people drift apart when the pull is not very strong. I have to stop to think sometimes how really real you are—not just a mere peice of you writing. The girl behind it all is so fascinating to me and so far away. If you don't come in June I think I'll get me another girl—some New York actress—some nice tall lady like Madam Kalish(?) or Mme Nazimova.[1] By the way she—Nazimova—was excited first about an artist friend of mine & later

about a writer—the latter Owen Johnson.[2] But I'll wait until June before I move—and then some.

T.D.

Peaches your so rich natured & sweet that even your letters convey a deep sense of reality & presence to me. You need never mind my jesting. But these warm Spring days make me wish more than ever that you were here.

I forgot to say the other day that I had recieved the drawing of the peasent in the shawl, also a small spring sprig. Also but perhaps there wasn't another also. But I am satisfied that I have recieved all your letters to date and a precious pack they make.[3]

[1] Bertha Kalich (also Kalish) (1874–1939), an actress born in Lemberg, Austria-Hungary (now Lviv, Ukraine), achieved her first success in the Yiddish theater in Budapest. She later came to New York and had a renowned career in both Yiddish- and English-speaking theaters. Alla Nazimova (1879–1945), Russian-born actress famous for her interpretations of Chekov, Ibsen, and Turgenev on Broadway before turning to film in 1916.

[2] Owen Johnson (1878–1952), American novelist, whose novel of college life, *Stover at Yale* (1912) was described by F. Scott Fitzgerald in *This Side of Paradise* (1920) as "somewhat of a text-book" for his character Amory Blaine.

[3] Dreiser pasted next to this paragraph a comic clipping about a passenger falling off a train.

46. Dreiser to Hyman

Saturday. April 19 [1913]—No 5

To the Wild Elyhon—
(the maddest & baddest of them all)

I scarcely know what to do with you honey. You cause me many aches and pains. Your two letters which came yesterday one protesting your enduring love and one confessing continued flirtation with Dell interest me as an illustration of the artistic temperament. For the life of me I cannot follow the psychology of

these things except on one basis. You are really not interested in any one person but just life and art as a spectacle. When you are near Dell he is interesting to you & when you are near me I am interesting to you. There might as readily be a third, a fourth, a fifth and a sixth. If one is not enough twenty is not too many nor thirty nor forty. It all depends upon the amount of time, strength, subtlety & passion that one has to devote to such things. And the difficulties of the complications that must come. Isn't that it.

Well, Elyhon, sweet, I shan't worry about this thing any more one way or the other. You are fascinating to me from many points of view & will remain so but shall I wear my heart on my sleeve for doves to peck at? When I think of what you might mean to me artistically—passionately—I could die of grief for life holds so few sweets that fit in with our hearts moods, beliefs, emotions, desires. On the other hand I fear that to submit myself so uncompromisingly to this affection is to be lost completely. You are almost too remote are you not—too elusive and non-understandable to yourself? You really do not know Elyhon, I fear, what you want—you wonder girl. Not me only—that is pretty sure, isn't it? You are living in a thrashing sea of investigation, hope, discovery, love of love, love of life, love of joy. What is any one in that. I feel sometimes as though I ought to resign you instanter before I greive too much and then I think no, perhaps she will swing to me forcefully and undeviatingly of her own accord. Am I not enough Elyhon sweet. Do I really not match your dreams & the utmost reaches of your moods? Is there anything in heaven above or earth below that we too cannot plumb unitedly? What is it you find elsewhere that I do not satisfy—for the present anyhow?

There was a curious accident out here on the river drive at one oclock last night. There was a car coming up the drive which swerved too swiftly into this street (149) upset & crushed the body of its own great weight & momentum. There was a crash and a smash of wood & glass and one single cry (a scream) of "Oh, Harry!" and then silence. Came police rappings & whistlings, the clang of an ambulance, a crowd & today the papers (afternoon) report the cutting off of the legs of the man who will die and the precarious (unconscious)

condition of three women. I thought at first someone had fallen out of our own apartment house into the court below.

Yesterday was an odd day for me anyhow. I saw a brutal street fight, an automobile funeral parade, attended a dance which was dull & homely, recieved two poems in praise of—an illusion—recieved your letter which makes me see how mad & sad and dusty this mortal show really is & went to sleep finally listening (after the auto wreck too) to a late night or early morning quarrel between a man & his wife over love & infidelity. I think she & possibly he were a little drunk. Such "God damns" & "you devils" as flew back & forth. And yet you could read the rime of passion & yearning running through it all.

My lady fair—to what are you & I drifting I wonder. When I look at your picture, study your drawings that fairly shout a delicious passion, read your letters that burn & blaze with a fine understanding I want to take you in my arms again (oh, how eagerly!) to smother you with kisses, to hold you tight—to whisper a thousand urgent, eager brutal things to you—and when I read your letters—in another way—read your moods, your naive explanations & acceptance of the variable I—but why talk. Time will tell. I shall surely know anon. I remind of the Beaus in one of my books. But if it could only be that you would come to me—wonder girl that you are—yearning, passionate, mine and mine only—! Is that possible? Can a sunbeam be caged or the wind be bound from straying? Is it something to wish or try for? There is no funny story for today. I am not in the mood. But you! you!! you!!!

The Lonliest Man.

47. Dreiser to Hyman

[Publ. *LTW*]

3609—

Sunday—April 20—1913—No 6.

Elyhon Sweet:

Just consider that I have recited the well known litany of Elyhon this Sunday morning as my contribution to faith & perhaps that

will make up in part for my letter of yesterday. I was "acting up" very badly as I look back on it now. It is blowing like sixty here this morning—white caps on the river—but otherwise it is as clear and radiant as a day can well be. An April blow. Do you remember the blowing figures of March in Primavera with their cheeks extended.[1] They are like this day.

Yesterday, after the accident of the night before I saw another accident on Broadway at 113th St.—Things always go in twos for me—an old man knocked senseless and broken by a ripping motor cycle. When he fell on the track he looked like a frog that had been hit with a club. The rider who struck him came down in a heap also with his machine & getting up & seeing his victim began to cry—sob in an odd kind of way. A woman coming up offered up a prayer. A fool worked himself into a rage on the assumption that it was a motor cycle policeman who had run the old man down. It was a fine crowd of delivery wagon drivers, Saturday afternoon marketers, butcher boys, grocers clerks and citizens generally, to say nothing of idling authors. Someone brought a policeman: someone else phoned for an ambulance. The cyclist was arrested & so ended that incident. I shall not soon forget the spectacle of the smash. I saw it quite clearly & sharply—like a scene in a play.

Last night I went to George Rectors[2] to see the dancing between the tables. New York is surely crazy over this sort of thing. There was the wildest abandon—a sort of drunken orgy—so rythmic and sensuous that it put me in a strangely savage mood. But there was only one girl I wanted and alas she was not with me. The young lady opposite complained that I was engrossed with other things. Very true indeed. I kept thinking all the while how you would look dancing & wishing I might dance with you—were graceful enough to match your utmost mood. Failing that I would like to see you dancing with another.

My one act play is growing apace.[3] I'll tell you about it when I see you—if you haven't deserted me by now. I have an idea, for a dandy individual book which I will tell you about latter, too. I'm eager to do it—only The Titan is almost draining my hearts blood. I am to be the guest of honor next Friday evening at the

Playwrights Club[4]—and I have never written a play. Two playwrights however want to dramatize The Financier.[5] I wish someone who really knew how would. Next Tuesday I meet Madame Kalish. More news than that I cannot think of, at present.

But as for you—you may depend on it my thoughts never change. I go over my hours with you—each little thing—and the crucial hours with intense feeling. I want you so much, Elyhon. I want to get you in my arms & hold you close and tell you all the soft things that only we too can say to each other. Don't you want me so?—much?

The Fair Weather Philosopher.

Here is a good one:[6]

[1] The Florentine painter Sandro Botticelli's *Primavera* (ca. 1480) or "Spring." Among the nine classical figures of mythology in the painting, there is one "blowing" figure, usually regarded as Zephyrus, the god of winds depicted as groping at a fleeing nymph.

[2] George Rector's restaurant at 44th Street and Broadway sought to produce a nightclub atmosphere and employed women to dance as part of the entertainment accompanying dinner.

[3] *The Girl in the Coffin*. See Dreiser's letter of 15 April 1913, n. 3, letter 42. The play first appeared in *Smart Set* 41 (Oct. 1913): 127–40.

[4] The Playwright's Club, which met in the studio of the painter Robert Amick at 63 Washington Square, gave aspiring playwrights an opportunity to discuss their work and to hear talks by established writers. Dreiser was invited to appear on Friday, 25 April.

[5] There is no record of interest in a dramatic version of the novel in 1913. In later years, Dreiser attempted to dramatize the book, but he eventually felt the material was not amenable to such a treatment. See Dreiser to Rella Abell Armstrong, 26 Oct. 1929 (*LTW*, 219–20).

[6] Here, Dreiser pasted a comic clipping about an Irishman and a turkey.

48. Dreiser to Hyman

Monday. April 21—1913—No 7

My Dearest Elaine:

I have been feeling so scrubby today generally that I cannot write you an interesting letter & so I shall not try. I recieved none

from you yesterday, but two today, one telling me of some dinner party you attended and the coming of Mr. Ficke;[1] the other of his arrival & his opinion of my style. The trouble with Ficke is that he is obviously the sort of person who cannot see the drawing for the door knob so that his criticisms have never appealed to me. He never seemed to have anything vital to offer. Dell I shall always sincerely respect however I might regret his charm for you for the reason that I have read enough of his criticisms to know that he writes with sincerity (certainly at times anyhow) & feeling. I shall hope to make my further books right.

I am sorry the soothsayer saw you returning from New York. I should not believe it until I saw it. But I do not believe that your ultimate success or failure here will depend on me—my sustaining feeling. You have plenty of that yourself. And more power to you. The wind has died down here—the sun has come out warm & it is very spring like & still. Just now someone is singing My Old Kentucky Home—which somehow, seems to apply. I am very blessed physically but sustained by the thought that much work is always our salvation—the way out of every ill. Goodnight. I am glad you are having such a good time.

Th. D.

[1] Arthur Davison Ficke (1883–1945), Iowa-born lawyer and well-known poet of his day and also a good friend of Maurice Browne and supporter of the Chicago Little Theatre.

49. Dreiser to Hyman

Wednesday, April 23rd [1913]—No 9.

Elyhon Sweet:

I hardly know how to go about to straighten out all of this thing. I did not write you at all yesterday or rather I wrote but did not mail the letter. As a matter of fact I have written various letters which have not gone—dark, sombre, brief letters which I believed at the time if I sent them would end things definitely. Faith is such a sweet thing. The lack of it is terrible, almost destructive to me. I cannot stand it. I would a thousand times rather never hear from you

anymore—return all your letters & pictures & drawings which are so precious to me than to suffer from a lack of faith. I cannot stand it. And I wrote that I wanted your whole hearted, undivided affection or nothing. I did not care to share with one or ten or twenty others the graces and sweetnesses and intimacies which belong to me. If it is desirable in the name of privilige and individuality to have these things let others have them all but count me out. I love you too much to care for or long be deceived by sweet words. I look on you as an exceptional woman. You answer to something deep & particular in me. If that same answer is there for others let them have it all. There must be a Jill somewhere for every Jack and I can find mine & surely someday you would find yours. I love you too much to harass my soul continually or yours either. I could[1] not live to plead with anyone. My answer is—"if I am not to be the one why beg and play the fool." Not at all. If there is anyone who means more—or I do not mean quite enough—throw me—"can me" as you once expressed it and let me go. The world is wide and one can live, if the will is there, on almost any basis.

The two letters that came today numbers 9 & 10 are the most reassuring of any since this row began. Since the letter which produced those two—the long one reciting your faults (outside of indifference you could have none for me)[2] I wrote one other, short, disgruntled, dangerous. I had a worse one in my pocket—two in fact. If you still love me when this comes—if that essential love which these two letters breath is there when this letter arrives & you want to see those letters sometime I will mail them. In love—real love—one can smile at the rages of past jealousy. But Elaine please don't make me jealous or envious. You arouse the ugliest opposition in my soul because I love you. I would not quarrel or swell with rage if I did not care deeply. A little of that sort of thing and I could hurt you seriously physically and anyone else who crossed my path in your affection. They might readily know that I cared much—or I would leave you entirely. If I could win the other way I might try it.

Darling, I don't want to leave you. You smack of something strange and romantic to me. If my affection is too severe, too binding perhaps you had best let go anyhow for too tense

feeling—too much love (in short jealousy) is as bad as too little. And I am jealous, exacting, angry, stormy at time. I have repressed even in these several days a thousand times as much as I have said. I could have written you things which would have stung your pride so terribly as to make reunion quite impossible or nearly so but I did not. And yet I love you. You can't doubt it. You must have seen it in those hours when with intense delight I have clung close to you. Your body is like a vast boquet of flowers to me. Your mind is sweeter still. I cling close for there and almost only there is intense happiness. Don't you love enough to cling close to me—not to wound me. I believe you do—now. You say you haven't wounded me intentionally. I believe that too—now. But I yearn so and I am so lonely. Can't you forgive me on that basis. If you were only here with me where we could see & walk & talk with each other all would be so well. I am doing my best now to get on my feet financially so I can have you. You will not go back to Chicago if I can help it and you will not sink into the Thunder head of the mass—although a better simile would be the overhanging grey of a dull day. You have things in you which stimulate me and I have thoughts and feelings for you which will pull you up, I hope. I think you will go up whether you try much or not but I would be glad if I could inspire you to try. It is sad that these grim storms should arise in affection but perhaps they are best after all—perhaps they are the real test. I am so sorry that I could not bring myself to write something suitable yesterday but I could not. I suffered—I cannot tell you how I suffered.

Sweet, if because of delay on my part or hard words since you wrote those two dear letters you have sunk into indifference—given up in anger let me say try again. Let us both try. We have so much to give each other—lovely love, beautiful thoughts, rich emotions—a deep urgent passion. In my arms you want me so soulfully—and I—oh I come to you with all my heart and my body. Life cannot hold more for me. I would that it could not for you. As I write an old poem comes back to me—one that I read years ago and pasted with affection in a scrap book. Here it is.

I never thought it would apply. It Is not so good—Shelley "An Ariette For Music"[3] would be better but I liked this once—much.

Nocturne[4]

In the shade of the trees it is night,
  But out here, bright as moon;
All the garden lies brilliantly white
  In the light of the moon,
And the rose-laden air breathes delight,
  And—love passes so soon.

From across the far fields comes the sound
  Of the sea on the shore;
So the love of all time echoes round
  The world, o'er and o'er.
But our love-time is brief—and when found
  Shall we waste it the more?

From the branches I brush as I pass
  Fall the dew drops like rain,
And the wind in trees sighs, "Alas!"
  And is silent again.
But no faint fast step rustles the grass,
  And I listen in vain.

Oh, my lady, your garden lies fair
  In the light of the moon;
It is midnight—but why should we care?—
  In our hearts is high noon.
Life is sweet as the rose-laden air,
  And—Love passes so soon.

And now sweet I must say good bye for today. Be good, be sweet, be my baby-peaches—my love, delicious Elyhon. I enclose two bits from the Sun of last evening which amused me & which will amuse you, I hope.[5]

The Worst of Lovers.

[1] Dreiser changed "w" to "c," thereby changing the meaning of the sentence.
[2] See Dreiser to Hyman, 19 April 1913, letter 46.
[3] Percy Bysshe Shelley (1792–1822), "An Ariette for Music. To a Lady Singing to Her Accompaniment on the Guitar."
[4] "Nocturne," by Caroline Duer (1865–1956), appeared in *Poems* (1896), by Caroline and Alice Duer.
[5] Dreiser enclosed two columns from the New York *Evening Sun*, one comprising a number of examples of comic headlines; the other a comic poem about coffins as "Tokens of Affection."

50. Dreiser to Hyman

N. Y.

Thursday, April 24—1913—No 10

Elyhon—Love—
My Black Lamb:

It is the most interesting thing to me to see how you fill my mind. It is as though your temperament fitted in perfectly with all the things that interest me from philosophy and romance to the current scene. You are coloring it all—omnipresent like the air and the light. I forgot to say yesterday that your enclosures of flowers (hypaticas are they? I know so few flowers by name) came fresh in color. I fastened them to the letter for which they were intended with "new skin"[1] my latest fad. If you would get a bottle of that (25 cents) and cover your cuts & burns & bruises you could always forget them instanter. It is a transparent, medicated liquid glue which dries & feels like skin. I say this for so much of the time I was in Chicago with you you were suffering from a cut which could have been treated that way. I didn't know of this thing then.

Honey Sweet, as I told you I had your handwriting read—both specimens—your old style & your new—small bits which I cut out and the report is most interesting. The person who does this thing here is Lee McCann who has astonished me more than once by interpretations offered—very accurate.[2] Here is yours and it fits it seems to me in so many ways:

"These two specimens of hand writing (Nos 1 & 2) bear but small relation to each other in quality yet in temperament they are

not unrelated. No 1. (your printed hand) is formal and affected but the shapes of many of the letters indicate an artistic profession and great ambition which, in this specimen, is tremulous, questioning, uncertain. There is so much determination, aggressive and constructive ability and vitality however that it is difficult not to predict success. Taken in connection with the second specimen which shows intensive sensuality—a large capacity for it—you have a nature which is full and dynamic—not at all unlikely to do many interesting things.

No. 1 (Printed hand) shows other characteristics which the second specimen confirms—affectation, which springs partly from a desire to be seen clever, partly from a belief that he or she is not, optomism, envy & vanity in about the usual proportions. No 2. adds magnetism, love of fun, tenacity, coquetry and inconstancy but most of all a love of affection which when taken in connection with the intense sensuality indicated in both hands might readily lead to a stirring if not permanently enduring passion for some one. There is danger here—shown in both hands—that selfishness and indolence might cause the writer to hold lightly or carelessly things which at times (and when not possessed) would be craved intensely. Intuition & instincts are very strong in this person. There is a marked evidence of fondness for animals. Intense emotion, which leads to intense dissatisfaction, combined with the first noted qualities of ambition (strong) determination and aggressive and constructive ability and the art qualities indicated are likely to lead to success in some field. At once the best and worst sign is a gross and sensuous vitality which so often underlies a striking disposition—a vitality which when combined with artistic ability may lead to great distinction though not necessarily. If the writer is young the characteristics are favorable."[3]

How is that for Elyhon. I like the gross sensuality and the emotion along with the other things. I don't mind the selfishness and the vanity. Who is without them. The magnetism, love of fun, optomism (at times) and coquetry are all plain to me. The depressions of soul spring naturally from ambition. So you see how your hand writing reveals you. I like all your faults and all your charms but

one in this report—inconstancy but when I think of the others and when I think of you I am ready to believe that his last is set aside—overcome. I know how intense your craving for affection is. I have felt it—walking with you. It reaches out to me quite like a grasping hand. And I love so to meet that appeal because I love you so. I wish I might take you in my arms and kiss and smother you so that your longing for affection should for once be satisfied to the full.

As I write I realize you will get no letter today because I did not send one day before yesterday & it makes me feel so badly that I think I'll go & telegraph. I haven't been to the P.O Box so I don't know whether there is a letter for me or not. If there is and it is still forgiving and tender I am going to be very happy. If you have become disgusted or dispairing that will be alright too—I understand why very well enough. But I hope so that this union will not go to peices. I want you so—as much as you have ever wanted me—if not more.

Write me—Elyhon. Come to me in June or sooner. I wish you would live with me. We could arrange it. Oh, the lovely summer evenings in New York. The long walks & talks.

Th D

Does this one seem to you to have any special application?[4]

[1] New-Skin waterproof court plaster, by the Douglas Mfg. Co.

[2] Dreiser concluded the first page with the line, "person who does this thing here is Lee McCann who has," and on the next page inserted above the line beginning "astonished me more than once . . ." a line with the spelling and gender of the name changed to "The person who does it here is Lee McMann and he has." In an undated letter (DPUP), Lee McCann explains, "I was christened Elizabeth but I dropped it early in life." An early letter from McCann consists of handwriting analysis of three specimens, one of them Dreiser's. In his letter to Hyman, Dreiser edits this analysis severely, mostly dropping negative qualities but retaining some of McCann's phrases as well as the general tenor of the analysis. One can only speculate why he altered the last name and gender of McCann, for in later letters he refers to her correctly. In a letter of 13 Jan. 1926, McCann writes that she had published for the first time—an article about tarot in an issue

focused on Gypsies, "The Fortune Teller's Deck," *Survey Graphic* 59 (1 Oct. 1927): 20–21.

[3] Beginning with the word "distinction," Dreiser's pen ran out of ink and he rewrote the remainder of the paragraph on a new page.

[4] Dreiser wrote this question next to a comic clipping that read, "Alfred was having one of his 'bad' days, and upon coming to the table began to cry. He was sent to the kitchen to wait until the family had finished. Several minutes afterward, when the incident was forgotten by all save small Alfred, the kitchen door opened softly and a pair of dancing eyes, but a very serious little face, was thrust into the dining room, while a very pathetic little voice said: 'Anybody here call Alfred?'—Woman's Home Companion."

51. Dreiser to Hyman

[Publ. *LTW*]

Friday, April 25—1913—No 11

My Peaches Sweet:
You Dark Red Asia Rose:

Your letter last, no 13, caused me to feel so sorry for myself and for you & yet it cheered me, too, for it proved as much as writing can—and sometimes much can be proved that way—that you truly love me. It all springs from love, as you know, that hungry craving that goes with the thought of another. You represent so much that is sweet to me that the mere thought of your sharing your looks and graces with another is maddening. But as I wrote you I am not going to think of that anymore. I am not going to believe you are unfaithful—I really do not. I am just going to think of your loving me whatever you do and that when you get here all will be perfect once more. So there.

Owing to an engagement the dinner with Mme Kalish was put off until next Tuesday and I went instead to dine with Lillian Russell.[1] What a strange type she is—smooth, blonde, placid rather cow-like. I question whether she ever suffered a great emotional storm in her life. She is 62 (she says) and she can actually put it all over the average woman of forty. It is almost impossible to believe it is true. At about 9:20 or :30 she left to go to the vaudeville theatre

where she was performing and having put on a red and black dress and a chic black hat she looked much younger still—not more than 30. Wouldn't that, as some one used to say, make you bust out and cry? She comes of common stock however or her experiences have been coarse for I could see quite plainly that it was an effort for her to maintain that smooth level of polite language which is so easy for others. Every now & then she would drop back, quite by accident, into the parlance of the vulgar rounder or the bagnio even. However she is charming, good natured, kindly and courteous which help a lot—doesn't it. Her husband (no 4) lives in Pittsburgh & comes on every Friday night, returning Sunday night.[2] He owns The Leader there, the principal afternoon paper. He is 49 to her 62. He owns [a] house in Atlantic City which she won't live in; one in Pittsburgh which she will not occupy & an estate somewhere which she will not visit. This apartment is her own, done Chinese style. Two maids, a Japanese servant, her sister & her sisters son make her life comfortable while she is here. She has six automobiles & is earning $6,000 a week at present. How is that for 62.

Wednesday night I went to dine with Laura Jean Libbey.[3] She didn't know me from Adams off ox and all the while (I went with a newspaper friend) called me Mr. Ceaser, which I refused to correct or allowed to be corrected. Short, stout, red headed (brick red) genial, skittish, 53,—that is Laura Jean. She lives in Brooklyn. Her house is a fright—stuffed with all the old, dull stuff for which Brooklyn is noted. There is two billion dollars worth of junk masquerading as furniture and art in Brooklyn. I expected to see a landscape with a mother-of-pearl moon set in the sky (real mother of pearl) but I escaped that. Yet they had champagne, $7^{50} Victorola records—a library of dictionary sized volumes of history. Police!

Last night I went to see Adachi[4] (the Jap) who is as grouchy as ever. He says when you come east again he will cook us that Japanese dinner. He saw you on the subway & you saw him. An interesting but sombre person.

So, Elyhon, this goes my time but I wish you were here. Life, outside of love (when you are in love) is dull business. I have to

smile when I think of Miss Goodrichs[5] solicitude for your age and conduct. At twenty-one you percieve more than she will at fifty or ever. There is no limit to vision or mentality except as our temperaments bind us, but all are so bound—some much, some little. She is bound much. She needs an effusion of temperament. You have so much that life is nebulous, to you. But, my sweet, thats why I love you so and when you come to me again I am going to be very happy. Now is the time—the spring is so wonderful. But I shall stay in New York all summer with you & if it can be arranged & you will we live together. Oh, "them"[6] happy days.

Mr. Lonely.

Here is a lone page but this story isn't bad.[7] If I have missed a letter I have made up in length of others—haven't I. Write me another poem or send me a sketch. The second picture at Hellingers[8] was better.

[1] Lillian Russell (1860–1922), born Helen Louise Leonard, actress and noted operetta singer, was celebrated for her beauty as well as her stage presence. Dreiser may have misheard or misremembered her age because Russell was a decade younger than he says here. In Chapter 41 of the early version of *Sister Carrie*, Dreiser shows Carrie tiring of her work in choruses and envying the fame of Lillian Russell, whom she thought of as one of "the high and mighties" (see the Dreiser Edition of *Sister Carrie* [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981], 391). The reference was edited out of the book published by Doubleday in 1900.

[2] Russell's fourth husband was Alexander Pollock Moore (1867–1930), owner and publisher of the *Pittsburgh Leader*.

[3] Laura Jean Libbey (1862–1924), prolific best-selling novelist of working-girl romances, which reportedly earned her as much at $60,000 per year.

[4] Adachi Kinnosuke (1872–1952), prolific writer whose articles on Japanese and other Far East topics appeared in mainstream magazines, including Dreiser's *Delineator*. His books include *Iroka: Tales of Japan* (1900) and *Manchuria: A Survey* (1925). He had written to Dreiser, highly praising *Jennie Gerhardt*.

[5] Elizabeth Goodrich, Hyman's fellow actor.
[6] Dreiser inserted "'them'" above "these," but failed to cross out "these."
[7] Dreiser enclosed a clipping of a comic sketch about an inexpensive "diamond" and wrote beside it: "Do you get tired of these stories?"
[8] Hyman often sent Dreiser photos of herself, in this case one most likely taken at the Ciminello & Hellinger Theater in Chicago.

52. Dreiser to Hyman

Saturday, [April] 26 [1913]—No 12[1]

Honey Sweet:

It's such a stunning day here today—so bright and warm that I am crazy to quit work and go somewhere but I haven't anyone I want to go with. You have spoiled all the people who formerly interested me—men & women. There is just one person I want to be with now—you. Have you ever thought how it would be if we were living together day after day—to get up in the morning with me present and to come with me evenings or find me there when you come. Do you really know—I'm telling you something that's true that never in my life, from day to day, for any days, few or many have I lived in the same house—in affectionate companionship with the woman that I wanted—never. Isn't that strange. All the days that I have lived I have missed that thing which other men—some others—not all by any means—have. To think of finding the woman you could really live with and love and then have here seems heavenly to me but I have never had that pleasure. I have longed & longed studying one life and another but never sure until I met you. I think that first afternoon out at your house when you looked so naive and poetic—the whole thing came over me—a yearning to blend with you—to love you much and have you love me—and then. In Chicago, in Boston, here I gathered new notes which have more than convinced me—your desire for affection yourself being the sweetest thing of all to me. And I can give you so much. There are so many lovely things we can do together. Affectionate companionship is so wonderful—days and days of simple, understanding nearness and sympathy.

I hope so much not that this storm is all over—that no more letters between now and the time we meet carry the slightest suggestion of complaint on my part or remoteness on yours. I suppose your seeming remoteness is all in me. I want to be happy with you. I long so for your letters—read them so gladly. I wished I owned the portrait by Nordfelt.[2] How much does he want for it. I would like to have a room full of pictures of you—sketches by you—touches of your loving feeling for me. Do you really love me Elyhon sweet, with all your heart & will you be true. Write me every day & wish that I may not long quite so much for it makes me very sad.[3]

The Worst One.

I don't know whether this will reach you before you leave Chicago but I send it to wish you whatever you wish. You might let me know what time you arrive.

Th. D.

[1] Dreiser dated this letter "Saturday, May 26—No 12." There are two errors in Dreiser's dating: May 26 fell on a Monday (confirmed by the envelope's postmark), and letter number 12 was written on April 26. Moreover, the penultimate sentence—"Write me every day"—suggests the letter was written earlier. How to explain the May 26 postmark? The final paragraph, "I don't know whether . . ." was written on a separate sheet, which suggests that after he mailed the final letter of the sequence on May 25, Dreiser discovered the unmailed letter and then mailed it.

[2] Bror Julius Olsson Nordfeldt (1878–1955), Swedish-born painter who had studied at the Art Institute of Chicago and became known for his portraits and landscapes. He painted portraits of the leading figures of his time, including Dreiser and Thorstein Veblen. He had painted the set for the Chicago Little Theatre's production of *The Trojan Women*, in which Dreiser first saw Hyman, and, as suggested by this letter, a portrait of Hyman. Dreiser habitually misspelled Nordfeldt's name in his letters or referred to him as "Nordi."

[3] Pasted at the end of the page is a comic clipping concerning the literalness of language.

53. Dreiser to Hyman

Saturday, April 26—1913—No. 12[1]

Honey Sweet:
My Perfect-Girl:

I came by the P.O just now—twelve midnight—on Sunday, April 27 & looked in my box (in through the P.O. door) to see if I might not spy another letter. The P.O. is closed [at] this time but I have fallen into the habit of going round through the carriers door if I see a letter & getting it—P.O. closed or no. There was none. I had recieved letter no 15 (unnumbered by you though) this morning & while I really didn't expect a second yet I hoped for one. I didn't deserve it after all my bad talk but if I only got my deserts I shouldn't have anything in this world I fancy.

But the reason I went again was because I was thinking of you intensely—achingly & I'll tell you why. (Are you wondering why I should need a special reason to think of you so? I don't really. So many of my thoughts of you are intense and aching.) But I had been down to George Rectors watching the Turkey Trotters[2]—for these days I often go. I have no other thing that amuses me so much. I don't care for the theatre intensely but the rhythm of graceful dancing to music with the added harmony of color & design in costume and the charm of face that so many dancers have—lighted with joy takes my mind off myself & my loneliness and makes me happy or at least comfortable. Now & then a face, a step, a motion, or sound even recalls you & then I suffer actual torture—I do really. Tonight I saw a girl, tall, black-haired, sensuous asiatic who reminded me much of you & I hurt so that I finally got up & came away. I cannot dance—only the crude old waltzes & two step & those are no longer useful. They are horribly mechanical as I see them now. As I came away calling to you spiritually, wishing you were here—longing longing I thought of the letter box and a possible letter & so I went up there, wishing & longing but there was none. I sighed and went home but I consoled myself with the delicious thought that you really do love me and that of all the lovely specimens of womanhood I have seen I have the nicest. If you will only really cleave to me Elyhon I shall be so happy.

I can't tell you how the rythm of the dancing & the dancers brings you back. It is because you are music to me, Elyhon, rythm—embodied harmony. I wished I cannot tell you how much that you might have been one of those on the floor and dancing with me and yet I cannot dance. Hang it all. It seems to me that in dancing life rises to epic significance and only so. It is thus very likely that the ultimate spirit of things disports itself if at all.

You have so often said to me that when you start to write words fail or that you are afraid to write as you feel because the sum of if might seem bathetic—wild. I feel sometimes as though there is no use to attempt to indicate anything truly deep because the deeps are unutterable. I envelope you in large, intangible misty woods at times but I cannot tell you how—or how I feel. But then as always you are identified with all lovely things—colors, sounds, motion—the glitter of precious stones, the sheen of fabrics. I was walking on 5th Ave the other night at five and my one thought was if you were with me to add for me the one spark of life that I needed. It is dreadful to long so. It is bad & yet delicious to be caught up in longing—to need another life to conflate with your own, and yet I am & do. I want you now more than I have ever wanted anybody it seems.

Your letter yesterday was so lovely. It breathed the same longing for me that I have for you. When you come Elyhon pet you shall stay with me days & days & days—morning noon & night until this intense yearning is relieved or proves itself of such stuff as cannot be satisfied. I know it is that last for me. I shall not get enough. But if it is then I shall want to life with you always & shall be prepared to make any sacrifice to achieve it. Oh, you sweet, make June come soon.

The Dreamer.

You'd better number your letters honey. They help me to keep track of their order.

Why can't we go down to Atlantic City for a few days—the first few days after you come—Atlantic City or Belmar or Sea Girt? Will you go with me?[3]

[1] The final digit in the letter number has been overwritten as either 2 or 3.

[2] George Rector's restaurant. The Turkey Trot was a popular dance done to ragtime music.
[3] Pasted next to this last sentence is a comic clipping about a Black woman kicked in the face.

54. Dreiser to Hyman

[Publ. *LTW*]
Sunday, April 27—1913—No 13

Asia Baby:[1]
My Peaches Pet:

It's raining tonight—the queerest little rain—fine and soft with spells of dryness in between. New Yorks streets are almost bare but in the houses here abouts the windows are all open and the sound of the piano & the Sunday Evening party is heard in the land. It is almost interesting to me to how the middle class & almost every other for that matter delights to hold Sunday evening party and have uncle John and cousin Mary and her husband in to participate. Life is so gay then. From the outside looking in it tinkles like a cymbal. It seems so eminently worth living and it is.

Honey Sweet, what do you think of true love anyway? Do you think there is any hope of a mating that endures for this life. Have you seen any examples. I have always had such a strange craving for my mate intellectually, emotionally & artistically. I have always dreamed that I would live with her always if I could find her year in and year out—never to stray anymore. I have known so many women in one walk and another but so often, almost invariably I have been alienated—as a rule instantly—by one characteristic or another. I have never really found her until now. Are you she? Have you meditated seriously on me and what if anything you would like to do with me. If you married me would you truly expect it to endure—would you try to make it endure or do you think as I so often think there is no binding the artistic temperament. Only hard cold reassuring can help to make an at times troublesome state last & would you feel that you ought to make it or is this just love for an hour—a gay day to be dissolved at will. My feeling is that I would truly like to keep you for my own—that

I would love to grow into a sweet companionship with you & quit seeking—that I would like you for my true hearts mate—to console me & let me love you all that my heart wishes. Years & years do not seem enough in time for me. How is it with you?

This morning I wrote and also until 3 P.M. when I went down to look at the paintings of an artist by the name of [Dreiser left a blank space here], a most serious and interesting person, but quite likeable. And the work is beautiful—in the best sense—temperamental, reflective, philosophic ideal. It shows sculpture & painting in a strange blend if you can believe it—a charming harmony such as I have never seen before but successful. The figures are so iron, so material, so gross & heavy & yet so ideal. The landscapes are in some cases enchantments of delight; the skies are brain skies, created in the lively mood of the author. They are delightful pictures all.

Elyhon pet I went the other night with several people into the restaurant which is a part of the Hotel Empire at Broadway & 65th Street where once one Sunday in March you & I were.[2] I had the most poignant sense of lost beauty—beauty that I can only think of now and anticipate for the future. I think of you so often—your lithe body, your black hair, that curve of the throat, the full, perfectly formed hips and breasts. What a flower like armful! How like a rose on a tall stem you are. And then to hold you so close—to feel the beat of your heart, to hear your loving voice. If I could just press my face into the round of neck, between chin and shoulder and feel the smoothing caress of your hand.

It's late now & I am going to sleep but I'll wish I may dream of you. My bed & my arms are always empty save of your spirit. I think of you beside me—wish & wish and then sleep. Be my Sweet Elyhon—be only for me, honey. I want you so.[3]

Your Lover.

[1] At the top left of the page, before beginning the salutation, Dreiser pasted what is probably an advertisement illustration of a woman dancing, recalling the line of his previous letter, "Tonight I saw a girl, tall, black-haired, sensuous asiatic who reminded me much of you."

[2] Hyman had visited New York briefly after her appearance in Boston with the Chicago Little Theatre.
[3] At the end of the page Dreiser pasted a comic clipping about miscounting chickens.

55. Dreiser to Hyman

Tuesday, April 29—1913—No 15

Elyhon Darling Precious:[1]

Three such delicious letters as arrived yesterday—all about the Cubist address by Prof. Foster & the picture of Elyhon and the rather scattered and occasional thoughts about living with me. I liked best the reference to the "raging beast within" & you know why. I love my Elyhon Pet like one hungry animal loves another and not otherwise in that last reach of union we love so much. And then I love her soul as only one artist can love another I think.

Peaches Pet, I heard of a two room apartment & bath in 55th street yesterday, charmingly furnished which could be sublet for June, July & August. It is to be exact at 347 W. 55th (The Cambria) between 8th 9th & on the 6th floor—looking North & East. The taste of the place is good. This is about four short blocks from Columbus Circle where so much night life is—not quite two long blocks from Broadway & 5th now fast becoming a theatrical centre. If I took it I should have to sublet for three months anyhow. If you could live there with me I could work from 9 to 4 or 5 as the days suggested and then the evenings & nights & Sundays could be for us—nights of sweet communion and loving—and days. I have been thinking of something like this for some little time. I don't think you'd better get Marjorie Jones[2] on your hands unless you have very definite plans of your own. Talk to me seriously honey about me & you. I love you so much.

Yes I recall the Nordfelts now.[3] They had just returned from Europe. He had been doing city scenes—bridges, buildings & what not. As I recall them I thought they were very good although he seemed a preternaturally solemn person in a rather wry mood

just then. But it may have been me—not him. That didn't modify my liking for his work. I shall see if I can get in touch with him at the place you suggest.

Honey, do you think it wise for you to talk about me to people so much. You know as the general estimate runs I am safely married however much promise the future may hold & someone taking umbrage from your interest might seek to cause us trouble. If a storm of opposition descended on you you might not have the heart to endure though I cannot think of your utterly forsaking me even under pressure—of not finding a way of getting to me your feelings of love. But storms of this kind can become so ugly and you are so young. You might as you sometimes suggest lose heart. Isn't discretion now the better sort of valor—lots of it.

I had such a pull towards you all day yesterday and again today. I am so happy in the feel of your strong affection. "A mighty fortress is our God" runs Luthers hymn[4] but for me it is "a mighty fortress is our love" and that is sweeter and more reassuring. I think of you all the time—toiling away at my book & it is toil. I am now working on chapter 39 and it has a long list of chapters still to run. But I never look ahead much—just keep the visible scene in hand & jog on. After a time I reach my goal I notice.

It is setting in for a period of rain again I think. This is the third day—but it isn't cold—jut lowery and interesting. What became of the book plate—no enclosure. I recieved the little picture—very good—and the poem about Adam & Eve which tickled me. The idea of the serpent filling Eves apron with a whole basket of apples is a true commentary on the sex instinct alright—delicious. But oh peaches mine—letters—even glowing ones are a poor substitute aren't they for the actual grip of the physical soul. I want you—honey-Asia-peaches-pet. I want[5] your black hair and your fussy mouth and your soft body and your rich suggestive soul—Oh, dear Christ, I hate this loneliness. Goodbye until tomorrow.[6]

The Worst of Lovers.

[1] At the top right corner Dreiser pasted a fashion illustration of a lady with a parasol. Letter no. 14, for April 28, does not survive.

[2] At this time, Hyman was considering moving to New York and taking an apartment with Marjorie Jones, who was then involved in an affair with Floyd Dell and would later, in early 1914, share an apartment with him near Washington Square. Jones would later publish a photographic portrait of Dreiser in *The New York Evening Post*, 23 Sept. 1922: 48.

[3] That is, Bror Nordfeldt and his wife, Dr. Margaret Doolittle (1872–1968), a homeopathic doctor, who had relocated to New York City.

[4] "A Mighty Fortress is Our God" (1527–1529), the most famous hymn by Martin Luther (1483–1546).

[5] Dreiser wrote "I was" but seems to have meant "want."

[6] Dreiser appended the following clipping, together with a note, "Doesn't this apply somehow or other."

SOLICITUDE

The Father—Really, I am afraid to associate with my own children for fear my morals will be hurt.

The Daughter—But papa! Don't you suppose we realize that, and are careful when we're with you?—Life.

56. Dreiser to Hyman

[Publ. *LTW*]

New York,

Wednesday, April 30—[1913] No 16

Elyhon Sweet:

My Own Peaches Pet:

I went last night to see Madame Kalish. She is a woman I am told of about thirty-seven years. To me she looks a little older but then she has recently been ill. She lives in a somewhat splendid apartment house at Broadway and 89th Street with her 19 year old daughter.[1] She was married at 15 and as I understand it her husband is dead. She is a Polish-Jew.

I was rather interested in Madame because I have seen her act several times and because she made a special effort last night to be nice to me. She has only read Jennie Gerhardt—that one accursed book which all women like—and is particularly mad about it. She could not say enough. She wants it dramatized, set to music—even

danced I fancy, if it could be done. She finally got on the subject of me and then—but I am [a] pretentiously unpretentious person and so I won't say a word. Today, however, as I understand, she is to buy and read Sister Carrie and The Financier neither of which she will care for. Accursed be all women: By the beard of the Prophet!

When you come, however, if you want to, I will take you to see her. She is most friendly now and wants to be neighborly with me. I have her copy of Thais[2] and an invitation to dinner. The daughter who is good looking, with reddish hair, is intelligent and artistic to a certain extent. Madame Kalish is as tremulous, as dramatic and as high blown as the divine Sarah[3] herself. Nevertheless I like my Elyhon best. Your ways in so far as I can see are always your own, which pleases me much.

Is this a dry account? Sorry. It wasn't a dry evening. It was twelve oclock before I knew it. We had candy, crème de menthe, champagne & black coffee. I was even offered cigarettes. She unconsciously attitudinized and bubbled. Her costume was black and gray. Once more, however, I would trade one Elyhon for nine Madame Kalishs. If Elyhon will only love me. But I believe Elyhon does. Yes I do. If I thought she didn't I would feel very bad today.

I get such strange letters. There is coming here today from Chicago a woman who lives in Boston but who is stopping out there. She first wrote me a long, mysterious letter asking me to meet her & advise her in a very serious affair which she could not explain except in person. She enclosed fifty cents for a telegraphic reply. I wrote her I was in New York and was fairly sure that I could not be of any service anyhow. Today I got a telegram saying she is [to] arrive here at 4 P.M. & will I please be in. She is, according to her description, 53 and with grey hair. When I hear what it's all about I'll let you know.

My dearest dear, your yesterdays letter was cute but surely you are the wild Elyhon. I wonder what you will do when you find me heavy, phlegmatic, stolid. You seem to be so busy living, but I keep hoping I have seen enough of you to know that there is a touch of the phlegmatic and the meditative in you. I have noticed,

with a breath of consolation that you love to dream & the way you have sat beside me for considerable periods in silence makes me think that some of my quiescent moods will suit you. You don't bubble always—certainly not with me. Why? Are you different with others?

Now that you have read Keats Eve of St. Agnes[4] I will get you a copy of Mathew Arnolds Poems and let you read Dover Cliffs.[5] There are six or seven lines in that I should like to have you read.

Well (as I used to say in my boyhood letters) I will close. I had word yesterday that an actress by the name of Florence Reed[6] is raving over The Financier and hopes to encounter me soon. Is she a good actress? The best testimony I have has as to that book comes from Cotton & Finance—a financial paper whos subscription rate is $10 per annum. It does not review novels but it reviewed The Financier & praised highly the fine interpretation of finance.[7] This is the last word. I never knew I knew so much about it.

Th.D.

You asked why I wasted time on Laura Jean.[8] Curiosity merely. I never saw her. It was just odd enough to take my fancy. I wish I might spend an evening—in time—with Jack Johnson—or Mother Jones.[9] It is the high brows that I really dislike.[10]

[1] Lillian Kalich (b. 1891).

[2] Anatole France's novel *Thais* (1890), the story of an Alexandrian courtesan, which inspired film, play, and opera adaptations.

[3] Sarah Bernhardt (1844–1923), Paris-born actress who played on the French and English stages and toured the United States nine times between 1880 and 1917. In *Sister Carrie* (Chapter 37 in the 1900 Doubleday edition; Chapter 40 in the 1981 Dreiser Edition) Dreiser shows Carrie interested in one of Bernhardt's American appearances, wondering how such theatrical success is achieved.

[4] John Keats's "The Eve of St. Agnes" (1819) is based on a fable that unmarried women can catch sight of their husbands-to-be on the eve of the saint's day.

[5] Dreiser means Matthew Arnold's poem "Dover Beach" (1867).

[6] Florence Reed (1883–1967), actress noted mainly for her Broadway performances; later she performed in film and television.

[7] See "Books and Literature: The Financier," *Cotton & Finance* (New York) 2 (5 April 1913): 173.

[8] Laura Jean Libbey.

[9] Arthur John (Jack) Johnson (1878–1946) became the first black boxing world heavyweight champion in 1908. Mary Harris "Mother" Jones (1837–1930), Irish-born labor leader and one of the founders of the Industrial Workers of the World.

[10] At the end of the letter Dreiser pasted a comic clipping about a domestic argument about work, underscored the words "in a nice cool sewer," and inscribed next to it, "Here is a peach."

57. Dreiser to Hyman

[Publ. *LTW*]

May 1—1913—Thursday. (17)

Honey Sweet
Honey Lamb:

I am longing for you so today I can scarcely tell you how much. It is "heimweh"[1] for Elyhon. Last night I went to the P.O. at midnight, coming home, and got your little school time story which I thought at first must be a long confiding letter—it was so heavy, Dear, but I was happy. I carried it home to read. When I discovered that it was a school day story my face fell I think but I read it with pleasure then & there because you wrote it. It made me think what a charming school girl you must have been and what promise you give of real writing. This thing has undeniable charm in its way morbidly sad as it is.

I wonder sometime why it is—what chemic riddle is back of my craving for affection,—or perhaps I had better say the smile & sympathy of beauty—the lovliness of soul in a given woman. Then I ask myself what is beauty and lovliness of soul in a woman & I do not know except as I find it expressed by some one—actualized—you, for instance. No individual—not even Jennie Gerhardt craved affection as much as do I. It seems when I haven't it—when it is dangled before my eyes in the happiness of others—as if I should gladly die to escape the pain—and yet I live and have lived for years quite ruggedly without it. As I said before to you I can truly

say that I never had the woman I wanted—the one woman. I have always been dreaming of her, tender, intellectual, gracious, artistic in heart and body, naive, faithful but I never found her—until. I wasn't sure at the moment that I had found her in you and yet I kept thinking and feeling so keenly. All the while—every hour you had a strange pull for me and it has grown and grown so that if you are faithful to me you can make my life quite full. Oh Elaine—my Elyhon. I could be so happy with you I am sure—I can be—But you have the capacity also of making me very unhappy even though I should bring my utmost stoicism to bear which I can & will if ever the time comes. To be quickly done with misery is a rule with me. To pluck out the thorn & throw it, though the ache remains. But oh the ache—peaches pet.

I was so pleased, in your letter of yesterday, to find your talking of "we"—really planning. It shall be "we" darling if it can be arranged—and it can be. The small apartment I mentioned is charmingly furnished—very conveniently—with linen, dishes & all the elements of service. I know Lee McCann who lives there but she would never know anything about us unless we wanted her to & she wouldn't care if she did. She designs for stores & cafés paintings and does—oh, I scarcely know what. She & her mother live there. It will be charming. I have already suggested that she wait to hear from me. But there are other apartments, lots of them that can be had in the same way. To think of living with Elyhon: "Would juice get breakfast for me darling?" Or would we go out every morning.

This is May 1 and for me my Elyhon is queen of the May alright. You are so sweet. I wish I were with you so that I might run and play with you—catch you as you suggest. Do you ever think of Revere Beach and those dear Boston days.[2] How sweet those hours were. And how cute you were. I shall never forget your "oh dear, oh dear" voice that first day over the phone. You were "so-o-o nervous."

Honey Sweet I can only think over & over how I long for you. I wish you would spend all your time writing me. I wish I might have six of eight letters instead of one. Every day I look for word from you with such joy. I take the letter out with such satisfaction. Think of me—so eager. I can scarcely believe it, and when I think

of you sleeping with all my letters in one bundle I can only smile but it makes me happy. It is as it should be for there is real love in them—true longing, passion, hope, everything. Peaches sweet I love you, love you, love you! Do you love me as much.

ThD.

Write me a long letter.[3]

[1] Homesickness.
[2] Dreiser is recalling the week in March with Hyman in the Boston area. See Dreiser to Hyman, 14 March 1913, letter 25.
[3] Dreiser included clipping of a comic joke about gallantry.

58. Dreiser to Hyman

Friday, May 2nd 1913—No 18

Elyhon Honey Darling:
My Black Asia Girl:

Such a perfect letter came from you last night—the one written the morning you were going to see Edith Wynne Mathison[1]—a letter full of such wise contemplation of the present and the future, so full of love and tender assurance that our love is like to endure. Surely, surely I hope so. If you only knew how I long for my mate—not this woman or that woman. All my life I have been trifling with one type and another—not in the great majority of cases in any intimate way but talking, observing, wondering if any one woman would ever appear who would grip me at once with her mind and her heart. I have always thought that I wanted too much perhaps—that this creature didn't exist. So often where there has been youth and beauty and intellect there has been little or no heart and a pharasaic puritanism or narrowness of view point that set me on edge. I can honestly say that I have taken more quick, instinctive dislikes to successful and beautiful women than to any other kind—as keen and keener dislikes than I have ever taken to man. So often I forgive a man for being a fool or a victim of circumstances but so often women are simply cold greedy animals without a thought of anything save self. At least the thoughts of man might be generous.

But peaches pet I feel a strong physical & emotional pull toward you. I don't know what it is but sometimes it gets so intense that my nerves all seem taut. I may not be doing anything—just walking—or sometimes when I am writing I find myself so obsessed by this thought and feeling about you that I have to stop and relax and breathe. Nothing could or would ease me then so much as to be taken into your arms, held close, caressed and petted & told over & over that you love me. To be held in your smooth arms Elaine—that is heaven for me. I do not care about any hereafter. Give me that.

And almost always at night I am with you. I hold you close in my waking thoughts—go to sleep holding your body close to mine. I feel your neck and hair with my hands. I carress and kiss you, feeling the pull of your love, until we come to the sweet climax we have so often reached and I rest again. I think of your voice and long for eternal faith and fealty in you. What a strange thing the pull of one to another—my girl and her lover—is, isn't it. You said of me that my love made you whole—complete. If you love me truly Elyhon you can make a wonderful thing of me—far more wonderful than anything I may have promised yet. I can do so much when truly loved. I feel so driven and harried without it.

Dearest, in a paper called "Art", published at 334 Michigan Ave. So Chicago—a really sociable art publication there is a notice—in the April number—Page 91 of me—such a nice reference.[2] Who are the OBriens.[3] And in the Atlantic for May is another.[4] In the June Smart Set will be a sketch—taken from my travel book & sold to them by the Century Co.[5] Edited, as it had to be it is not so very good. The first draught of the one act play is done.[6] I am not sure but what it is completely done. When you come you may read it. Unfortunately the principal characters are two men & an old woman—but there are others. I'll think of a one act play for you one of these hours—something that will suit you to a T—really present <u>you</u>—and then I will do it and should love to.

But dearest honey pet—write me often—don't miss a day for I need your letters. I need love for I am tired of work & would give anything to take a long rest somewhere with you. Your letters—the love you tell me—helps me. Don't tease me—ever—you rarely

do—for I am in a shaky nervous state solely from work. But I'll pull myself together & by the time you get here I'll be all right.

Th.D.

The other night I saw Officer 666[7] and laughed heartily. I also want to see Years of discretion,[8] which is fair. Will we live in our apartment & have an occasional experimental dinner together—or can Elyhon cook? I see my pet meditating like the sphinx over the problem of a beef-steak. Such is life.[9]

I addressed this envelope without thinking,[10] but since I have I'll send it. You see how you are in my mind. I was writing to Harper & Brothers. Peaches sweet I read & brood over your letters all the time. Obsession by Elyhon this is. But oh, just have you. You called me your lover-husband today. Thats the way it is in my heart. Kisses, kisses, kisses for you & whisperings of all you want to know.

[1] Edith Wynne Matthison (1875–1955), English Shakespearean actress who was then on tour in *Everyman*.

[2] Andrew F. Hicks, in "Literature and the Vice Question," writes (in reference to hypocrisy in magazine fiction): "On the other hand, Theodore Dreiser writes a deeply moving, utterly sincere story of an unfortunate woman who went wrong. And because he tells the bitter truth about her, librarians refuse to keep the book on their shelves" (*Art*, vol. 1, no. 6 [April 1913], 92).

[3] Howard Vincent O'Brien (1888–1947) founded the short-lived *Art: A Monthly Magazine* with the backing of his grandfather's art gallery, M. O'Brien and Son.

[4] A review of *The Financier*, "Recent Reflections of a Novel Reader," *Atlantic Monthly* 111 (May 1913): 689–91 (rpt. in part, Salzman, *Critical Reception*, 135–37).

[5] An excerpt from *A Traveler at Forty*, "Lilly Edwards: An Episode," *Smart Set* 40 (June 1913): 81–86.

[6] *The Girl in the Coffin*.

[7] *Officer 666*, a farce by Augustin MacHugh, originally opened at the Gaiety Theater in January 1912 and was then playing at the Grand Opera House.

[8] *Years of Discretion*, a comedy by Fredric Hatton and Fanny Hatton, played at the Belasco Theater from December 1912 to June 1913.

[9] Attached at the end of the letter is a comic clipping about a man hugging his girlfriend.

[10] Dreiser wrote this paragraph on a separate page and mailed it in a separate envelope to the Hyman family home at 4830 Forrestville Ave.

59. Dreiser to Hyman

Saturday, May 3rd 1913—No. 19.

Elyhon Sweet:

My Japan Print:

So you were out in the country may-day picking wild flowers. I called you Queen of the May you know. I was working as usual, wishing I might be out. Yesterday was so wonderful I went out for two hours around noon and lay in the grass in Columbia College Campus. Today is one more wonderful day—Saturday—and I am planning this P.M. to see the Womens suffrage Parade[1]—not that I am so concerned about suffrage for I am not but that I fancy it may be picturesque. I wish you were here to go with me in which case, to make an Irish bull,[2] we wouldn't go. I think I'd carry you off to Long Beach to look at the sea and find a terrace somewhere for dinner. Aloyus! Aloyous!

Spring seems to have reached into my blood and affected the corpuscles of which I am composed. I am very drowsy, very. I feel as though I could lie down all day. Nevertheless I was up at 6 this A.M. bathing & shaving & at 7 I was on the street. At 8 I visited an art store, at 8:30 Altmans picking some ties, at 9 at my bank, at 9:30 at the P.O. getting your letter, at 9:40 back & eating my breakfast. It is 10:30 & I am settling down for about 5 hours work.

In regard to the apartment I don't want to interfere with any ideas you may have. My idea was to take it and vacate whenever there was something else on—or only appear there on stated occasions. However you shall decide. It is always easy to sublet small apartments in N.Y. for the summer—though it might be just as well to let you take a room & we go away week ends to delightful places. Will your sister Dorothy be in the East during the summer?

I'm wishing today that I didn't need to work on this book anymore for all summer. When my income gets a little larger—which God speed—and my reputation a little more secure I shall go off in the woods summer days & loaf. What writing I do shall be done between September & June. I wish sometimes you weren't going to [be] an actress but just my love and my divine hostess living to make a delicious centre somewhere. Or I should like to start a little theatre with you & keep you there! Couldn't we stir up things? I often wonder though how much new scenes & new experiences will change your point of view? While you will be blossoming I will be passing on into a duller state perhaps and you will not see me as you do now. However I shall not scrutinize the future too closely. What will be will be. It is not at all unlikely that I shall come in a fairly secure fame which will carry me to where I wish to quit. But with what sad, if philosophic eyes—I shall turn my back on the past!

Honey—my Asia Jewel—the notice in the May Atlantic is on pages 689—690—691. It is odd that this first notice they have ever given me should be so extended & so complimentary.[3] Never, in the past, has there been a word. Now out of dozens & dozens they put me first. I often wonder that my smug admirers will think of The Genius when it arrives & The Bulwark.[4] Someday I shall rip this social order wide open—with a few real pictures of fact.

Your "Buddy Boy."

If there is no love in this letter it is tingling in my finger tips nevertheless.[5]

[1] The Woman Suffrage Procession of 3 March 1913, the day before President Woodrow Wilson's inauguration, was the first organized march on Washington. An estimated 5,000 to 10,000 marchers demonstrated in support of a constitutional amendment giving women the right to vote. The parade brought a crowd estimated between one quarter and half million people and marchers encountered hecklers; the chaos led to police intervention and eventually the cavalry was called to enforce order, which in turn led to a congressional investigation regarding the lapse in security.

[2] An incongruous or absurd statement.

[3] See Dreiser to Hyman, 2 May 1913, n. 4, letter 58. Dreiser may have had in mind especially the statement, "So painstaking, so lavish of detail, so determined to cover the large canvas closely, is he, that he seems to propose to himself the feats of an American Balzac. If this is the case, he has made a good beginning and is alone in a field that is ready for harvest" (Salzman, *Critical Reception*, 136).

[4] Dreiser's idea for *The Bulwark* occurred in 1912, when he met Anna Tatum (1882–1950), whose story of her Quaker father's career inspired his imagination. The couple lived together for about eight months in 1912 until Dreiser went to Chicago and met Elaine Hyman. Tatum would go on to type and edit *The Titan*, and her story would inspire "This Madness: The Story of Elizabeth," *Hearst's International Cosmopolitan* 86 (April 1929): 81–85, 117–20; (May 1929): 80–83–146–54.

[5] Pasted at the end of the letter is a comic clipping about following instructions literally.

60. Dreiser to Hyman

Sunday, May 4—1913—No 20.

Honey Sweet:

Your second letter of yesterday gave me a severe shock. You know, my sweet, if anything were to happen to you I beleive it would almost kill me—it would knock me over completely. You have twined yourself into my very being. Your arms and limbs are about me tight. Your soul is mine. I need & want everything you represent & then to have you take sick—to possibly leave me entirely or be out of my reach for a long time would be too much. I was going to beg you to come on before June 1—why not if you are well enough. You might as well be here with me. Why wait until June 1? But now until I here today & tomorrow that you are alright I shall be suffering hourly. Suffering describes it exactly. It is a kind of nervous agony. I don't know what I should do except curse life and wish that I might die myself. It is terrible to feel this way. Why have you ever torn me up so.

Peaches Sweet—my pet—one thing you should do and that is if there is the least danger of your undergoing an operation you ought to arrange to put those letters of mine somewhere so that in

case you died—you know the chances of the average operation—your friend Marjorie Jones or someone could get them easily & send them on to me. You would [not] want your father & mother to find them. It would only arouse sad thoughts concerning you & possible angry ones toward me. Neither are necessary. Leave them somewhere & instruct her how to get them quick. The rest would be suffering enough. I don't expect you to die. Appendix operations are not very serious today and healthy people are usually on their feet again in ten days or two weeks but there is always the one chance. Why not urge your parents to let you come on East to me now. If anything happens you can go into a hospital here and stay here. Please come if you can. You have put a hungry fever in my blood which only your love & your arms will satisfy.

It is beautiful weather now hot, bright, springy. Last night I went up to Kingsbridge near where we walked when you & I went to the hall of fame[1]—oh I longed for you so. It's something dreadful—really it is. All I can think of is you—your walk, your talk, your love and of getting close, close & holding you tight. Love is really a terrible thing—consuming describes it exactly. I find myself so nervously distrait at times that I can scarcely work. I find it necessary to forcibly take myself in hand & that is so hard. Oh, the sweet poison of you that is in my veins. I shall wait anxiously to hear now and meantime wish & wish that all will be well & that you will come to me. Can't you, honey? Or must I pick up & come there.[2]

Your Lover Man

[1] Hall of Fame: see Dreiser to Hyman, 30 March 1913, n. 3, letter 27.

[2] Pasted at the end of the letter is a comic clipping about a boy playing as a bandit.

61. Dreiser to Hyman

Monday, May 5—1913—No 21.

My Damascus Lilly:

My Fair Elaine:

I was so nervous yesterday when I didn't get a letter that this morning when I woke I decided to get up at once and go around to the

P.O. (it's just about the corner) and see if any word had come before I wrote. Yesterday I called on the Rosenthals[1]—friends of mine—and one of the daughters Miss Lillian was telling me of a sudden seizure of a form (which do you say) [of] appendicitis which came very near & probably would end fatally. A girl friend of hers was taken with what was considered severe indigestion. A woman doctor called in inserted a stomach pump to relieve the situation and secure material for an analysis. The pump burst an enlarged appendix resulting in peritonitis. Before the appendix could be cut out the pelvis had to be drained resulting in an operation two hours long. Consequence—fever, languor, severe heart depression. She had just phoned to know how the girl was getting along. Imagine my thoughts? I suffered thinking what I would do & how lonely I would be.

Today however two letters came—full of delicious love and gayety & both about dresses completed. I think you had better take an early opportunity to have your appendix out before its presence effects your health. Go into the hospital quite well. Then you will surely be up in two weeks or so. If you wait anything is likely to happen. You may have a severe seizure and if I were present it would almost kill me. But in that case I'd have the thing quicky over with you bet! I'd get you into a hospital & get a good surgeon. Once I came into the room of a young friend of mine & found him rolling on the floor groaning. I called a dandy surgeon here. He doped him and in 30 minutes he was on the table at St. Lukes! He got well but if fate hadn't sent me in he might have died readily. He wasn't very strong anyhow.

I'm Jobs counselor, ain't I?

But honey, when you come I'm going to be so glad that I would be almost willing to have you have appendicitis if I could be alongside, all the while. I'd be right in the room with you all the time wishing you out of it. I'm sure these June days are going to bring us delicious hours—scores of them. But we must arrange it so too that I can go on working from 9 until 3 or 4 every day because I am under contract to get this book done. I will write it just as well—better—if you will sit right beside me & read or sew or do what you please but <u>you</u> must make me work. Our future depends on it. I'll live with you in an apartment or I'll come every day after

four, with Sat. P.M. & Sundays spent together for good measure to me or I'll do anything else you suggest but you must hold me to my task. I have to go on and you will make me—but I wish above all that I could spend every hour in your presence.

It's grey today but warm. They've set out a lot of young trees in Broadway to grace the central space & they are all flourishing. I keep thinking as I write of how sweet—how ravishing—you are going to look in your dressing gown—your boudoir costume & how I am going to take you in my arms & kiss your very breath away. Oh, you honey girl! you true sweet! I'll have you all warm to cuddle and kiss—my baby peaches—to smooth your black hair and feel your soft arms. You can't come too soon for me. June 1 or 2 or whenever it is can't come fast enough—only I wish it were sooner.

Mr. Job.

I'll call on the Gouleds at once. Strange to say I phoned last night (Sunday) but they weren't in or I should have gone. I kept thinking I ought to go all Friday & Saturday![2]

[1] Elias Rosenthal (1861–1919) was a prominent New York lawyer in whose home Dreiser stayed after the breakup of his marriage with Sara White Dreiser in 1910. His daughter Lillian (1887–1972) became Dreiser's lover shortly afterwards. In 1916 Elias Rosenthal issued a pamphlet defending *The "Genius"* from obscenity charges: *Theodore Dreiser's "Genius" Damned*. Lillian Rosenthal provided the model for "This Madness: Aglaia," *Hearst's International-Cosmopolitan* 86 (Feb. 1929): 22–27, 192–203; 86 (March 1929): 44–47, 160–66.

[2] Pasted at the end of the letter is a comic clipping entitled "Women's Opinion of Women."

62. Dreiser to Hyman

Tuesday, May 6—1913—No. 22

Peaches Sweet:

My Precious Honey-Baby:[1]

How your letter of today makes me long for you! You write at times in a divine, lyric mood—you are lyric—and then you paint joy until the very soul of me aches. Do you know Elaine if you

deal with me lightly you will do me great harm—you will hurt my heart terribly—beyond any curing in this world anymore. Do you really understand how it is with me?

I find so much in you that is like myself—the same responsiveness to beauty, the same love of life, the same dreamy dreams. And I find what might so readily not be there the beauty—physical—that should be the expression of all these things—the grace, the ease, the poise, the charm. I remember a poem which ended "I name thee music for thou art divine, embodied harmony"[2] and so it is with you. You are that to me. It seems as though I could never be weary of holding you close in my arms—of leaving all others to cleave only to you as the biblical phrase puts it.

Peaches sweet I want so much when the June days come to take a walk with you—to go out in the country along a canal or stream in the warm days & follow it idly. I want to walk with you where birds are and wild grass & bushes and the tangled things of nature. I wish I might spend a month in a mountain camp with you—just you and I—or on an island. But here in hot old New York it is lovely enough—even in sweltering summer days for the millions never really leave. They are here, nearly 8,000,000 all told within twenty-five miles & they make a sweet kind of human sea in which one may sail and dream. Sometimes the sounds of the city, the open windows, the lights, the music, the laughter are like an inexpressibly beautiful symphony to me. I walk outside and look in and could almost cry for joy & sorrow—I scarcely know which. It is such a wonderful thing to have come out of the dark of time—all this—without a word of explanation, without an answer, and going back into the dark of time again.

But my greatest lack has always been a fellow heart—a fellow understanding. I adore beauty but it does not help me unless it is intimate—unless it comes affectionately close to me. And what beauty is really close except one—the beauty that expresses itself through love. When I think of you as I have seen you, truly beautiful to me, and felt that you were yearning toward me as I was to you then I have known what life is in love & what beauty is and only so. Of the beauty that is you it seems to me I may never get

enough. I should like you to quite distroy me with your love—never to let me wake to weariness or disillusionment or lonliness or dispair. I hate this rich life without love. It only cuts & hurts. If you loved me much, poured your sweet heart over me oh I might grow into something wonderful. Old wounds would heal—old aches subside. You do not know but I could tell you things that would make you see how better it has been with me.

But I shan't hurt you so. Your letter of today telling me of your clothes again, of your sewing, of your search for shoes and of the future ivory white gown which you will some day wear thrills me. It is your trousseau sure enough, peaches pet, and I am your man. When I turn this trick on this literary game right you shall have your ivory white and other gowns. It enrages me to think that in one way I should have so much standing, so much fame & repute & yet in another way so little of that real prospect—money which unlocks so many doors. People bow & scrape & almost cry on my hands but it all avails so little without means. Beauty flowers out of material possessions—some—anyhow. I will admit that Beauty such as yours—of heart & of body can flower gorgeously out of almost nothing because of the art you have & bring to bear which others lack but nevertheless some material basis is necessary. So I long for ample means & work not exactly for them, but wishing, aside from my work at times that I had them. I would like to have a great sale now so that we might spend wild, delirious years. But never mind, perhaps we could not be any happier that we are—any happier than we will be. Darling, precious honey pet—just wait till I get you tight in my arms once more!

The Lonely Man.

Your father is the limit! That remark. I laugh every time I think of it. Never mind, Elyhon, he has a daughter who sees straight into the heart of things & who doesn't confuse fact with theory.

Yes, I love fig pudding. How cute you will look in a pretty apron. Your a tousling, black haired tom boy—thats what you are—at times.[3]

[1] Pasted before the salutation is a clipping of an illustration of a woman sitting on a chaise-longue. Dreiser inscribed under it: "This looks like my Elyhon to me" (see fig. 11).

[2] The identity of this poem is unknown.
[3] At the end of the letter Dreiser pasted a brief clipping about a man who had a cobblestone lodged in his eye during a car accident.

63. Hyman to Dreiser

May 6th, 1913

Lover darling:

I did not mean it to be so late before I wrote you, but the day has been so full that there has not been a minute when I could slip off by myself. When I had bathed and breakfasted I went straight to my darning. When Daddy has gone at about 9 I went to unpack Mother's trunks and repack them for camp, at which merry task we labored until luncheon. It was truly a joyful proceeding, for Mother has done wonderful hard work during her stay at the sanitarium,[1] and aside from what I saw in her satchel last evening there was a raft of wonderful work. When luncheon was over (and I could not even slip away to you then, for it was served on a tray in the 3d-floor sittingroom) Bobby and I went downtown. We bought me a pair of beautiful evening slippers, and a stunning pair of white shoes, and did a vast deal of shopping for Mother, returning home only when our tummies told us it was dinnertime. Since when Daddy and I have been at The Little Theatre, hearing some of the most delightful old songs I ever heard in my life.

But, sweetheart, if my day has been full, my heart has been just as full, and my brain has been constantly occupied with sweet thoughts of you. Among the first, though many hundred had preceded it between then and rising, but in proportion among the first, was my thought of how proud I would be if I could show you the wonderful darn I put into a pair of silk stockings. I should not say a pair, for the darn only went in one, but it was a scrumptious darn anyway.

Oh, my sweet lover, time is flying! Time is moving now on winged feet. When you realize all the things that I am parting with these days—probably forever—you will realize how its flight can seem so rapid. Yet it is nevertheless none too rapid, for I count all hours too many that separate me from you.

Oh, my sweet lover, it will be so good to come. To think of you now, waiting for me, to a certain extent, in that great city, seems like a perfect haven. I had to laugh at your this evening's letter.[2] I should love to tease you about it, but I won't. I will only remind you that Father is letting me come to New York to find work, and that it is only on condition of having found work that I shall remain, and that, to come more definitely to the point, if I spend my morning sitting beside you while you write, I will never find any, and work, other than what I see you do, will be unknown to me. Therefore, sweet chuck, I see where there will be no vast danger of my interfering with your work in hours, but much possibility of my enforcing them.

But, darling, my one fear is, what if I should not get work at all? Daddy says he is perfectly willing to have me try, but it would not surprise him in the least if I became discouraged. He says it would not surprise him if the fourth day he received a wire saying that I was coming home. Of course he does not know that I have a precious lover-child there, but I have been terribly doubtful and quavery of late.

But I won't whine, my own. Time and effort will tell. Greatest of all great things, greatest wonder in the world, is love,—our love—and it comes first of all.

Marjorie Jones tells this of a conversation in the dressingroom: Nellie[3] said she thought it dreadful that Elaine should go to New York alone, and Marjorie said: "Why? She's perfectly able to take care of herself." "Is she" said Nellie. "Well, I'm glad to know it, but I wish Theodore Dreiser could be kept away from her." Marjorie feels that the safest thing is for me to get away as quickly as possible before they should get a chance to speak to father.[4]

[1] Hyman's mother, Belle Bushnell Hyman, was having difficulties in her marriage and was spending time away from home. By 1914 she would be living apart from her husband, and in 1920 Harry S. Hyman would remarry, to Beatrice C. Stafford (1886–1988).

[2] See Dreiser to Hyman, 5 May 1913, letter 61.

[3] Ellen van Volkenberg (1882–1978), who cofounded the Chicago Little Theatre with her husband, Maurice Browne. She acted in many of its productions, including playing Hecuba in *The Trojan Women*.

[4] This paragraph originally appeared in a group of undated letters in the 1916 section of the transcript. It has been placed where the context suggest it belongs.

64. Dreiser to Hyman

[Publ. *LTW*]

Wednesday, May 7th 1913—23.

Roses Red and Roses Black:

My Asia Lily:

I took your second warning and called up Mrs. Gouled again last night and was promptly invited to dinner for Thursday at 7. So I shall have to listen to Gouled orate on his views. But much more would I do for Peaches Sweet—my Flower Face. I worked in a kind of dream of you all day yesterday—the breath of the art of Elaine—seeing you dimly in the back ground. You are so much nicer to me than the picture of Florence Reed you sent me—though that serenity of pose is yours; so nicer than Madame Kalich who may have been but certainly is no longer as charming as you are. I doubt if she was. She called up yesterday but I was out. I expect it is an invitation to come to dinner. You are just art of line & art of motion and art of feeling & art of thought. You are so beautiful that often I want to get away a little distance so that I can sit and look at you. Then your beauty comes in on one like a soothing song. I get richer & stronger for it—elated & yet composed. You supply just what I want near me—all the time—the living image of beauty. But will you be good & love me much and very, very long?

I was thinking when I read your letter last night about the Mathison[1] reception that when you come here & get away from Chicago for a while you will get very homesick. All your friends & your home & the Little Theatre and the things with which you are so familiar in Chicago will begin to take on appealing significance and then if I am not just everything you will gather

up your belongings and return. The illusion will be ended—the dream over. Did you ever think of that? I fancy you won't thank me for the thought but it might be true. I am such a cantankerous creature intellectually. I insist on turning every angle of the prospect toward me for inspection. I notice that you also have the habit of digging up woes in advance and yelling about them—weeping, as it were, very early and premature tears.

Certainly old Dr. Foster is a strange man but you know I sympathize with him keenly. I know what the lure of beauty is and if it will not die—will not down—it is terrible. I have now reached that state where I can stoically set aside certain charms with an aching eye—but some men never can. The lure is too great. I have a perfectly wonderful novel in my head to be called The Rake[2] which ends—but I will not tell you where it ends. It is something really to cry over. But The Rake is the victim of the lure of beauty. I might not be able to commend Dr. Foster. I wish he would learn to keep his hands off for that is futile—but the sorrow of unsatisfied longing is always terrible to me.

Do you recall this by Hardy?[3]

The Looking Glass

*

I look into my glass
And view my wasted skin
And say: "Would God it came to pass
My heart had shrunk as thin!"

*

For then I, undistrest
By hearts grown cold to me
Could lonely wait my endless rest
In Equanimity.

*

But time, to make me grieve,
Past steals, lets part abide,
And shakes this fragile frame at eve
With throbbings of noontide.

Thomas Hardy.

I can imagine the lusty & vigorous in life smiling at this perhaps a little contemptuously. They simply do not understand.

But no more. I am on chapter 42 of The Titan. The first 40 have gone to the typewriter. I am struggling with the amazing intricacies of the street car situation in Chicago. I greive over life and then I take a hitch in my belt & stand up & feel quite perfect—equal to anything—Life, God, man or devil. The spring is so wonderful here—it is like a song. Write me dear, thoughtful letters & be my lovely Damozel—my Blessed Damozel.[4]

Th.D.[5]

[1] That is, Edith Wynne Matthison.

[2] Dreiser began writing a novel with this title more than once, with different sources and motives. See Riggio, *American Diaries*, 8 n. 5; 37; 123 n. 15.

[3] Dreiser misnames the poem, which is entitled "I Look into My Glass" (1898), and slightly misquotes the following two lines:

"And view my wasting skin"
"With Equanimity"

[4] A reference to the work of one of Dreiser's favorite nineteenth-century artists, Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–1882): either the poem "The Blessed Damozel" (1850), with its theme of the heavenly "damozel" yearning for eternal bliss with her earthly lover after his death; or the painting of the same title (1877).

[5] At the end of the letter Dreiser pasted a comic clipping about a boy's desire to leave work for a baseball game.

65. Hyman to Dreiser

May 7th, 1913

Sweetheart, my darling:

Your letter this afternoon is so precious. I love it when they come in the afternoon, for then I always think: "It was with him only yesterday morning!" Which thought brings you much closer than most thoughts of you come. Oh, these fair days and the love of my boy!

Mother and I have spent the whole day in her room, for she overdid yesterday, and thought it wise to remain in bed till the middle of the afternoon. So I have sat beside her bed and worked

on my green blouse, and my new work-basket, and she has sat in the bed crocheting. Time and again I have gone to the phone to order things for camp, or if the things were here, put them in one of the trunks. Often and often I have thought of my lover, pegging away off there in another city, for we do not talk much while we are working. It makes Mother nervous. Mother brought me the sweetest little present. It is a long slender tube sort of a vase, set on a flaring base, of plain glass, to hold a single rose. It is exquisite, and cannot imagine anything more lovely. Martin Johnson[1] would say it was decadent.

Dorothy's birthday is near, and as she is going to room alone next year she wrote of some of the things she needed. One of them was a tea-caddy, and so I set out in search of one yesterday, Bobby going with me. Of course duty impelled us to seek at the store first, but we were not surprised when we did not find what we wanted, as we had our minds set on something quaint. Next we tried Burley's, the big chain and glass store, and then, duty done so far as staying where parental conservatism would have us go, we went to a little Chinese shop. There the man showed me an ugly tin thing that I didn't like, and when he said that was all he had I pointed to a lovely thing sitting on a shelf and asked him what he called it. "That—oh, that was a tea-caddy too." and he brought it down. It is lovely, a bas-relief dragon on an eight-sided box of Japanese silver. Nothing else would do but that. It is so perfect. Daddy was peeved because I spent as much as I did, and I said I was willing to go through the week on what I have left of last week's money, and what would be left of this week's if I paid for it myself, whereon he immediately forked over the price. I sit and love it with my eyes. Some day, darling, when I am really making some money, you are going to take me to Chinatown, and I am going to blow myself on all the freak things I want. The fool little Oriental in the shop yesterday nearly gave me two dollars more in change than was rightly mine. I guess he had not expected to make quite such an extensive sale, as the tin one he showed me first was 75 cts. He looked so nervous and pleased when I gave him back his extra two.

Mother has been so dear and companionable all day, planning how best I can arrange my things, how best to put away the things I do not need in New York. She was terribly nervous that first night she was home, and does not care, now, whether I go to the Brevoort, or the Martha Washington,[2] or any other place. I am already dreaming of being there to stay, though, and having soon the opportunity of fixing up a dear little place of my own, where no one will know who goes in or out but just we two, and we will each have latch-keys. Whoop! Don't you love it?

Oh, my dearest dear, I am longing for you so unutterably. I dreamed this morning just before I woke that I was playing on hills, little weeny constantly rolling hills, of pure snow, with half a dozen girls from the theatre. Miriam Kiper[3] decided to be Christ, and she put one bottom corner of a sack into the other, making a hood. Then she went up and down the snow hills, talking to the winds, the birds, and the fish, the flowers that were not, and the dry mullin stalks. Marjorie Jones and Mary Elizabeth came toward her with their arms around each other, laughing. I lay down in the snow so that they could not see me, whereat they laughed again. "Elaine does not know that her lover is coming, and if she doesn't go to the station he will go on downtown to the Grand Central." I rose up and raced for the station. As I ran a man dragged his small boy out of the way to the sidewalk. "Make the sign of the cross," he said, "and do not look at her. She is impure." When I reached the platform the train had just gone through and I was standing looking after it, wringing my hands and weeping when I woke up. Wasn't that a strange dream? Sweetheart, I clutched the precious letters very close for a while before I got up. Somehow they relieved the dull misery that the dream had brought. It is all laughable now, but somehow the impression of a vivid dream will last for hours.

I saw a man in the moving pictures the other night whose bearing was sufficiently like yours to make me choke and want to sob out loud. Oh, that dear, individual swing of yours! How I want to take your arm, and after I have walked with you unthinkingly for a few minutes, find myself walking the same way. To feel your dear

strong arm against my heart as we walk, darling. That is life, the best of it. Just to keep walking so forever, looking often at the stars, and often at the simple, wild things that grow around, but oftener at each other, you with your pen in your free hand, I with my tragic mask in mine. It must be the left hand that you give to the pen, dearest, or the bondage of the one must not check the power of the other, while my work can only come second to my love and can be carried in my left hand just as well as not.

Now, dearest, I am going to run away, for it is dinnertime. Love me with all your heart as I love you, and when you think of how it would hurt you if I took your love lightly, remember that we love each other just the same, and that neither one of us can do anything harsh without the other suffering unspeakably.

[1] Martyn Johnson (1883–1934), a fellow actor with the Chicago Little Theatre, journalist, and from 1916–1919, editor of *The Dial*.

[2] The Brevoort Hotel stood at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Eighth Street until it was torn down in 1952; The Martha Washington Hotel is at 29 East 29th Street and was a women-only hotel and is now the Redbury Hotel.

[3] Miriam Kiper (1889-?), an actress with the Chicago Little Theatre, who went on tour with Hyman in the spring and was a close friend.

66. Dreiser to Hyman

Thursday, May 8th (24)—1913

Honey Mine:

I had such a discouraging letter from you last night—discouraging to me. Your mother had just come home and asked all about New York and me. Of course, if you have true love and courage no mother or anyone else could eventually come between us for after all all real individuals succeed in living their own lives but so often the courage goes out of some like a spent gale—or perhaps it never existed at all. I never feel that at bottom you are one such but when you talk of not having the heart possibly to go on—to overcome her opposition you frighten me. Love shouldn't be a bellyache that

one can cure with a little ginger nor yet an inflamed appendix that can be cut out and forgotten. It is that in many cases—or a plant that can be undernourished and left to wither—but it ought to be a strong wind that sweeps all before it. It ought to be—

I have always been afraid that you would talk to your father or Professor Foster or Bessie Goodrich or some one else to such an extent concerning me that you would arouse suspicion, opposition, envy—anything you will. I would not put it past either Miss Goodrich, Dr. Foster or anyone else who likes you to go out of their way in a secret way to put obstacles in your path thinking to serve you spiritually and otherwise. You must judge of their intentions but their deeds will lead to the same end. Life is full of people who out of envy or a destructive affection for us wish to do us a good turn by preventing us from doing what we want to. I have gone through that sort of sweet service over & over. And you are so impetuous Elyhon and enthusiastic and so generous in your estimates that all looks sweet and rosy until it isn't—Then you talk of sinking under the weight of opposition. My advice would be to either dodge it beforehand or fight it subtly or valiantly or both afterwards.

But Peaches Pet, I am not quarreling with you or upbraiding you. My heart is merely sore at the possibility of not having you after all. Whatever it has meant to you it has meant as much to me—more if such a thing were possible. I long for you so. Your soul fits mine. You are my other self and you came back to me in a so much more lovely form than I have ever known myself to be. Then to think that having found you—having felt the wonder of companionship & understanding that I should lose you is too much. It will spoil my summer though I can work on as usual. That is the gloomy thing—that life is constantly driving me back to labor without love. To hell with it.

Don't you think for one thing that you had better, now that your mother is home let me send these letters to the General Delivery where you can get them or take a P.O, box. In a way if you are coming June 1 or thereabout it would be foolish to take a box for

only 3 weeks remain and you cannot take a box for less than 3 months. I will gladly pay for it however—or I might address you at some studio or the little theatre. Are you sure your mother wouldn't open your letters? or read them if she found them? Please don't hold too generous views of human nature. They are rarely if ever sustained by fact in critical moments—very rarely indeed. Only your youth & enthusiasm could make you for one moment believe otherwise.

But, my sweet, more than anything that may be immediately or a little later done I want so much to make you feel that if you wish it nothing can really end a real union. You can stand by me and win if you are so minded and will play your cards cleverly. Your best move is to get into your profession even if you find that you cannot come here & if need be I will come to Chicago or elsewhere to join you. I shall be rid of this lease by Oct 1—next. I expect thereafter always to live alone somewhere as a bachelor until I can get a divorce. If I can live near you somewhere so much the better—as you know. If I cannot—if you see no way—than I can live but by no means so happily. I can work and wait if you are faithful to me but if you are determined you can surely reach me eventually.

Asia Roses don't let anything come between us. Why should you let anything so wonderful as loving understanding be put out of your life. Be courageous. Don't give way so easily. Things can be adjusted so often one way or another & you are clever. Come to me if you can. If you can't allay opposition for the time being and tell me, if by coming I can see much of you. I wish, I wish—but oh my, my arms are so empty. You said the other day that nothing could ever separate us—that you would or could stand out against the whole world if need be for me. I can mean so much to you—you do already to me.

Th.D.

I am waiting so anxiously the next letter to see what if anything has developed.[1]

[1] Pasted at the end of the letter is a comic clipping about a misunderstanding in a shoe store.

67. Dreiser to Hyman

Thursday, May 8th 1913—24[a]

Honey Sweet:

I wish you wouldn't be mad at me for suggesting that you make me work. If you knew how much I want you with me all the time! Such a delicious letter just came—all about the pair of evening slippers & the white shoes & nothing about the danger of being prevented from coming which depressed me so this morning. Don't be afraid you won't get something here. You will. Talent such as yours won't go begging & I don't propose to let you lose heart. The only thing that worries me is your possibly leaving after you do get something. I'm going to see if Madame Kalich hasn't some influence. In regard to the apartment—it can be had for $40 a month—little more than $10 a week you see and it's charming. You might take it under your name & I'll do the rest. It would be better than a hotel it seems to me. Then I need only stay there such times as you will permit. I'm so eager to see you in all your pretty new things. Oh, those lovely days when I will take Elyhon in my arms and feel how sweet she really is

Th.D.

68. Hyman to Dreiser

May 8, 1913

Sweetheart mine:

As the saying goes, "Murder will out," and I cannot keep my surprise any longer. It is not much, merely that I will not reach New York on the 1st or the 2d, but on the 29th of this very month! How do you like the thought?

I have a piece of rather sad news, sad in that it did not happen long ago, considering how much she has suffered, and that is that Margery Dell is going to divorce Floyd.[1] I guess she cannot stand his varied and never-ending acts of infidelity. I can see how, with her philosophy, it must be very hard for her to come to this decision, but whereas a woman might pardon an occasional lapse, it is quite different to have a husband who is always in love with somebody

else, and a different somebody else at least every three months. I don't think Floyd is capable of loving very deeply; he falls so easily.

Precious mine, it makes it seem very near when I realize that I have already started packing. It is so much nicer to lay things in from day to day as they are ready than to do it all at once in the end. I can see you now at the gate in the Grand Central, and myself coming through, lanky kid that I am, with little Marjorie[2] trotting alongside. I can see her giggle in a pleased, quiet sort of way if I kiss you. Am I going to kiss you in the Grand Central Station, sweetheart, or don't you have a Grand Central Station in your particular kind of anatomy? Poor child, she is heartbroken about Margery and Floyd. 'Twas she that told me at the theatre this afternoon, and she was in tears at the time. Margery had told her last night and had asked her to start telling other people. She, too, during the past year, has been one of the young gentleman's loves. I must get hold of the poem Arthur Ficke wrote to Floyd, entitled "Lines to an Outrageous Person." I can only remember the last line, which is "Up the rainbow, Oh, my friend."[3]

As I look back over the first pages of this letter, and find what a jumble of wedding and divorce to be it is, I am rather shocked. But it is rather like all life, isn't it, rather symbolic of all that is going on around us?

How I wish you were here that I might lay my head on your shoulder and think of nothing but you, and our love, and the wonder of the spring. Poor little Margery, that she should love Floyd, for she truly does, and yet be made to suffer so that she cannot stand to live with him any more. Poor little heart! Poor, homely, lovable little girl! I am sorry for Floyd too, for he loves her in his way, as much, I think, as he can ever love any woman. But let's forget it. Thank goodness our woes are our own as well as our joys, and we need not look too long nor deeply into those of others. My heart at present is full to bursting with a wonderful, all-pervading gladness, and every one else may have sorrow, but it is nothing—nothing—nothing that can hurt the song in my soul. Oh, wonderful lover! Oh, big, sombre, gay, melancholy, joyous, <u>everything</u> lover! Here I said I would come to

you with the roses, but I am even going to beat them. I am going to fly in to the arms of my lover before the birds are really settled. I have just thought of a new happiness. On looking at my calendar I find that Decoration Day is on a Friday, and that means Friday, Saturday and Sunday to play in before I start my work. I tank dat ban very nice, huh?

Well, goodnight, sweetheart. Tomorrow I shall sew on the trousseau again all day.

[1] By the time of this letter, Margery Dell had tired of her husband's philandering, realized their arrangement wasn't working, and decided to end the marriage, though she and Floyd would continue living in adjacent apartments and socializing together until fall, when Dell would move to New York and live with Marjorie Jones. Margery Dell officially filed for divorce in August 1915, charging that Floyd had abandoned her on 6 May 1913. In an interview, she explained her opposition for the legal need to file for cause: "Divorce laws should be more lenient. . . . Everybody knows how a friendship is outgrown. When love on one side ceases the marriage cloak should be removed. That means that Floyd should have been allowed by law to divorce me as soon as he tired of me, and it should not have been necessary for me to file suit" ("Love Theorist in Divorce Suit," *Chicago Tribune*, 18 Aug. 1915: 1).

[2] Marjorie Jones, who was planning to share an apartment in New York with Hyman.

[3] Hyman refers to section VI, "To an Outrageous Person," of "Ten Grotesques," which would be published in the *Little Review* in March 1915. Hyman remembers the final line accurately; the poem opens, "God forgive you, O my Friend! / For, be sure, men never will."

69. Dreiser to Hyman

Friday, May 9—1913—No 25

Ebony and Ivory:
My Darling Pet:

I had no letter from you late last night nor any his morning so I am waiting as I always do, living from letter to letter. You are the

sea—the sunny sea—on which my bark floats. You haven't any idea how the vision of beauty which is you settles down on me at times to ache me because I am alone and have it now. I have built up or there is about you such a cloud of lovely things that to be shut out from them by a thousand miles of unresponsive space is too much. Sometimes at 10:30 [to] eleven and 11:30 to 12 at night I have the strongest yearning to be with you. I feel so sad—so enveloped by longing. I feel so empty handed that I can think of nothing save closing my eyes and forgetting in sleep. When I am once asleep morning soon comes again & then I can go to the P.O. & see if there is any word. For the number of times that I take out your latest letters each day & read them I am happy—particularly over some keen expression of tenderness. Then in between come the hours & hours in which I am simply waiting. Can this thing really endure?

Last night I went to call on the Gouleds and dine. We had a right good time, much to my surprise. Gouled was as toothy and as aggressive as ever. He monopolized the field except where Mrs. Gouled as usual forced herself energetically into the fray grabbing off a few moments of attention. They amuse me. They are both so self-sufficient. She is so bourgeoisically busy with clubs, lectures, art exhibits fads—just pursuing and knocking down culture with a club and he is so sure that he already knows everything there is to know. She had on white silk stockings which, possibly because of the latest social habit of crossing the legs, she insisted on showing nearly to knees. And they aren't very pretty legs either—rather heavy and gross. She showed me a copy of one of Leonardos pictures she is making—the girl in the hair net. But you will see it when you come.

Nevertheless we had a good time. She is so brash and so is he. She wanted me to come down to Seigel-Coopers[1] & make a speech—give a talk someday in the book department!!!! Can you see me. We got on the subject of genito-urinary therepuetics and surgery (apropos of Breiuxs play Damaged Goods[2]) and they told me of the terrible & dramatic experiences of their brother-in-law (I believe) who is a specialist dealing with syphilis & gonorheea.

I had my sense of the awful racked for they had real life stories. In a way I admire the Gouleds for—polished or no—they handle life in a frank, free way which pleases me. The fair Sonia[3] is back in Russia writing letters & defending America to the Russians and Mrs. Gouled is still apparently her faithful satellite. So much for clever, selfish egotism.

I went out the other night with Lee McCann, (a girl she is) Allen Benson (author of What is Socialism)[4] Ellis Jones (editor of Life)[5] and Anna Tatum[6] a radical writer and bummed around as they phrase it to cafes, dance halls & the like. We were in the Breslin[7] for awhile at Broadway & 29th street, where the leather seats run along the wall & where you can sit & look out the windows & see the Spring rout of Broadway going by. Although there was much splendid talk—really brilliant at times—I wanted to get up & go home. All the time I kept saying if only Elaine and I were drifting around together this spring evening idling & watching the crowds. How we would talk and dream over scenes or a table somewhere and then home to our couch together. I suffered so wanting you that it almost spoiled the evening for me—quite did. Is this love or what is it?

It is cooler again today—grey & not so wonderful but yesterday was perfect.

Is there any danger Peaches of your not coming June 1. I hate to think of it. I shall be too miserable for words. Write me every day anyhow & tell me over & over how much you love me—if you do. I dream of your hair & your eyes & hope you will always be as tender & yearning—will always want me as much.

The Arther.

I liked the book plate quite much—thought it was charming. I had an idea that I had said so. If you will, let me see the other one too. The greedy boy wants a choice.[8]

[1] The Siegel-Cooper department store, on 6th Avenue, was at the time of its construction in 1896 the largest department store in the world.

[2] *Damaged Goods*, by Eugene Brieux (1858–1932), appeared at the Fulton Theatre from March to May 1913. The play is about a man who, on the eve of his marriage, learns he has contracted syphilis but

nonetheless continues with that marriage and thereby spreads the disease to his wife and daughter.

[3] Sonia, last name unknown, was a Russian immigrant and the proprietor of Sonia's Art Cigarettes at 19 West 8th Street; she was a frequent visitor to tea rooms, where she offered her cigarettes.

[4] Allan L. Benson (1871–1940), journalist and Socialist Party candidate for President of the United States in 1916, published *The Truth about Socialism* in March 1913

[5] Ellis O. Jones (1873–1967) was a journalist and socialist activist who was an associate editor of *Life* magazine.

[6] For Tatum, see Dreiser to Hyman, 3 May 1913, n. 4, letter 59.

[7] The Hotel Breslin opened in 1904 and in February 1913 inaugurated the then-innovative ten percent tip on fares of more than fifty cents.

[8] Dreiser attached a comic clipping about a deaf lady mistaking a ten-gun cannon boom for a door knock.

70. Hyman to Dreiser

May 9, 1913.

Darling Mr. Job-lots:

Ah ain't had no letter today. Last night I played what I hope will be my last performance at the Little Theatre.[1] Tuesday night will open the season's last bill, Yeats' "Shadowy Waters," and Oren Taft, jr's "Delphine Declines."[2] Nellie and Don[3] are becoming really pathetic. Their ideas of each other's perfection are so wonderful. Last night Arthur Johnson[4] was doing particularly good work. Florence Reckitt[5] and I spoke of it in the dressingroom. Nellie looked up immediately. "Yes," she said. "But it is Don that is setting the tempo." Poor darling! Don was on the stage at that very moment, in the most serious part of the Mimi act, absolutely unable to control his laughter. Arthur has had a call from the professional stage, and next week he goes on at the Majestic in the "Lona" act of "Anatol," with Jack Barrymore.[6] We are all so pleased.

Dear heart, it seems as though I had nothing new to tell you. Since I wrote last I have played my last time, come home, gone to bed, slept with your letters, arisen, breakfasted alone, sewed, lunched alone, and sewed again. That is my past 24 hours.

All that is new is the fresh installment of love that has come each hour for one Theodore Dreiser. I don't know who he can be, but I have an idea that he is almost as fond of me as I am of him. Maybe you've met him. He is tall, and swings when he walks, and he thinks of all sorts of funny names to call me. Still you couldn't tell by that, because he wouldn't ever call you by those names, I don't think. One is "Peaches Lamb." Did he ever call you that? Well, I will. Another is "Honey Sweet." You can have that one too, for I don't think he ever gave it to you.

I wish you were here. I would make you comfortable, by all that's good and holy—or otherwise—I would. I would do all sorts of things to you. I would throw a weight of about one-hundred-and-fortyfive pounds at you, and make you hold it, I would. At first you might be sitting in a chair—a nice big rocking-chair—but you would be elsewhere before you got through. Oh, I must stop! I cannot write now. Maybe I can try again later.

[1] Hyman is playing Mlle. Y, the actress who remains silent, in August Strindberg's one-act play *The Stronger* (1889), a dramatic monologue about rivalry over Mme. X's husband.

[2] William Butler Yeats (1865–1930), in addition to being renowned for his poetry, founded the Abbey Theater and was a prolific playwright. The Abbey Players had visited Chicago in 1912, directly inspiring Browne to found the Chicago Little Theatre. *The Shadowy Waters* (1908) was widely staged by little theaters. Oren E. Taft, Jr. (1868–1958) was a Chicago banker active in theater. His play *Delphine Declines* was a one-act farce written as an "afterpiece" for the Little Theatre's final performances on 13–15 May 1913 and was adapted from an unnamed story by Leonard Merrick. The play is no longer extant and apparently Maurice Browne and Ellen Van Volkenberg were the actors.

[3] Maurice Browne, whose nickname was Don.

[4] Arthur Johnson was an actor in productions of the Chicago Little Theatre.

[5] Florence Reckitt (1884–1973) was an actress in many of the productions of the Chicago Little Theatre.

[6] John Barrymore (1882–1942), noted stage and screen actor. Hyman is referring to performances at the Majestic Theatre of scenes from

Arthur Schnitzler's *Anatol* (1893), a play comprised of dialogues on the meaning of love and the stability of relationships. Mimi is a character in the episode "A Farewell Supper"; Max (played by Arthur Johnson) and Lona (played by Katherine Harris, John Barrymore's wife) are characters in "The Wedding Morning."

71. Hyman to Dreiser

May 9th, 1913

Darling lover lamb:

I have written two stanzas of a new poem, and I do not know how to go on. Here they are. When I have finished writing to you I will crawl into bed and work on them some more:[1]

Out of the garden of the moon
Quavered a soft Lucidian tune
With eerie flute and rhythmic thrum
Of muted strings and beaten drum.

And where the amber poppies twine
Arose a fragrance like to wine,
That mounted on a singing breeze
And melted in the jasmine leaves.

Wait! Some more is coming now. I can feel it working:

The lotus lilies lay in light;
The moon, no whiter than the white
Of their pale blossoms, like a cool
White lily in a blue-black pool
Floated, and all around like flowers
In sky and water dripped the stars.

Daddy and I have spent the evening, or what is not yet unspent, with Aunt Net and Uncle Maxie,[2] but the burglar alarm has been disturbed at the store and the men had to go down.[3] I was too

tired, I said, to wait up with Aunt Net, and so they brought me home. I am really quite tired, though, and will only make this a goodnight song. I wonder how you will like the portrait.

Do you realize how soon we will be together again, darling? Two weeks from next Thursday, probably. Oh, heaven speed the days! I want you so badly, so dreadfully much. My whole being longs to be held, to be drawn up to yours, and to draw you into mine. I kiss you now, lover, on your eyes and hair, and your dear, dear mouth. I kiss the dear seeking hands of you, lover, and fold them over my heart. I kiss the dear head where it lies in the hollow of my shoulder. Night, only night, can bring some illusion of your being near. Daytime holds you afar, encircled with forty-two chapters of The Titan, numberless pens, and rivers of ink. But in the night you are near. You are bending over me, hovering about me, kissing me with tiny butterfly kisses, touching me softly with dream-fingertips. Oh, to have the real vigorous touch of you, the real, living, loving kiss of our union!

[1] Dreiser used the opening of the poem in *The Titan*, where Gardner Knowles (based on Floyd Dell) reads a poem to a rapt Stephanie Platow (Hyman): "It concerned the garden of the moon with the fragrance of pale blossoms, a mystic pool, some ancient figures of joy, a quavered Lucidian tune.

'With eerie flute and rhythmic thrum
Of muted strings and beaten drum.'"

(*The Titan*, ed. Roark Mulligan [Winchester: Winchester University Press, 2016], 207). For Hyman's later response to this usage, see Dreiser to Markham, 9 Feb. 1914, n. 4, letter 143.

[2] "Aunt Net and Uncle Maxie": Max and Jeanette ("Nettie") Holzheimer. Holzheimer had formerly been with Hyman, Berg & Co. and now managed Frederic's Jewelry, which was located next door to the Hyman jewelry store.

[3] The burglar alarm at Hyman, Berg & Co. had sounded; the next day, the store was robbed, and two men were arrested and the jewelry recovered ("Alleged Jewelry Robbers Caught in Loop District," Chicago *Inter-Ocean*, 11 May 1913: 6). See also Hyman to Dreiser, 10 May 1913, letter 73.

72. Dreiser to Hyman

Saturday, May 10—1913—26.
Only 20 days more to June.

My Dear Elyhon:
My Wild Flower:

Such a delicious letter came from you yesterday. It was so beautiful in its spirit. It makes life quite worth while. When you tell me that you love me so I take heart to work—to go on vigorously—for work without love as life without it is a dull game. I can see nothing in the clouds over the hills nor the splendor of the movement of the streets without my love is loving me. Then, somehow, I see things in their natural proportion. I do not envy other lovers their happiness as I have at times. I congratulate them.

Elyhon this is May 10 and I ought to be seeing you now soon. I am not going to do anything about subletting an apartment until I talk to you. I think I can get Miss McCanns anytime within a few days after June 1 and there are others. There is a place over the river—some delightful cottage on the river which we can talk about when I see you. I wish the train bearing you were coming in this morning and I were standing at the gate. But why not time yourself so as to arrive in the evening & then we can proceed from your long ride to rooms & a bath and I can pet my lover after her weary hours. You can be thinking all the way how I will take you in my arms and love you the night through for the sweet heart of you.

It is so cold here today—what we used to call Blackberry Winter—because such weather as this in spring used to freeze the blackberries. I am quite chill.

What an interesting woman your mother must be—and high strung. I sometimes wonder if she is truly interesting intellectually. You told me a few things which made me compare her to someone I know & since then I have heard others from others. Perhaps life has hurt a sensitive disposition very much. Perhaps she has never found a consuming love which could hold her. How she should fail to take to you I can scarcely understand but I am glad if her indifference has made you hungry for the affection

I want to give you. I can make up to you Elyhon for so many things if your heart really craves my love. I can pet you into a full blown rose if love will do it—and it will. Love to my heart unlocks all its finest fancies. I feel the most delicious impulse to do things—to write plays & books & essays. I could almost attempt verse but I should have to find a new lyric form. Perhaps you will find it for me some day. But, oh me, if we can only be together—that is all I want.

I was so disappointed yesterday for a moment. I went to the P.O. box & there was no letter—only a card calling for a package. I was in the dumps until the man brought out your extra heavy letter of eight pages & said there was two cents due.[1] Then you should have seen my spirits rise. And here at my table I sat & read of the Chinese tea-caddy and the green blouse and "ma" and of the room with two latch keys. Your such a wild kid—Elyhon. Your like a light wind at dawn or a dream of old roses.

Peaches Pet—you know I don't think much of Marjorie Jones. She is too easily shifted from one affection to another. First Dell & then Ficke[2] & then probably someone else a little later & all so swiftly. I can understand that she craves affection greatly but I'm afraid she won't get it deeply by showing her need of it so sharply. And least of all do I think that Fickes interest will last very long. The gentleman must be rather hard up emotionally. He will find someone else a little later and then fare well. If she were an able woman I could see her finding a faithful artistic mate. But not Ficke.

But of your love, your varied disposition, your resourceful and colorful moods I am never weary of thinking. I keep turning your temperament in my mind as one may a crystal sphere in the hands, contemplating its mysteries. You are somehow like an opal to me who[se] hidden fires are never the same in any light or from hour to hour, changing, flashing, glowing in a dark dull rich way. You are like a black opal that gleams red and green and blue. I keep wondering—strange restless creature that I am—whether you will find in me and I in you those complimentary artistic influences—those generosities, tendernesses &

forgivenesses which will bind us together. Can two artistic souls write together. Were Paolo and Francesca[3] so? Were Abelard & Heloise?[4] Were Wagner & Madame Wasendonck[5]; Goethe[6] and—who was she—I forget. We have the instance of Robert & Elizabeth Browning[7] but somehow I have never cared for those two. They are a little too sicky—but Wagner & Madame Wasendonck—they were so charming.

Did Shakespeare have his mate. All great men have had their great woman—there are great loving woman to smooth out their hearts & bind up their wounds & make life whole. Are juice my great woman Elyhon—my mate—my pet. Oh, but I do love you so. Write me a long letter. Don't you know yet the sure day when you are going to start? Keep me happy by loving letters until you come.

Your Lover-Husband.

This is a sweet old chesnut but it's almost good.[8]

[1] See Hyman to Dreiser, 7 May 1913, letter 65.

[2] In the Chicago bohemia of Dell's circle, Marjorie Jones had had affairs with Arthur Ficke and George Cram Cook before settling, for a time, on Dell. See Clayton, *Floyd Dell*, 116–17, 134–36.

[3] Paolo and Francesca are two doomed adulterous lovers in Canto V of "The Inferno" of *The Divine Comedy* (1308–21), by Dante Alighieri (1265–1321); *Paolo and Francesca da Rimini* (1855) is also a famous watercolor, inspired by *The Divine Comedy*, by Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–1882).

[4] Peter Abelard (1079–1142) was a French philosopher who began an affair with Heloise d'Argenteuil, made her pregnant and secretly married her, and then was castrated by a band of men under the direction of her uncle. Their letters were published in 1616, and their story inspired a number of literary works, both before and after the publication of the letters.

[5] Richard Wagner 1813–1883), German composer, became infatuated with the poet Mathilde Wesendonck (1828–1902), who became his muse for the opera *Tristan und Isolde* (1859) as well as the *Wesendonck Lieder* (1862), five songs based on poems by Wesendonck.

[6] Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), German writer whose epistolary novel *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (1774) is about a young man's unrequited love. Goethe had a number of affairs, but

Dreiser may be referring to Goethe's last love, Ulricke von Levetzow (1804–1899), with whom Goethe became infatuated when she was only 17 and whose rejection of his marriage proposal inspired the "Marienbad Elegy" (1823).

[7] Poets Robert Browning (1812–1889) and Elizabeth Barrett Browning (1806–1861) met after Barrett published her *Poems* in 1844, which Browning admired. Their courtship, conducted in secret to avoid her father's disapproval, led to their marriage in 1866 and move to Italy and subsequent disinheritance by her father. Their courtship has long fired popular imagination.

[8] Dreiser inscribed this next to a comic clipping about an Irish domestic who, when given tickets to the theater by acclaimed actor James O'Neill (father of Eugene), mistook the rise of the painted curtain and the ensuing dramatic action as eavesdropping on "family affairs."

73. Hyman to Dreiser

May 10, 1913.

My Beloved Refuge

Curses be on all reporters, curses on the heads of all their tribe, now and forevermore. It was exactly a quarter past four this morning when the phone started to ring. It rang and rang, and as all three phones are at the back of the house, one of them in Bobby's room, I decided I would let someone else answer. Then, as I became less drowsy I thought perhaps something had happened to you, and I tore for the 3d-floor phone. The stairs were like ice, and the wind was tearing through the house. "Is Mr. Hyman in?" I said: "Surely," and back I went down the cold stairs to Daddy's room. The bed had been occupied, but was empty. In the meantime Bobby had finally taken it into his head to answer. Then I told the man he was not in, and hung up. It is funny that Daddy should have had to go down twice in one night. The second time the store was really robbed. They smashed the diamond window high over the steel grill and cleaned off the shelves. They did not get much. About $800. They have never got away with more than a thousand without being caught. There are many other stores one

would think they would prefer, however, for ours is on what is accepted as being the busiest corner in the city.

I lay along awake after the alarm, not worrying, for Daddy's having had to go down once during the evening gave me a definite idea of what must have happened. But the excitement of a call like that ringing in the dawn is not easily abated. I lay, wide awake, hugging my letters and wondering, as one will wonder at a time like that, if my loved one was perfectly safe. Poor Daddy! We breakfasted together, and he told me about it then. . . .

74. Dreiser to Hyman

Sunday, May 11th 1913. No 27.

Honey Girl,
Asia Baby:

It was such good news your letter held yesterday that you were coming May 29th. I took it that meant that you would arrive here May 29th leaving Chicago the 28th. That means that my last letter goes to you the 26th and this is the 11th—only 15 more letters and then I have you. Really I am with you all the time in mood—walking beside you, looking at you, feeling arms and hands—but to actually have you again will be heaven. I would prefer that you arrange it so that those first three days are spent with me at once. Don't go to the Brevoort until late Sunday night or Monday morning when we return from wherever we decide to go. I should like to go down to the Oriental Hotel at Manhattan if it [is] open or to the Terra Marine at Huguenot on Staten Island. If not there at least to some place here in the city—the Prince George or the Gregorgian[1] where we can be alone. It would [be] nicer to go out of town over the week end. Are you afraid to go to Long Beach with me?

But I'm not worrying so much where we'll go or how—just thinking of how delightful it will be to have you again—for keeps I hope. It pleases me so to hear you speak of your trousseau. It is such in the best sense. You belong to me and you are my peachy bride coming to your hungry lover husband. My but I will hold you close—my long brown lily, and smooth & fondle your lovely

body. I'll get to see all the pretty dresses & the slippers and the morning gown and what not.

It's interesting to hear you tell of Floyd Dells difficulties but not surprising.[2] I fancied the first time I met her—in 1911 that she was a neglected person. I am morally sure that at that time he was intimate with Edna Kenton[3]—such as she is—sure of it. But there must have been many others. It always makes me a little sad (selfishly I suppose) to think that you were included along with Edna and Marjorie Jones for you are so much more significant than either of the others—perhaps more so than any of the others. However it's all in a life time and you may have an intellectual angle which takes that relation lightly. I know many people do. They devide tenderness and affection from cohabitation or the sex relation—having perhaps a strong feeling for one & indifferent relations with many. I am quite free to believe that it is possible though the experience has never been mine. You won't quarrel with me for smiling will you over your naive thoughts about Marjorie Jones share in it all, will you?

But I don't really care if you love me & will be faithful to me physically until you decide to leave me entirely. If you will just promise me one thing that when you end sex fidelity you will end everything else at the same time I will be happy. I will promise here and now to utter no reproaches & to make no comment—if you will do that. We will simply part good friends. Whether later, by any chance, we might decide to come together again will remain to be seen. I simply do not care for mixed relations. Perhaps you think I am quarreling again—or showing a tendency in that direction—by bringing this up at all, but I'm not, I'm too thoroughly happy in your coming & your love which I now believe I'm to be disturbed. It somehow has arisen out of the whole Floyd Dell incident which interests me only as it affects you. Are you sure Mrs. Dell isn't going to name names & give dates & places? She may have to.

It has turned so cold here, Pet—quite winter again. I am wearing—or will wear—an over coat today. Lets hope it's warm & bright when you come. And by the way why do you come over the New York Central. Why not the Philadelphia for change or the

B & O. The latter trip is beautiful. If you left the same time I did in the afternoon you would get here the next night at 10 P.M. & you would have a lovely day in the mountains East of Pittsburgh following quaint rivers & seeing the lovely country between here and Washington. The dining service is excellent & the observation car delightful. I like it much better than the Northern route.

You know I have never said so much about it but I think your art inclinations match mine exactly. I long for all those simply orderly things—self selected—which you do only I would rather come by them through you than through my personal efforts. I have always been looking for the one who could realize my art moods for me—without effort on my part—I have so little time—thus completing my life unconsciously. You are that one Elyhon—if you love me truly. I should find myself slipping gently & peacefully into the world you make which would be my world. What you did would be exactly as if I did it—what you felt would be what I would be feeling—I should not quarrel with you I know because I temperamentally lean so strongly to all that you represent. You are my art world & when you flower into your own than I shall have only what belongs to me—my own. Don't you see. It is so very true. It is exactly as it should be—when love is. Less than that between two is neither art nor love.

The Writer Man.

Thanks for the news concerning the Goodriches.[4] I wish them happiness. If you say so I will go down to see them off. I supposes she really realizes that you & I have hit it off together. She accused me in Chicago of being more interested in you than anyone else but I refused to commit myself. If I were free I should not hesitate to do so now. When you arrive of course I'll kiss you if you say so—if you think it's alright. I want to alright—that you know. Oh, the blessed 29th.[5]

[1] The Oriental Hotel was a resort hotel located at Manhattan Beach; the Terra Marine Inn was located in Huguenot, Staten Island. The Prince George Hotel still stands on 27th Street; the Gregorian Hotel is on 35th Street—both near Fifth Avenue.

[2] For Dell's "difficulties," see Hyman to Dreiser, 8 May 1913, n. 1, letter 68; Dreiser to Hyman, 10 May 1913, n. 2, letter 72.

[3] Edna Kenton (1876–1954), writer, critic, and suffragist, wrote an early review of *Sister Carrie* ("Glances at New Books," *Chicago Daily News*, 30 Nov. 1900: 13; rpt. Salzman, *Critical Reception*, 2–3) and thereafter developed a long friendship with Dreiser. She would become a key member of the Provincetown Players, which staged Dreiser's *The Hand of the Potter* in 1921.

[4] This refers to the marriage of Hyman's friend Elizabeth Goodrich, who married in June 1913. See Dreiser to Hyman, 22 Feb. 1913, n. 3, letter 13.

[5] At the end of the letter Dreiser pasted a comic clipping about a girl missing her train.

75. Dreiser to Hyman

[Publ. *LTW*]

Monday, May 12th 1913—29[1]

Peaches Pet:

My Own Black-Haired Kid:

You must be easy in your thoughts of me these days—these last two or three—for your letters breath a strange content which is sweet to me. You love in such a delicious way Elyhon. You come forward with an eager step—match my thoughts and my moods with a sweet and delicious abandon. That is the charm of you—the wonder—and it pulls me so exquisitely. I shall never forget the many delicious things you have said—the direct assurances given "before this I throw my body after my spear."[2]

Well, Peaches Pet, be happy. I only wish I could go to sleep & forget everything until your train arrives, the 29th or 28th. I am like a ten year old—expectant—and when you come we will hurry to our secret embraces if we may—to the holding of each other close until—for the moment this ache be satisfied. Then just sweet pettings and talks until the fever that is passion returns. I shall never forget you at the Hall of Fame[3] exclaiming so passionately—"oh I want you so."

With the letters today—there were none yesterday—came the copy of Nordfelts portrait of you. It is delicious. I like the rhythmic

swing of you and the delicious Jewish cast of your face. I wonder how much of a Jewish woman you are going to look as you grow older. That is the race of faithful women and of happy families—perhaps more so than any other. I have always admired the loyalty of most of the Jewish woman I have known. They give, in so many cases, for keeps. But you have New England in you, too,[4] and heaven knows what errantries of romance. But it is delightful this picture & I wish I owned it. With your consent I may secure it someday soon ahead of you—for myself.

Honey Lamb I can't write much more today. It seems to be raining people. I went to see Madame Kalich last night in "The Kreutzer Sonata"[5] on the East Side—she is splendid. Mr. Karl Lewis, of Chicago is at the Astor & phoning hourly. Mrs. Jarmuth[6] & old friend of mine is almost dying of heart trouble & wants my counsel as to her will & effects. I have my work & 20 other things. But I could write you by the week—if I might—just soothing reiterations of thoughts of you—of how much I want you. Write me each day—love me as you do, with that intense feeling which seems to take my very soul in your arms and shield it. And yours are the arms—the only ones in all the world that can.[7]

T.D.

[1] Dreiser apparently skipped number 28 in his daily letter numbering.

[2] The quotation is a rough approximation of a line from Macbeth, Act 5, scene 8, in which Macbeth cries to Macduff, "Before my body / I throw my warlike shield. Lay on MacDuff, / And damn'd be him that first cries "Hold, enough!'"

[3] Hall of Fame: see Dreiser to Hyman, 30 March 1913, n. 3, letter 27.

[4] Hyman's mother, whose maiden name was Arabelle Bushnell, was raised in Lakeville, Connecticut, and came from a prominent family that went back to the earliest settlers in New England.

[5] Kalich was playing a role for which she was famous on the Yiddish stage, an adaptation of Leo Tolstoy's novella about marriage, jealousy, and murder, *The Kreutzer Sonata* (1890).

[6] Edith DeLong Jarmuth (1880–1919) had separated from her husband in Colorado, moved to New York City, and became active in suffragist and avant-garde circles. She divorced her husband and

in 1918 married Dreiser's friend, the journalist Edward H. Smith (1881–1927), with Dreiser serving as best man. In June 1919 she died of influenza. Later, Dreiser wrote a semi-fictional sketch about her as "Olive Brand" in *A Gallery of Women* (1929).

[7] At the end of the letter Dreiser pasted a comic clipping about contemporary slang in verse form.

76. Dreiser to Hyman

Tuesday—May 13—1913—No 30.

Peaches Pet:

My Own Letter Holder:

Would you pet me very much today Elyhon if you were here and knew that I was very tired & that my nerves ache me. Last night I went to bed thinking of you—and no blame to you—had a bad night. I kept thinking of you wishing you were here. Today I put in a long day—from nine to four looking over this blessed book or wretched book perhaps I'd better say & it's gone rather hard with me. Sometimes a book gets as cantankerous as anything else & refuses to take form & progress until the nerves almost snap. I've been struggling with mine & I'm very tired. Would you love me, if you knew, not because I deserve it but just because I'm tired?

I meant to tell you the other day—speaking of the Gouleds—that they at once asked if I had heard from you & I said yes—several short notes. They also indicated that she heard reasonably often & that you were doing very well. She said that your sister Dorothy & her friend had been down & wished to see me but that she did not have my telephone number at the time and could not communicate. No other comment of any kind concerning the Hymans were made except a few unimportant ones concerning your mother—her nerves.

I've been wishing each day you would write me longer letters than you have during the last four but if you can't think of much to say you can't—I know that. Love goes in waves like anything else—the rythm of affection & passion is the rythm of life. Some

times we are keen some times dull—even in love. Your letters are not dull though—ever just brief & elusive at times.

You know Elyhon sweet—I think you could accomplish beautiful verse if you would. There is something so pale and delicate about all of the things I have seen of yours—pale & delicate & yet rich & sweet, like moonlight on water. I always think if you lived with & loved me you could love me into such beautiful things. Only love does that—only love can. It is like some rich & wonderous soil into which we are transplanted—or into a fine scene, a perfect landscape or a perfect day—which inspires. Yesterday I recieved a 6 page poem from someone—rythmic, metaphysical, charming & it is all about me. I shall show it to you when you come. It has passages of rare beauty & force.

But honey sweet it isn't poems I want or letters even from anyone save you—but just you & your understanding heart. I wonder sometimes when I write to you so fully whether after all you are really old enough to know your own mind & your own heart. You are so young—just twenty-one. I think of that reference in the bible to the house that was built upon sand—"and the storm came & the wind blew & great was the fall thereof".[1] So it is, so often, with the thin dreams that have no base in a wise consciousness. If you do not know—if there is no real chemic pull between us—something much deeper than mere moments of passion—if we haven't things to give each other freely & fully in great generosity it will not last long. The winds of selfishness will blow—the attractions of other things will act and this house will fall. There will be no understanding & no union between me & you.

That is such a delightful sentiment you exercise, sleeping with my letters in your arms. It is so lovely. In my moments of doubt I fall back on things of that kind for assurance. And when I am lonely & wishing for a letter I get out all your pictures—(I have four now) & compose them in a square—the large head of you in a black frame with a glass over it—and study you in the different aspect in which these pictures reveal you. I like the Nordfelt portrait for many reasons but principally for the swing—or rythm & the sense of motion & go it has—my wild Elyhon. I like the large head next best for it reveals the pathos of your young

spirit & of your beauty even though it is full of sweet simulation. I like the one where you sit by an open fire place next best because of the lonley, arty spirit of it—the wise smile that is too sapient to be really young & next I like the one published in the Examiner (?)[2]—the one you gave me second because it is normal & natural—without a suggestion of affection—except that consciousness of yourself which you never escape apparently—and sometimes I like that best of all. But, oh, me, better than pictures I treasure my dreams of what was & may be, and better than these—you yourself when I have you.

But I hurt so now from nerves & work & longing that I am going to stop & walk. I long so to be taken in hand by you & sympathized with. Why? Oh, because at bottom, very often, I am a very little child & I want my mama. Thats all.

Th. D.

What do you think of this thing below anyhow & the comment on it. I would really like to have your opinion.[3]

[1] Matthew 7:27. The American Standard Version reads: "and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and smote upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall thereof."

[2] See Dreiser to Hyman, 26 Feb. 1913, n. 2, letter 16.

[3] Dreiser attached a clipping, which the newspaper prefaced, in part, "And 'the city papers,' which, with all due solemnity, are wont to speak of politicians as statesmen, profess to find this amusing."

"SOME BRIDE."

> "The bride is a woman of wondrous fascination and remarkable attractiveness, for with manner as enchanting as the wand of a siren, and a disposition as sweet as the odors of flowers, and spirits as joyous as the carolings of birds, and mind as brilliant as those glittering tresses that adorn the brow of winter, and with heart as pure as dewdrops trembling in a coronet of violets, she will make the home of her husband a paradise of enchantment like the lovely home of her girlhood, where the heaven-toned harp of marriage, with its chords of love and devotion and fond endearments, sent forth the sweetest strains of felicity that ever thrilled the senses with the rhythmic pulsings of ecstatic rapture."

77. Hyman to Dreiser

May 13, 1913

My precious baby

Was so tired when he wrote me last. Oh, little sweetheart, I must ask for something too, that makes me dreadfully sad. It is simply that I must not, or rather cannot, hear from you until Monday. When you get this you must put away the next letter you write and add it to the next one, and early Sunday morning mail them together to your child. The reason for this is that we are going to spend the week-end at the cottage with mother,[1] and it would not do to have a collection of your letters—few as it might contain—waiting for me on my return on Monday. During that time—which I thank heaven is short—I doubt whether I can write to you at all without arousing mother's and father's notice. Little tired son must not worry if word does not come. He knows, doesn't he? How I love him, and how I will get word to him if possible. In fact I will get a letter off tomorrow morning before we leave, and perhaps I can get one in on Sunday night, so that would only leave Saturday without. How I will look for tomorrow's letter. It will have to last until Monday, and much as I love it I would like to have two new ones in between.

Oh, my lover-heart, my little boy, he mustn't work so hard. Oh, that letter today makes me ache so, makes it so hard to think that you are way off there where I cannot touch you, cannot pet you, where I cannot do anything but just long and long, with a ceaseless longing. It all makes me think of the second trip to Revere Beach,[2] when it was cold, and I got so morbid on the way home, and you slept while I went to the performance, and when I came back I only came to say that I must go home with Mrs. C. Lying there in the dark, your hand went to my breast, and I opened my dress without thinking. Then you were so surprised that I was quite frightened at myself, and left you with a miserable sense of my own brazenness and inadequacy, which was only quelled by your voice on the phone the next morning. Oh, the strange wonder of it all, darling, the compassion for each other's pains or wearinesses,

the desire, above all, to please, to do what one knows is pleasing in the eyes of the loved one.

[1] In 1904 the Hymans built a summer cottage on Tower Hill, near Spring Green, Wisconsin.

[2] Hyman is recalling her rendezvous with Dreiser in March 1913, when the Chicago Little Theatre was playing as the guests of Boston's Toy Theatre.

78. Dreiser to Hyman

Wednesday, May 14—1913—No 31

Honey Sweet
My Ebony & Ivory Girl:

I had a letter from you today mentioning Lee McCann. You needn't worry about her. In the first place—like the only one of the sixteen reasons that was important in the story—she isn't in the least good looking—not the least bit, but interesting intellectually. She is constantly digging up interesting men & women, artists, sculptors & the like of whom I am not normally apt to hear. In the next place she doesn't like me, save as a writer. I know an artist at whose feet she would fall if he would let her—but he won't. So your rhyme is anything but to the point. I could name you others who might have disturbed you a year ago but not seriously. Honey Sweet you never had a real rival except as an ideal in one and since I have known you I have come to identify you with her. And I shall continue to do so I believe. Only you can separate yourself from that and in one way. And even then I should not be sure but that I had found my ideal and lost it—through some lack of magnetism in me.

It is once more delicious spring here—warm & soothing & last night I walked in the moonlight thinking of you. I came home very tired and this morning had the first dream I ever had of you. You were so vivid and so friendly—so companionable with me. It was only a vision—you just seemed to be in the same room with me dressed much as you were the first day at the house and talking.

There was no passion, no embrace, nothing—just presence and such a genial, sympathetic look given to me. Downstairs, somewhere, your mother (!) was playing on the piano & quite delightfully. I woke sorry to be awake—sorry that there are days and days more.

I have worked all day on my story until now 4:30 and it just probable that I did somewhat better than I did yesterday. I am on chapter 46 & soon to be done with it. I am trying to select a new lady-girl type for Cowperwood as an interlude between one commercial deal & another. I think I am about to settle on you. I am not sure that you will like the interpretation for I shall have to make her do things that I do not want her to do at all—that hurt me.[1] But I haven't really begun yet on that. I'm merely turning my pen in my hand. This may turn out to be a very long story after all & I had hoped to make it shorter.

Tonight Franklin Booth[2] and I are going to some artists singing club & when I come home late I shall lie down & wish you were here. Always late at night I get the most dreadful ache for you. I suffer—Lord—I can't tell you how much or how. It seems as though I should never get through the night—never sleep. What the devils hell is this, anyhow? I seem to be sane enough on every topic except this awful pull toward you. When I get to thinking about you I hurt—actually & truly. For Gods sake, Elaine, be faithful to me. You will not be worth a seconds breath if your womans tenderness & mercy will not see me through this unscathed.

But, oh, why talk. I get so sad sometimes. I sink & sink until I wish I were dead. The spring is here, my work is heavy, this sunny world is short and I am alone. But I'll try & brace up. I'll make the best of a sore task—two weeks more of long, long days. Why not come sooner? But I suppose you can't. I wish I were out there. I wish we were in an apartment by ourselves. I wish you loved me as no woman ever loved a man before. I would drink it all if I died.[3]

Th D

[1] In the Platow sections of *The Titan*, Dreiser sketches a promiscuous Stephanie, her sexual encounter with Gardner Knowles (Dell),

and his own double standard regarding sexual fidelity in Cowperwood's judgment and eventual rejection of Stephanie. For Hyman's later complaint about this depiction, see Dreiser to Markham, 9 Feb. 1914, n. 4, letter 143.

[2] Franklin Booth (1874–1948), Indiana-born artist known for his pen-and-ink illustrations for magazines and book publishers. Dreiser first met Booth when they were colleagues on the New York *Daily News* in 1904. In 1915, Dreiser would undertake a 2,000-mile road trip with his fellow Hoosier, publishing his account, with 32 charcoal illustrations by Booth, as *A Hoosier Holiday* (1916), America's first road book.

[3] Dreiser attached a comic clipping about a dog, punning on "mad."

79. Dreiser to Hyman

May 15—1913—(Thursday) No 32
Just 14 days exactly until you get here.

Peaches Honey:
My Baby Girl:

I had such a nice letter from you today but after reading it I don't feel a bit less hungry for you than I did yesterday—rather more so. Your suggestion as to the character of the Mathison play "The Necessary Evil"[1] and your opinion of it interests me so much. I love you so Elyhon for at 21 apparently you have a full grip on reality or are fast getting it. So many things you say illuminate the scene—a clear flash of insight. For me to love you it would necessarily be so for I like to see things as clearly as may be, though always at the ultimate reaches of thought we come upon mystery again. But the silly little people who see the world as something that it is not—who mouth and act hearsay—believe that virtue is a sexless, dehumanized state—perfect & yet easily made imperfect—and always sufficient for all human needs give me a pain. Life teaches a sad fatality and a rich reality—but why waste breath on them. The blind are leading the blind and Ephraim is wedded to his idols.[2]

But if much, or some of the world, exists in silly misapprehension you and I can live and find it real together. I would so much like

to see you interpreting with rare art the grave realities of things. I saw Madam Kalisch the other night in "The Kreutzer Sonata" and she reminded me of you truly enough only you are going to have a sweeter stage presence—or have it. It is just such roles as that that you should essay & if you could appear here in that play I believe you would make a fine impression. Of course, Elyhon, you are very young yet. You can wait years for your true maturity without harm. But it would be such fun to be with you and help define your art for you. I wish when you come you would never leave me anymore. I don't want to be alone anymore. I feel as though I were divided now—one half here and one half elsewhere, and if you go again I shall suffer terribly. I want to live with you in happy union. Can't we work it out some way?

You know I think Madam Kalich is a little angry at me. She sent word up to the box by her daughter for me to wait until after the performance and come back up the stage but I couldn't. I had a young singer with me who had to make a train. When I called her up the maid said she was sleeping & when I wrote she didn't answer me promptly, which she should have—she hasn't yet. That is the pettishness of the artistic temperament.

Baby mine, don't worry about your clothes. I don't care, really, so long as I have you. Perhaps I'll make some money myself one of these days and then you can have anything the amount will justify. I should love to buy things for you. It would be an intense pleasure to know that everything on you from shoes to hairpins had been bought by me. I would like to clothe you in realities produced by my love & my labor. Love is always so. It wants to give freely. There is no happiness in division. I would like to give you everything I might and feel that there was nothing but just Elyhon and me—our common, unified world. Don't you feel so, Elyhon—or do you? Truth letter.

I like your letter today so much because it tells me so feelingly how you love me. Is your heart really all mine, Elyhon, and will you love me engrossingly? I want to be loved in your spirit—immersed in it. I want to sink completely into Elyhon and be her as she is me. I want to hold you so close, physically & spiritually and that all

that you are will come into me and all that I am will go into you. I really want to be one with you, Pet, my Honey Girl—just held in your heart until there is nothing save a single, rich effective and perfected point of view. There are such unions. The world holds them in delicious memory. All the old hurts of the world would pass away I am sure if just you & I could cling close. I need you so & I wish it might be that you really needed me.[3]

Th D.

[1] *The Necessary Evil* (1913) is a one-act play about the double standard by Charles Rann Kennedy (1871–1950), whose wife, Edith Wynn Matthison, played the fallen woman who warns the twenty-one-year-old Nellie to insist on marriage "in daylight" rather than to become a man's mistress. The play was then in performance at the Fine Arts Theatre in Chicago.

[2] A reference to Hosea 4:17—"Ephraim is joined to idols, / Let him alone" (American Standard Bible).

[3] Pasted at the end of letter is a newspaper clipping of the poem "Into Arcady," by Marsh K. Powers, reprinted from the April 1913 *Smart Set*.

80. Dreiser to Hyman

Sunday, May 18th 1913—

Peaches Pet:
My Lover Girl:

I didn't try to write you Friday or Saturday after your letter came for somehow it seemed rather doleful business writing letters which couldn't go at once & so I just didn't. I waited until today thinking I could say enough to renew the connection—to bridge the lapse. I wanted to write but more even than writing—except for what it would mean to you—I should prefer to go to sleep and forget—to be wakened only when I might be happy again—not otherwise.

How slowly the days drift by. I work & work at what seems to me an endless task. When I think of work & life I always think of Piranesis[1] drawing of the poor tortured devil of a man who climbs a staircase suspended over an abyss; as he mounts each

step the lower one crumbles into the depths below. Not that the agony of the man who is shown in tense crouching attitude, his hands drawing the masonry above him is represented in the labor of ordinary work, but just this that the endless stairs is always above—the abyss of nothingness behind. When this book is done there must be another or idleness is the final dark. We cannot really stop and stand our own souls. The pen or the art must go. Work is our salvation. Luther used to sing—"a mighty fortress is our God." I should say "a mighty fortress is our work" only also it is our prison—our very heavy ball & chain.

But the days pass so slowly, even so, and there is nothing but pen pushing. You seem to find much keen diversion running here and there with one and another. I find very little. I go. Last night, I sat with a half dozen radicals from 6:30 to 11—I.W.W.[2] propagandists—a waiter who is in the strike at Patterson,[3] a propagandist who is lecturing and writing, a cripple who is doing a new political economy for the world, a woman who is a sort of Louise Michel,[4] only younger & Mrs Jarmuth, radical, dreamer, what not, who thinks she is dying of heart lesion. It was gay enough—candles, good food, a pretty prospect, some beauty in the women but I found it dull. I wonder whether I am becoming a solitary and whether the fate of the monk in your story of the monk and the dancer is to be mine.[5] Is that story to be typical of our love? It might, you know.

I am wondering sometimes whether you aren't getting a little weary of my too fervid letters. How would you like to stop now—from now until the 29th & see if it makes any particular difference. Perhaps by too much protest I am blowing these fine coals to ashes. Isn't the bundle of letters large enough as it is—almost man size. Why eight more? It would please me but wouldn't you love me more if I stopped?

I marvel sometimes how easy it is for people to misunderstand each other. I saw a moving picture film the other day entitled "Let Them Quarrel"[6] which illustrated it exactly but I won't describe that. What I was thinking of was your saying in one letter that the

time you opened your dress when I put my hand on your bosom you fancied I thought you too bold and grieved over it.[7] As a matter of fact I was thinking at that time and often since how nice and direct and simple it was—just the sort of thing I love to see you do and which you do do with a freshness which is captivating. You have a sort of wild Jack Johnson way of handing out a punch now and then that does the trick completely. I was thinking particularly of such phrases as "life isn't sweet mushings over ones do-o-dy" and that other about Prof. Foster "blabbing like an old wash woman". I have never forgotten either "writer-pups"[8] or the room with the two keys.

However, this is now Sunday the 18th. Eleven days more should set you down in N.Y. When this reaches you Tuesday it will be only nine days more & I shall write my last letter if I may on the 26—6 days later. I hope sincerely that I hear no news of delay nor any untoward intelligence of any kind. If this thing doesn't work out as I hope I shall strictly confine myself to books & meditation for many a day. Brother Theodore will become a reality. Well, Pet, let me hear and believe that I never change in thought. I think much & variously but the lure is continuous. I hope you enjoyed your visit to the country. I have had no word as yet of course. Letter number 40 came yesterday—one day after 41—which shows how the mails vary. Hold my letters tight please & wish that they were me. The thought of you sleeping with them so comforts me.

Mr. Dweisah.

I am now working on chapter 52.[9]

[1] Giovanni Battista Piranesi (1720–1778), Italian artist famous for his etchings of Rome. Dreiser is likely referring to one of the fourteen imaginary prisons in a collection entitled *Carceri d'invenzione* (1750).

[2] I.W.W.: Industrial Workers of the World. A labor union, nicknamed the "Wobblies," founded in 1905 in Chicago,

[3] That is, the Paterson Silk Strike. See Dreiser to Hyman, 15 April 1913, n. 3, letter 42.

[4] Louise Michel (1830–1905), French anarchist and a leader of the Paris Commune who was sentenced to 20 years in prison, then

deported to New Caledonia, and then granted amnesty in 1890. Until her death she lectured widely in Europe.

[5] For "The Monk and the Dancer," see Dreiser to Hyman, 1 March 1913, n. 3, letter 21. In the story Brother Angelo becomes fascinated by a Spanish dancer, Delores, who lures him away from his vows. When she tires of him, he returns, chastened and penitent, to the monastery.

[6] *Let 'Em Quarrel*, dir. Laurence Trimble (1913), a comedy short.

[7] See Hyman to Dreiser, 13 May 1913, letter 77.

[8] See Hyman to Dreiser, [ca. 24] Feb. 1913, letter 15.

[9] Attached at the end of the letter is a comic clipping about a baby eating an ear of corn.

81. Dreiser to Hyman

[Monday],[1] May 19th, 1913—No 34

My Honey Girl:

I'm not going to be able to write much today. I've just agreed over the phone to take a long spin out to the Inn at Upper Montclair[2] and I know I shan't be back before midnight or later. I wouldn't have waited to write now only I had no idea this was coming & I have about fifteen minutes to shift my present classic garb which is nothing more than a gray silk dressing gown. But tomorrow sure (possibly late to night) I will write a better letter. It's as clear as crystal out & ought to be delicious. I wish you were going along. Dinner on a balcony overlooking perhaps 10 miles of landscape. I had no letter yesterday—none today so far though there may be one waiting. Ill see. It's an ill wind—isn't it—, but the air won't hurt me. Much love.

Th D

[1] Dreiser wrote "Tuesday" but meant to write "Monday," which is the 19th day of May 1913.

[2] Dreiser is likely referring to the Hotel Montclair, which stood on the corner of Crestmont Road and Claremont Avenue, before closing in 1938.

82. Dreiser to Hyman

N.Y.

Tuesday, May 20—1913—No 35

My Honey Girl:
Flower Face:

Such a delightful letter came from you today—three in one—so much more faithful were you to your ideal than was I. If you knew what an inlay of moods and colors it is to me—how your mind glows like a mosaic but always with sombre reds, browns, greens blues the rich colors of all great mosaics! You seem to match my own fancies, tastes, emotions to the life. I might be there walking with you as I was myself years ago—as I still am. It is so I brood and meditate and build up strange fancies and then abandon them for others. I love the rich poetic passion of you—your hungry red heart. When I hold you in my arms I can feel how close your blood is to mine—what the kinship of emotion and magnetism & mood is. You build me up & tear me down but mostly you build me up & restore my soul. I get something out of your clasp—your close flesh clasp which is tonic.

Honey Peaches Sweet I propose to do everything in my power to keep you here as I wish & as you wish. Only get here once. There are several things that can be done & I will help you stay. I think you run a very good chance of getting what you want but you must be willing to try for awhile. Even if you get something it ought to be easy to conceal it for awhile and then to say there is some doubt as to when rehearsals may begin. That is an old true fact anyway. But more when you come. If Miss McCann will get out of her apartment I will take that for you in your name. But only come once.

I wish you would tell me how snakes do do when you come. I never knew. I never saw mating of that kind or much of any other kind. I should be glad to know. I am not quite so nervously squeamish as once I was.

Peaches Honey I wish you were so wrapped up in me that only my soul would satisfy you. If you knew how much I crave just what you represent. I get so enraged when you seem to forget me

at times that I could quite dismiss the whole thing and forget it all to cease my own suffering. I am so prone to do that at times—to end things swiftly and surely because I hurt so. I hate the wandering forgetful interest in other things which afflict us all and when I suffer so thinking that I am merely an element among other things I want nothing of it. I suppose you wonder what I am driving at—I am merely reflecting my moods when I don't hear from you.

Yesterday I had such a fine ride with the Smiths[1] & others to The Inn at Upper Montclair. We'll go over there some night if you will. It's about 18 or 20 miles from here. The ground is high, the balconies command great sweeps of country. The food is fair. At night they have dancing, for automobile parties arrive especially to dance from all about—the Oranges & elsewhere. The Smiths reside in Yonkers & adore me much. I was lonely though just the same, for outside of Mrs. Smith and a Sister-in law and a son (Sister-in-law aged 28) there was no one & only Mrs. Smith—the most faithful of wives by the way if you chance to think of her—commands my sympathetic interest. As usual I sat in a rocking chair, watched the dancing, the moon, the arriving machines & wished you were with me. We would have stolen off into the dark green fields and whispered in each others arms. I was glad to come back—to get to sleep again in order to forget.

The other night by the way I saw Mme Bernhardt in Lucrezia Borgia at The Plaza[2] here. There was a corking good vaudeville bill. To me she is much too old, too squeaky, too fat, too representative of an older day & an older method to suit me. Her art is a trick, too calculated, not sufficiently self resolving—disappearing. There is the actress who disappears completely into her part—there is other who causes her part to disappear in her. Give me the former. It is richer & truer. But the stage settings were excellent—the costuming & harmonizing perfect. I like the care she takes. It is the last test of a true artistic impulse.

But Asia Baby I don't care for anybody or anything but just you. Come to me, come to me, come to me & let me fold you close & kiss you, and rifle you of every image of love. Let me grip you with the steel of my desire that would so lock you close forever.

I am like a lean & hungry leopard—tense and savage. But I love you for more than passion—for music & moonlight & feeling and dreams. Think only of me, peaches sweet, as I think so constantly and yearningly of you.

Th D.

You won't like this page if I don't write something on it so here is a sample of an Irish pict.[3]

[1] William Neil Smith (1878–1934), a New York architect who, with Dreiser, purchased the *Bohemian* magazine in 1909, and wife, Florence. In a letter to Markham (10 March 1915, letter 244), Dreiser describes the breakdown of the Smith marriage.

[2] Sarah Bernhardt was then appearing "in conjunction with a big vaudeville show" at the Palace Theatre (not Plaza), that included the play *Lucrece Borgia* (spelling in a newspaper ad), by Victor Hugo.

[3] Dreiser refers to the blank verso of the page, onto which he pasted a comic clipping, in partial dialect, about the tomb of Lord Nelson.

83. Hyman to Dreiser

May 20, 1913

Sweetheart my own

When I thought last night coming home of my letter, I felt very guilty and that it must be very unsatisfactory when it comes. Then this morning came your Sunday letter, full, in a way, of misgivings, and I fell to wondering if it hadn't been turn and turn about. Not that your letter was unsatisfactory, sweetheart. Only that it was distressing beyond words to have you wonder if I really cared for your letters. Maybe the letter I wrote Sunday or that was part of the one I mailed Sunday, will tell you how I wait for them, or if not, would it help any to have me say that I was awake at twenty minutes to five trying to read the clock at 25 past 8 this morning, and had even started for the door to see if my letter had come before I realized.

Oh, lover-heart, your letters are all I have to bring you near me, and the bundle would grow quite dead, in spite of the past love it contains, were there not a fresh installment brought to the purple band each day.

I am sorry the book seems to be taxing you so of late, honey-boy, but to have Chapter 52 done is a good deal, and it will be more by the time this reaches you. There will be many a time when I can sit by you during your working hours, in spite of my teasing not long ago. I will sit so still, like one little mouse, but I will be all eyes and ears for some sign from my lover. And when he wants me I will arise so gladly and go to him. Maybe sometimes Elyhon may darn his socks, while he is writing. Elyhon darns better than she acts. Her darns are an ornament to the article needing mending. May she darn her lover-husband's socks for him? All day she has been darning her own. It does not seem as though she could ever get through with her preparations, there is to much to attend to, and only one week left. Think of it, lover, one week! A week from tomorrow I will be boarding the train, and a week from day after tomorrow I will be in my lover's arms, somewhere, it does not matter where, so long as I am there.

I had a most disconsolate note from Arthur Ficke today, unhappy because of the proposed Dell divorce. He will be relieved to know that the divorce is all off, and that they are merely going to separate for three months to see if things won't be all right at the end of that time. I think they will, though Margery says she doesn't love him any more. However, he frankly admits that he is very much in love with her, and I think, like the fairy stories, "they will live happily ever after."[1]

It is so grey here. I want to be caught up into the sunshine of my boy's love, and forget all about it. I want to bask in the warmth of his body and the tenderness of his caresses. Oh, my lover, my baby, I cannot wait to come to you. I am awearyin', awearyin' for you.[2]

Your
Black Kid.

[1] Despite efforts to reconcile, the Dells would divorce in late 1915.

[2] A reference to the popular parlor song "Just Awearyin' for You" (1901), by Carrie Jacobs-Bond (1862–1946). The first of its three stanzas reads:

Just a-wear-y-in' for you,
All the time a-feel-in' blue,
Wish-in' for you wond'-rin' when
You'll be com-in' home a-gain.
Restless, don't know what to do,
Just a-wear-y-in' for you.

84. Dreiser to Hyman

Wednesday, May 21—
1913—No 36 (I believe)

My Wild Whirly-Girl:

You certainly are the scare of the ages. Every day you find some new condition to agonize one. If it isn't your mother it's your appendix and if it isn't your appendix it's snakes or what the Brownes are going to do about me & you. In so far as I am concerned and what they think of me the Brownes can go to hell. I was very civil to them. Nix for any courtesies in the future—here or anywhere else. I don't believe Mary Elizabeth showed that or any other letter of mine though she may have talked much. She confessed to me in one letter that she had made many derogatory remarks concerning me to Floyd Dell & then ran around afterwards when she thought I was going to like her and took it all back. Such is life. In the particular letter in question I took good care to quote Mary Elizabeth herself and she isn't showing that—believe me. But as for the Brownes I'll stake nine dollars to a doughnut that it is your friend Elizabeth Goodrich who is trying to save you from your fate and talking and that is nothing more or less than a case of sour grapes. She thinks she can get even for a fancied slight by taking you away from me. If you think there is any deeper, truer motive you simply don't know human nature—although I am sure you do.

Sour grapes have been a fruitful source of annoyance to me in years past and I haven't always eaten them by any means. It will account for much gossip concerning me here and elsewhere. If you want to stand by me you might as well make up your mind now to listen to the derogatory and to various hands lifted in holy horror.

I repeat over & over that I don't give a damn. I happen to be a little more incisive than some of the people who complain. Hence!

But—"ravenons à nos moutons".[1] If you do love me, Peaches Sweet, and I never doubt it now, be prepared to stand your ground. Don't go to peices so easily. Don't argue in the open—but arrange things underneath the surface. It's silly to be headed off completely by the conventional and the dull when a little tact and subtlety will arrange it all. If you by any chance can't come down here I may find it possible to come out there—if there is any chance of your seeing me—but certainly not otherwise. If you come here and will take the bit in your teeth I will help you stay. I don't care to get into any row with your father & mother but if I do you may depend on it that papa & mama will come up against a real fact if they come up against me. I dislike arguments but once in—I never back out. If you want to let them carry you off and forget me that is your business—not mine. I am not going to quarrel with that. If you want to help yourself & have me help you that is another thing, but unless you want to, <u>much</u>, there is nothing doing. This is my last word on the family quarrel business & the danger of separation. I want you but I want a fighting girl not a baby to lead me into a trap and then throw me. That's a welcher—and a welcher is a no-good in art and everything else.

But glory be I have never thought of you as that way at all. I think of you as a rich souled, poetic, dreamy but at the same time drifting slowly & surely to things that are good for you & that will help you. I love you but I do so largely because I think there is real stuff to you—something new, colorful sweet. I believe you can help me if you will & I can help you. But you must be with me, or I must eventually drop out entirely. The strain is too great. I didn't return your Financier because I am holding it with the notes for future reference—when I have time to recast the book. I didn't add that last silly remark about a moral to Lilly Edwards. It was put on in the office of The Smart Set & they never sent me a proof.[2] I understand now that my Century articles begin in August & the book comes out in September—late.[3] The Titan I hope to issue in

October.[4] Be a good girl & don't give me up & love me much. Do come on, next week.

Your Mr. dreiser

By the way why don't you go to the Brownes, say what you have heard & ask them to keep their hands off. If they see you are in earnest—your own boss—they will. It won't hurt you. It will raise you in their estimation. I would ask Miss Goodrich to do the same.

That is such a beautiful poem by Francis Thompson.[5] Do I gather that that was written to your mother?

Do you know that you never answer any of my questions—anymore than I answer most of yours? I'm afraid your for art—not love.[6]

[1] Revenons à nos moutons: let's get back to the subject (literally, let us return to our sheep).

[2] "Lilly Edwards: An Episode," *Smart Set* 40 (June 1913): 81–86. The episode, about Dreiser's encounter with a Welsh prostitute at Piccadilly Square in London during his European sojourn, is chapter XIII of *A Traveler at Forty* (New York: Century, 1913). The book version concludes, "Poor little Welsh waif! I thought, how long, how long, will she be 'here' before she goes down before the grim shapes that lurk in her dreary path disease, despair, death?" The *Smart Set* version adds a final line: "And the moral of it all? I don't know. Do you?"

[3] Excerpts from *A Traveler at Forty* appeared in *Century* 86 as "The First Voyage Over" (Aug. 1913): 586–95 [chs. I-III, V]; "An Uncommercial Traveler in London" (Sept. 1913): 736–49 [chs. VII-XI]; "Paris" (Oct. 1913): 904–15 [chs. XXI-XXIV]. *A Traveler at Forty* was published on 25 Nov. 1913.

[4] After many delays, *The Titan* would be published on 22 May 1914 by the John Lane Co.

[5] Francis Joseph Thompson (1859–1907), English poet. Hyman's letter, identifying the poem, does not survive. See Dreiser to Hyman, 25 May 1913, n. 1, letter 92, where Dreiser identifies "An Arab Love-Song" as the Thompson poem he likes best.

[6] At the end of this page, Dreiser pasted a comic clipping about a German saloon-keeper named August, whose rising bills during the month of August led to forced retirement.

85. Hyman to Dreiser

May 21, 1913

Lover Sweet

I thought I had a letter tonight, and found, when I opened it, clippings on vice,[1] but read them gladly and with interest because they came from you. But I don't want to talk about it, only face to face. Our letters cannot, short as they are, be of anything but our love and the things that surround it. New complications seem to rise at every turn. This one is not so important, only it adds more change to the conditions as they stand. It is merely that, if I get work next winter, mother wants to come East and live with me. She may never do so, one cannot tell, but that is what she confided to me today, that she could not make her life circle around father's any longer—that there must be something nearer real happiness than to have him come home and read to her, or to himself, or go to bed, night after night. I should be glad for her sake to have her come, and though we could not live together as much as we can alone, she would be a very lenient chaperone. This is the way I feel about it after a day's thought. I cannot tell you what a shock it was to me this morning. We can hope and pray, beloved, for our own loving, selfish sakes, if not for hers, that all will work out, but I wanted to have you know.

Enough of that! I have been reading Bliss Carmen[2] today, and came across several little poems that I must send to my lover.

> You pipers in the swales,
> Tune up your reedy flutes,
> And blow and blow to bring me back
> My little girl in spring!
>
> Take all the world beside,
> And flute it far away,
> For less than naught, but give me back,
> One sleepless night in spring.

[1] The clippings, pasted on three pages that Dreiser has headed "Scraps from a Page of Vice Stuff Published Here," concern various reports of prostitution in New York City; on one of them, Dreiser has circled

the statistic that 90% of 647 girls under the age of twenty committed to a reformatory had various sexually-transmitted diseases.

[2] Bliss Carman (1861–1929), Canadian-born poet. Hyman quotes, accurately, poem XXV from *Pipes of Pan: Songs of the Sea Children* (1904).

86. Dreiser to Hyman

Thursday, May 22nd 1913—just one week more

Honey Baby:

My Own Kid.

I am always so sorry after I write a letter in which I say things which may disturb you and that at bottom I never mean. Yesterday I wrote a letter which contained a phrase here and there which may irritate you but I really did not mean them in any unloving way. I am so jealous of you and of fate that is all. I am impetuous at times like you are. I don't want anything to come between us if anything I can do will prevent. You understand don't you. Love is so tempestuous. It is so greedy & jealous. Once you are here again and we have talked many things over we will come to a better understanding and a closer union. Then these eager urges to protest and complaint will cease. I need to understand you better for you are so complex—so emotionally dark. I don't think you know yourself yet truly but we will see. I want you though above everything else—you know that and when you can come we are going to be very happy. Forgive the quarrelsome letter and the short one and every other one that hasn't been satisfactory and believe that when you are here all will be well again.

It is so fine today—misting, but with the sun behind a thick white fog somewhere which gives the world a mystic, shrouded glow. It is warm. The trees look so odd—a deep fresh vegetable green. The roads are so brown—the city apartment buildings so rich in color. New York is so splendid these days—so tall, magnificent clean. It is much more splendid than London, Rome, Paris or Berlin though all these four cities have their great attractions. There is no city like New York except Chicago and I love Chicago at times almost as much as I love New York. It is so vigorous—so blustering and naive—Chicago. It is going to be so splendid. If it

would only hurry and get six or seven million within its confines how wonderful it would be.

But I have been thinking all morning that just a week from today you will arrive. This is the twenty-second and on the evening of the 27th probably you will be starting. That means that I cannot write after the twenty-fifth for fear you will not get it. I will wait it early Sunday morning and by Tuesday morning you ought to have it—Tuesday noon sure. Tuesday night you will be leaving. Write me the hour of your train & where. I shall not bring a bag for yours will be sufficient for our hotel needs. Can't you induce Marjorie[1] to go to the Brevoort for the time being alone & let us go elsewhere.

This means I can only write three more letters after this—think of it Peaches Pet—you black kid. How I love your short black hair and brooding, sleeping look. I have you down to the life in The Titan—but your very bad, you imp. If you ever treat me so I'll give you a good beating, to say nothing of doing other things to you. And to think you should really be coming at last.

You were saying the other day that you were so sorry to be troubling me with the thought of marrying me. You weren't troubling me. I love the idea. I wish I knew how to do it now. I'll tell you many things when you get here and then we can see. But unless I am greatly mistaken you and I will manage to stick in some way for you answer so many of my human needs. If I do yours, it is sure. I should love to find in you, as I think I have, a real mate.

Peaches Pet, as the time draws near and I really feel that you are coming letters & words become rather insignificant. I feel strong & deep but it is too strong & too deep. Words won't do. I would like to hush & sleep until you come and then get up & hurry to you. And there won't be so very many words then either—just looks and touches and the grip and feel of you. But that is <u>all</u> for the time being—all that love can feel or want—just the human clasp of you. I want to take you in my arms again close & call you my Elyhon & tell you how much I think of you. Hurry on Peaches Lamb, Black Kid, my Asia girl. There some class to Elyhon, you bet, and I'm her loving

Writer man.

If you see much of the Gouleds you better leave me out of it or they many write your family.[2]

[1] That is, Marjorie Jones, who at this time was still planning to accompany Hyman.
[2] At the end of the letter, Dreiser attached a comic clipping with a joke about the illogic of language.

87. Hyman to Dreiser

May 22, 1913

Dearest, my lover

The trousseau has made a tremendous jump, for mother, not being well enough to go about, has given me two of her prettiest dresses. I took them to Greene this afternoon to be fitted down to me. I feel that I am really started now, when I have said goodbye to her. I saw her off at the train this noon. We have had such a happy two days with each other. We were quite early at the depot, and walked up and down the platform, talking and laughing. She gave me a smarty sort of message for you, which, however, I am forbidden to write but must deliver in person. If we two could only be together a while, without that influence of father's that she finds so racking, we could really find each other. She started to tell me about the night court, and then I said that you had promised to take me there some time, and she said she knew I would find it very interesting.

Oh, sweetheart, I am all excitement! The time is getting so close. Daddy brought me a robe of tissue paper today to pack my trunk nicely. Just to think of seeing you and feeling you and loving you—it is too wonderful.

I will leave some time Wednesday afternoon, and in order that things may be as you hoped, I shall try to arrive in the afternoon. However, I cannot say whether it will work out or not yet, as Daddy always attends to trains and tickets and the like for me.

But, sweet my lord, I cannot get over the excitement of having two unexpected new dresses. One is white trimmed in black, the

other is black or white, but to brighten it up and make it a little more youthful, Greene is putting on it a wide girdle of bright pink.

I am sending you a four-leaf clover I found on the lawn. It belongs to us both, but you may keep it, being the master of the house. I also enclose a shooting star. I think they are one of the loveliest of spring wild flowers. I hope we can spend many a Sunday where the flowers are. I know them so well, them and the birds too, and the ferns only pretty well, and the fungi still less. I will tell you about the snakes when I see you. The one pair I saw, I mean; snakes as a whole are few in variety and quite uninteresting in this part of the country.

I must stop now, lover sweet, and go down to the theatre to say goodbye to every one. I love you, love you, love you, and my heart is a song of gladness.

88. Dreiser to Hyman

Friday, May 23rd 1913—

Asia Baby,
My Artist-Poet Girl:

You wonder girl: I cannot think of anything else to call you which will really suit you today for your letter with the fine selective judgement it manifests in regard to the verses by Carman and their significance and application is just another proof of how near you are to me, intellectually and emotionally. Will I take you up in my arms, you ask? Will I. Wait till you real[ly] come. Only still waters run deep or deep waters run still. I shall only be able to look at you for awhile and say commonplace things perhaps until we are quite alone. But you will know, all the while. I see Carman occasionally ambling with his bushy hair in the Park.

Honey Lamb—Peaches Baby—Darling mine if you only knew how fond I am of you. It's disturbing. I get the most agonizing doubts if I don't recieve the daily waited letter on the hour and if I just so much as fancy that you are straying in thought I want to cast everything by the board. In normal moments I want to laugh

but love isn't normal. It's some remote ecstasy that hasn't anything to do with the practical necessities & drift. Today I was troubled by a notice to serve on a jury beginning June 2nd which would have tied me from 9 to 4 or 5 but I went down & let out a terrible wail. They put off my service until October.

It's amazing isn't it. This notice concerning your mother is a fair sample of the drift of things but if as you say she is liberal it might not work out so badly. If she is so unhappy with your father as I have judged from several things you said she ought to understand my position and yours. There is no use complaining much as to how this world runs but some of us get handed straw & water for breakfast and some grape fruit or cherries. If I am to have cherries they have to be illegal—agin the law—which grieves me much—for the present anyhow.[1] Later I may be able to straighten it all out & I think I shall. If I should leave and stay away long enough it would all adjust itself naturally enough. If you love me enough and wish it enough it will probably come true. You don't know how much I hope it may.

Just think peaches pet—this is Friday the 23rd and in six more days you will be in my arms. By this time in the afternoon next Thursday (it is 3 now & I had to go down on that jury business this A.M.) we should have had hours together. Think of it. Hours of your dear self in my arms—your long slender tiger-lily like body. Sunday I shall write my last letter and be waiting for you tell me just what hour you get here. The thing to do is to spend the first four days together—whatever happens—and talk things over—Thursday, Friday, Saturday & Sunday—and then we can say what is best. If you think well of the McCann apartment idea we can try for that or something like it. There are so many apartments in N.Y. which can be sublet for the summer at a reasonable rate.

It is still warm, foggy, lowery, summery here. There is no sun—only mist & golden glows here & there in the sky—like burnished coffee—black masses & silvery-lead-y patches. The water is leaden & the boats drift by in a haze. I love to see colors in such weather—reds, blues, greens, browns. They look rich & fulsome—so comforting to the eye.

My Black Baby your lover is waiting with long strong arms to fold you close. Its good I'm so tall Elyhon isn't it—in spite of your height you just make a nice armful for me. I can gather you up close like a two year old & hold you tight. Your nice silk stockings & whats inside will be petted by me and your soft neck will hold my face, pressed close. I want to kiss and bite you all over. Do you want to bitten—by me?

Now that it is all so near I can scarcely realize it. I can wait though these few days. You may not get this now until Monday & Tuesday—the very next day you will be starting. You ought to get my tomorrows letter at the same time & Sundays Tuesday morning. Bye bye peaches for today. I will be so glad when I can say as I will Sunday—bye bye until I see you.

Mr. Writer

Just think you won't have to read any more funny stories after Sunday. Perhaps you don't read them now.[2]

[1] Dreiser refers to his relationship with Hyman in context with his marriage to Sara.

[2] These sentences appear beside a comic clipping about a gambler and a money lender.

89. Hyman to Dreiser

May 23, 1913

Sweetheart my own

I have to laugh at our letters. I do not want you to think that I shy at everything that comes up. I merely want you to know that certain conditions do arise. If you would rather I did not tell you about them I won't, but you must not think, just because I did tell you about them, that I let them all upset me. In spite of Nellie Browne having been rather slurring in her attitude toward you, I am quite as sure of my convictions and my devotion as ever, and you know it. I had to laugh at your letter this morning, it was so dear and so altogether lovable.

The days here are finally cleared off, and I think the rain is over for a little while. It will probably turn out hot and dusty for my journey on Wednesday. Think of it, four days! There is to be a party given at the theatre on Friday for Bess Goodrich, but I am not going to stay over for it. Even Bess advised me not to, and I wish, dear, you would clear your mind of any suspicions you may have, at heart as to her, being responsible for anything we may have heard. I know perfectly well, from talks we have had, that she knows nothing at all about it, though I should scorn to sound her on the subject. To begin with, she is too absorbed in Charles,[1] and in her wedding preparations, to give me more than a passing thought, and sees none of the theatre people besides me at all. If you think I am fatuous in my faith in her and in other friends, you don't know your child, as I thought you did.

I went down to the store this morning and raided the junk drawer of all the things I could want for costuming. It is a drawer that father has the inexpensive jewelry which is to be discarded put, to give away to bazaars and the like.

I thought I could write another sheet full, but Bob just calls to please hurry up and come with him, so I must go. Length of letters doesn't count much now, anyhow.

[1] That is, Charles Colby Reckitt Jr. See Dreiser to Hyman, 22 Feb. 1913, n. 3, letter 13.

90. Dreiser to Hyman

Saturday May 24—1913

My Honey Lamb,
You Wild Girl,

I have been so anxious all day to write you but have not gotten to it until now. Still this will reach you Monday or should, anyhow. Such a dear letter from you. I wonder what the smarty message was your mother sent me and how you will really look in the fine dresses. Ma must be wishing you well indeed to hand over two of her gowns for N.Y. But she isn't wishing like I am wishing to see

you in them. I take the greatest delight in thinking of all the things I have seen you in—particularly the several things I first saw you in in your own home. I shall never forget how cute you looked in your boudoir costume—how enticing. Neither have I forgotten how lovely you looked here at the opera & elsewhere with your cute black hair laid over your ears so—how?

Honey Pet, I was talking to Ray Comstock[1] of the Princess Theater here today & told him about you. He told me when you come to bring you down. He wants to talk to you. I am going to take you to see Ben Teal[2] & also Edward Laska. He can advise you. Sunday, when I dine with Madame Kalisch, as I shall, I will talk to her. I wish you & I might write a one act play together or a 4 act one—for that matter. The one act affair I told you about is done.[3]

Yes, Pet, I hope we shall go out in the country Sundays. I wish we might take that walking tour I described only now after all the rain we have had I am satisfied that the mosquitoes will be legion. The times I have gone in the past I have walked in the spring before they arrived or in the fall after they are gone. I[n] summer I'm not sure, but I should like to try it. Are you mosquito proof. I went once with Franklin Booth & he tried christian science on them but he only succeeded in driving them away from our faces. The back of our necks & hand suffered as usual.

You can't imagine how dreadfully it is raining here today & how cool it is. Down pour after down pour without let up. If it weren't for the lovely thought of your coming that sustains me I should be in the dumps. But this is Saturday & tomorrow I write my last note. Then I have only four days more to wait and I hope I shall get a letter each day.

The enclosed came from your friend Miss Brinkman.[4] I shan't answer it until you're here & then you can add a postscript perhaps. She seems to be rather enthusiastic. Is she so truly wise?

Dear Kid I'm very tired tonight & I'm going to stop. I've longed so much for you that I feel almost run down. But when you come & I feel your loving arms about me I'll come too again. I get no advice from you as to what to do—hotel & Marjorie[5]—so I am

waiting until I actually see you. We'll go to the Manhattan or some such place—possibly to the Cumberland[6] which is always convenient. But make a suggestion if you think as to whether you will be able to send by down to the Brevoort or not.

Bye bye Pet. I am certainly waiting for you & am gayer than I have been in many & many a day. That four leaf clover makes me think all is sure to be well.

Th D

[1] F. Ray Comstock (1878–1949), theatrical producer who initiated musical comedy at the Princess Theater (see Dreiser to Hyman, 12 April 1913, n. 6, letter 39).
[2] Benjamin Teal (1857–1917), actor, director, and playwright, most noted for staging a chariot scene on stage for *Ben Hur* in 1909.
[3] *The Girl in the Coffin*.
[4] Florence Brinkman. See also Dreiser to Markham, 27 Jan. 1914, n. 5, letter 116.
[5] That is, Marjorie Jones.
[6] The Cumberland Hotel stood at 54th Street and Broadway.

91. Hyman to Dreiser

May 24, 1913

Sweetheart darling

It was such a sad darling letter today, and its plea for forgiveness was so sweet, and I loved it so. I loved yesterday's and instead of resenting its crossness I laughed long and loud, because it showed me in a new way how you loved me, and I laughed long and softly over today's, because it regretted yesterday's, and for that reason was pathetic and made me altogether happy. Precious one, the days are growing fewer and fewer, and ere much of a song could be sung I will be with you. Oh, wonderful, wonderful spring, oh, wonderful love! Twice today have I read the seashore memories of Walt Whitman's[1] that I love so, and wept, wept, wept over the beauty and sorrow of it all.

Bobbie and I went down to the Little Theatre last night, to hear the adorable English girls sing again.[2] They were lovely, and sang

some new ones, and those at both programmes that I have heard and remember I know you will love.

I thought the rains were all over, but it has just started to pour outside. It seems almost like a cloudburst.

Enough of talk. We will be together shortly now, and why waste time? My clothes need all I have, and as my lover will have me, clothes and all, in four days, the clothes had better receive all the time they can get. Goodnight, and Heaven love you, as you know I do.

[1] In the 1900 David McKay edition of *Leaves of Grass*, the Sea-Shore Memories section includes the poems "Out of the Cradle Endlessly Rocking," "Elemental Drifts," "Tears," "Aboard at a Ship's Helm," "On the Beach at Night," "The World Below the Brine," and "On the Beach at Night, Alone."

[2] The Fuller Sisters—Dorothy (b. 1890), Rosalinde (1892–1982), and Cynthia (b. 1897)—from Dorset, England, sang traditional English, Scottish, and Irish folk songs during a number of tours of the US from 1913–1917. Maurice Browne provides an extensive description of their performances at the Little Theatre in *Too Late to Lament* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1956), 140–41.

92. Dreiser to Hyman

Sunday, May 25—1913.

Well, Honey Baby, here it is at last, after so long a time, Sunday the 25th and I shall not write you another letter for fear you may not get it. It's been a long time coming but perhaps the separation has been worth while for what a lot I've learned about you in that time—traits of character that have appealed to and amused me. I have been thinking so much about you all this while wondering how truly binding your affections are and how few or simple might be the things which would change you. We are all like that. We cannot help speculating. But most of all I have learned so much of the mystic resourcefulness of your soul—its strange agitations, responses, retreats—the tremendous edge of experiment and anticipation on which you live. Dreams, dreams, dreams. You

are compounded of dreams & color & emotions. I wonder so often how much I may feed your soul & how much you mine.

It is a splendid day this final one—for my letters. The rain has gone. Outside, under my window on the Hudson there is a whole flotilla of small motor boats rocking in the blue water & the clear light. Most of the owners are already aboard or coming out in small boats ready to make a day of it. Some go up the river, some down toward the bay and hundreds of people are out on the drive strolling in bright summer clothes. I saw a woman go by just now in such a rich, glistening blue.

I wish when you come you would tell me all about yourself someday lying in my arms—your complete history. I want to come close to you and really I seem to know so little—just scraps—or is there so little to know. I should like, if I might to get your psychology straight through an interpretation of your past moods. You needn't if you don't want to. I shan't disturb you. There isn't anything in the past that could make any difference to me—nothing. It would only be the future that I would care about. But I should like to see you perhaps even as you do not see yourself. How can we see ourselves.

Today I have been reading Strindbergs Inferno[1] and trying to work but somehow your coming has gotten me all stirred up so that I can scarcely collect my thoughts. I find myself very nervous and as though I should like to be taken in your arms and petted. That is one delightful effect you have on me. Instead of tensing my nerves you calm me & make me feel very sedate—except that there is always a strong pull from you to me. I feel actually drawn until finally the ultimate embrace and the ultimate moment is reached—and then still I am drawn. What a gripping Venus you are—and how utterly you make me yeild myself.

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday & Thursday & then you are here. When you get this—possibly Tuesday morning you will be just two days away. You haven't said anything more but I presume Marjorie Jones is coming with you. What a queer little satellite you have in her. It reminds me of Sister Carrie and her small attendant.[2] I am convinced that you are going to connect here theatrically &

possibly play a season in N.Y. I hope so. You are so much better intellectually & emotionally than so many of the women who now strive. I hope you get in with the Princess Theatre.

I wish you were here, dearest honey kid right now. Letters have become mere nothings these last two or three days. I love the words you write me but my own seem inadequate. I want to see you again—actually—not be compelled to contemplate this abstract vision—this thin wraith—the shadow we all are at a distance. How quickly we become a mere idea in the mind & yet how substantial we truly are. I think of all the poems you have quoted me I like that of Francis Thompson best—"the red pavilion of my heart."[3] What a lovely idea that is. I wish when you come we might go off to some simple farm house for a week. Lets.

Your Lover.

Have a pleasant journey. Ride comfortably & think of me waiting for you at the gate.

There is a butcher up here by the name of Wubbenhorst. Can you beat that Emil W<u>u</u>bbenhorst[4]

[1] *Inferno* (1897), an autobiographical novel by August Strindberg (1849–1912), traces the protagonist's search for contentment amid paranoia, hallucinations, and psychic breakdown.

[2] Dreiser refers to the character Lola Osbourne, "Carrie's little soldier friend," who "had become a sort of satellite. Little Osbourne could never of herself amount to anything. She seemed to realise it in a sort of pussy-like way and instinctively concluded to cling with her soft little claws to Carrie" (ch. 42).

[3] Dreiser is quoting the final line of Thompson's "An Arab Love-Song": "Who has the red pavilion of my heart?"

[4] Dreiser printed the second iteration of the name. At the bottom of the page he pasted a comic clipping about a defendant before a judge.

93. Dreiser to Hyman

Sunday, May 25—1913 (10 P.M.)

Just one final word to my peaches sweet to say not goodbye but welcome to our city. A pleasant journey, a good nights rest, lots of

nice scenery, everything lovely & pleasant to make the journey seem short. I have the letter or envelope with the four leaf clover in my purse. What a find & I know it spells good luck for my honey girl who shares it so gladly with me. I am waiting for you, Black Haired Artist Girl, with my arms open to receive you. I wish, I wish, I wish. I came away from a dinner tonight because no one seems to interest me much anymore but you. Here lots of love & kisses.

Your Lover.

I wish I might find a four leaf clover but they don't grow on Broadway.

94. Hyman to Dreiser

May [27] 1913

Such letters, especially two at a time, don't come to happy little girls often, letters like those two I received today. You must forgive the shortness of my letters—when they come at all—for there is so much to be done these last days, and there are so many people to see. I don't see quite how I will ever get through, but I suppose I will manage somehow. Daddy has been teasing me to stay over Friday, because Clarence Darrow and his wife[1] and a few others are coming to dinner.

I have some news which I know will please you. I am coming alone. There will be no Marjorie Jones with me, for she has finally found a dancing teacher here who can answer to her needs. So, sweetheart, things are entirely in your hands. I must be where I can drop a postal card to the family each day, and such things; otherwise arrange them to your liking. I do not and cannot know what to do about Lee McCann's apartment until I get there, but such things can wait. All joy to our reunion, may it come soon!

[1] Clarence Darrow (1857–1938), Chicago lawyer who would gain fame for defending Nathan Leopold and Richard Loeb for the murder of Bobby Franks in 1924 and for defending John T. Scopes of the "Scopes Monkey Trial" in 1925. At the time of the letter, Darrow was married to the journalist Ruby Hammerstein.



Theodore Dreiser, ca. 1915
(Photo by Marceau)

Figure 1: Theodore Dreiser in 1915. (DPUP)



Figure 2: Elaine Hyman, 1910. (*The Correlator*, yearbook of University High School, Chicago, 1910)



Figure 3: Elaine Hyman, 1911. Photograph accompanying an article about the Art Institute Students' performance of her play, *The Master Painter*. ("Art Students Will Enact Play Written by Young Student," *Chicago Tribune*, 14 May 1911: 5)



Figure 4: Elaine Hyman, age 20 (ca. 1911). (Courtesy Anabel Cole)


Glories of the Montezumas Re-enacted To-Night

Art League Prepares Brilliant Aztec Pageant

From left to right: Elaine Hyman, Beatrice Levy and Frances Thorpe in Aztec costume for the Art League pageant.

Figure 5: Elaine Hyman in *The Masque of Montezuma*, by Thomas Wood Stevens and Kenneth Sawyer Goodman, presented by the Arts Student League, 1912. L to R: Elaine Hyman, Beatrice Levy, and Frances Thorpe. (*Chicago Examiner* 20 Feb. 1912: 7)



Figure 6: Floyd Dell, 1913. Portrait by Bror Nordfeldt. (Newberry Library)



Figure 7: Elaine Hyman as Andromache in *The Trojan Women*, 1912. (from Floyd Dell, "The Littlest Theater," *Harper's Weekly* 58 [29 Nov. 1913]: 23)



Figure 8: Chicago Little Theatre acting company, 1912. Photo by Matzene. (Ellen Van Volkenburg and Maurice Browne Papers, University of Michigan Library, Special Collections Research Center)

Back row, L to R: Edward Pasmore, Elkan Powell, Elizabeth Goodrich, Shelley Neltnor, Genevieve Griffin, Paul Bartlett, Alice Gerstenberg, unknown, Elaine Hyman, Arthur Johnson, Elizabeth Bingham

Front row, L to R: Maurice Browne, Miriam Kiper, Lou Wall Moore, Prof. Alfed Emerson, Cloyd Head, Florence Reckitt, Margaret T. Allen, Ellen Van Volkenburg



Figure 9: Portrait of Elaine Hyman, ca 1912–1913, by Raymond Jonson. (Ellen Van Volkenburg and Maurice Browne Papers, University of Michigan Library, Special Collections Research Center)



Figure 10: Elaine Hyman with the Chicago Little Theatre in St Louis, 1913. L to R: Elaine Hyman, Florence Reckitt, Maurice Browne, Orrick Johns. (St. Louis *Post-Dispatch*, 23 Feb. 1913: 26)

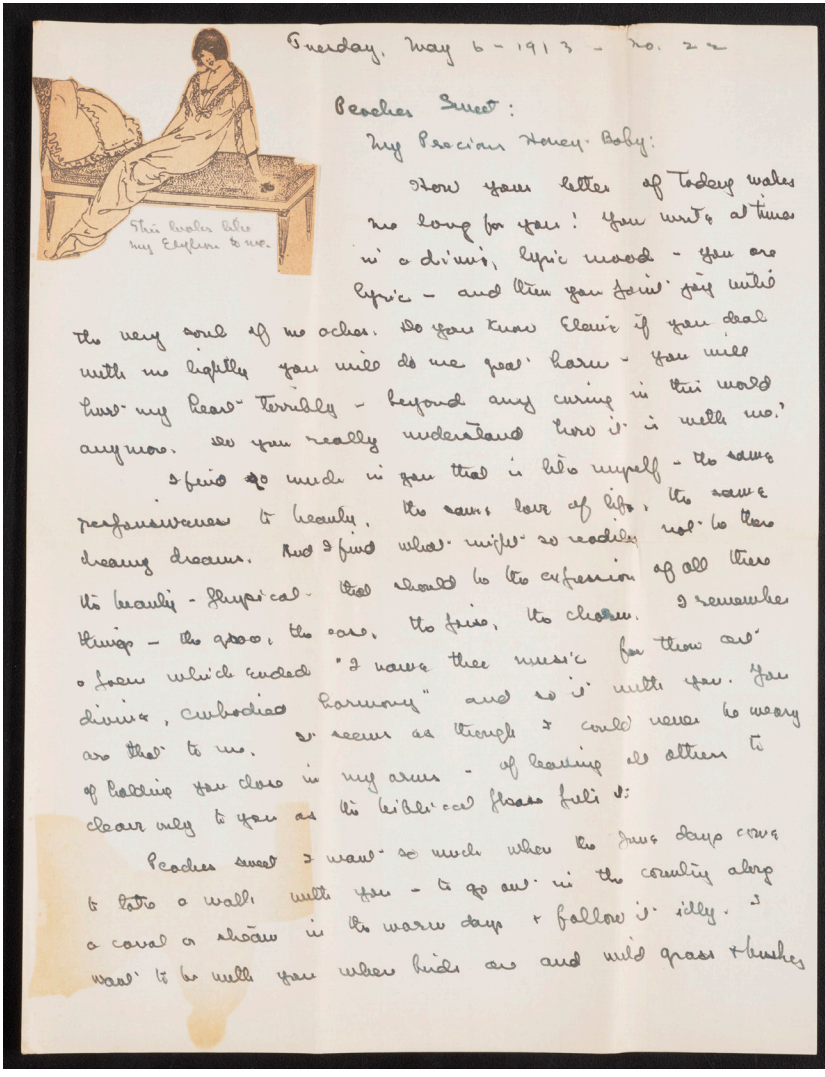


Figure 11: First page of Dreiser to Hyman, 6 May 1913. (DPUP)



Figure 12: Portrait of Theodore Dreiser, by Bror Nordfeldt, before 1916. (DPUP)

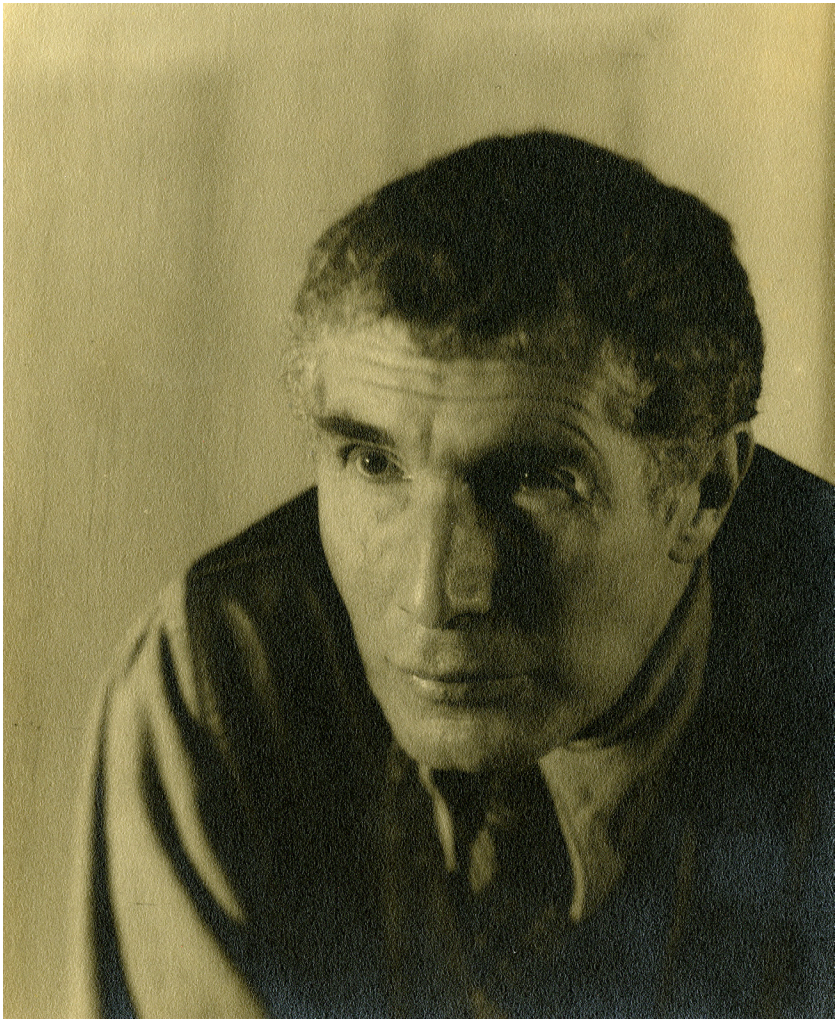


Figure 13: John Cowper Powys. (DPUP)



Figure 14: Kirah Markham in *The Lure*. (*The Theatre* 20 [July 1914]: 28)

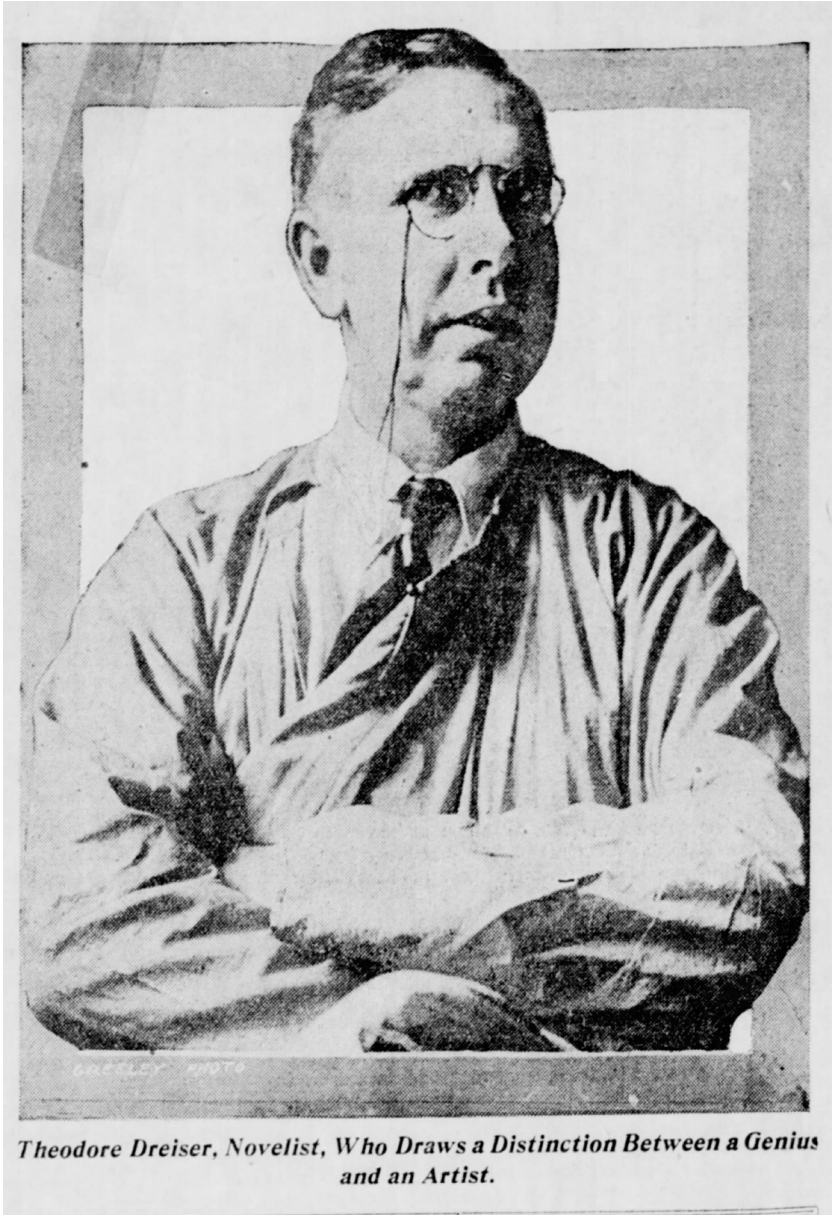


Figure 15: Theodore Dreiser in 1915 upon publication of *The "Genius."* (from Bennett McDonald, "Genius Is a Merciless Obsession, Says Dreiser," *New York Tribune*, 5 Dec. 1915, pt. V, 3.)



Figure 16: Kirah Markham in *Conscience*, 1915. (*Chicago Tribune*, 4 March 1915: 9)



Figure 17: Dreiser's eldest sister, Mame Brennan, who often provided a good meal, 1931. (Swanberg Papers)

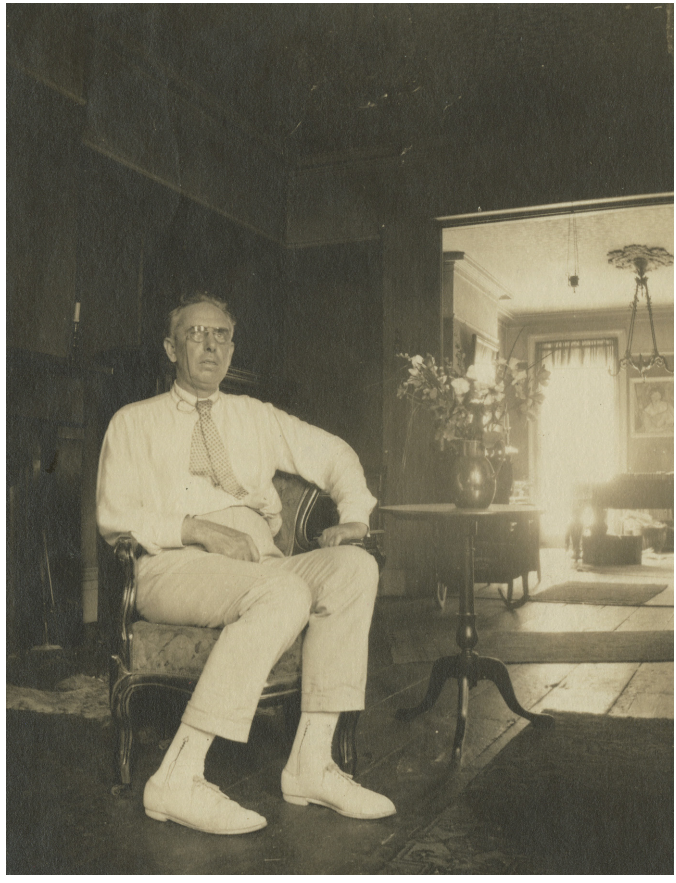
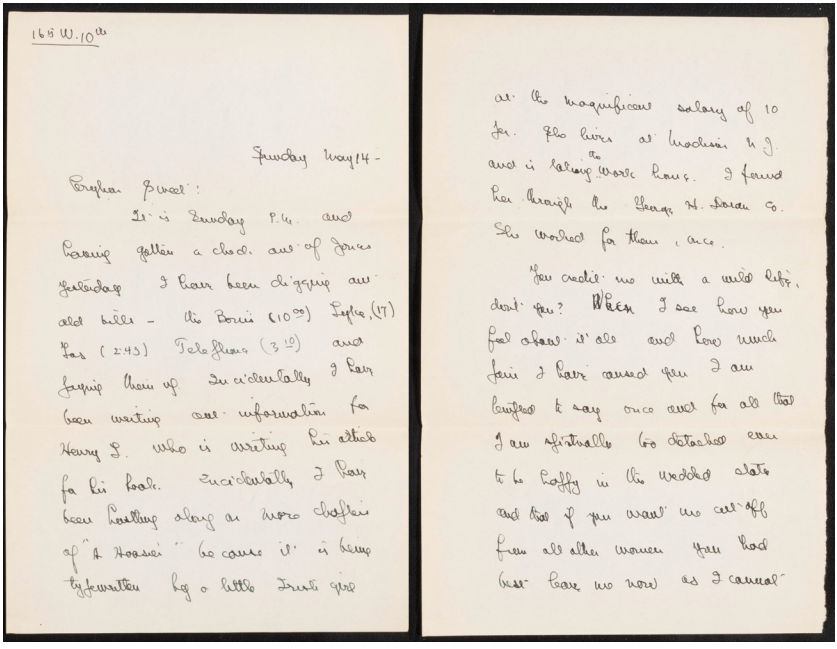


Figure 18: Theodore Dreiser in his Greenwich Village apartment, 165 W. 10th St. (DPUP)



165 W. 10th

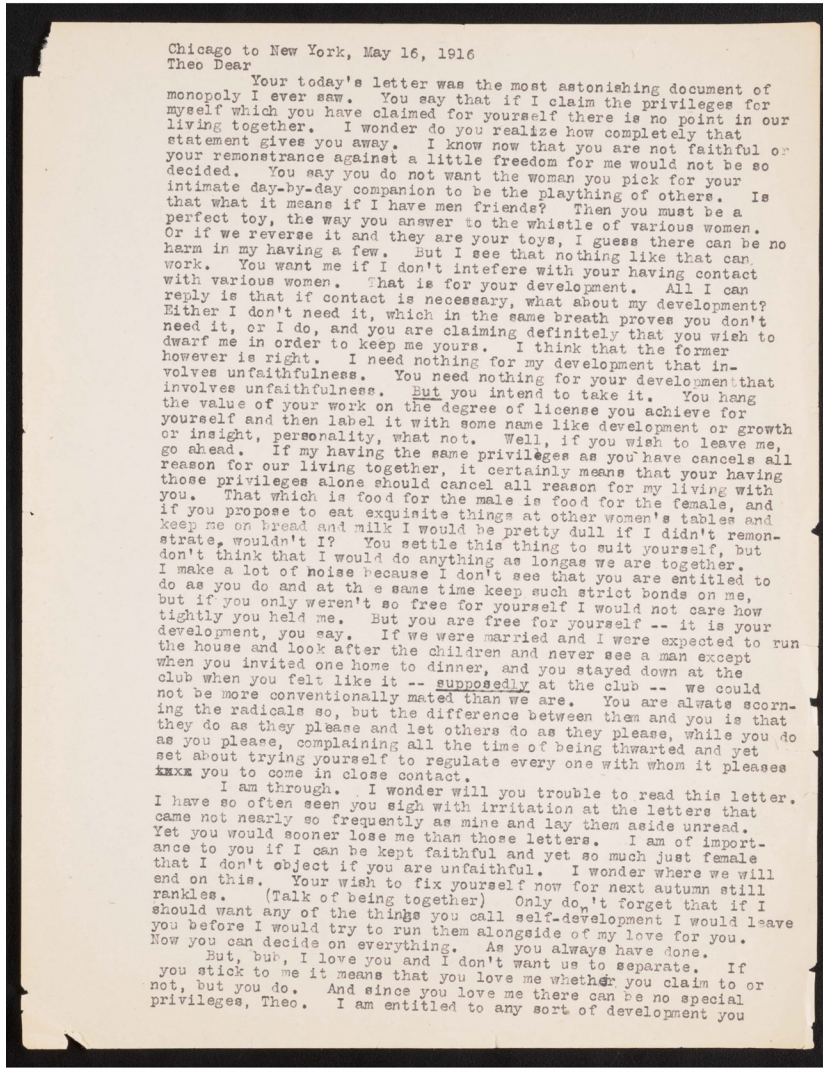
Sunday May 14 -

Orphan Bruce:

It is Sunday P.M. and Evening gotten a clock. and of Jones Yesterday I have been digging out old bills - the Bonis (10.00) Taylor (17) Fox (2.45) Telephone (3.10) and Typing Room of Incidentally I have been writing and information for Henry J. who is writing his attack for his book. Incidentally I have been reading along as more chapters of "A Hoosier" he comes it. it being typewritten by a little Irish girl at the magnificent salary of 10 for. She lives at Woodside N.J. and is taking more hours. I found her through the Thomas H. Dorian Co. She worked for them once.

You recall me with a mild life, don't you? When I see how you feel about it all and how much pain I have caused you I am tempted to say once and for all that I am spiritually too detached ever to be guilty in the wedded state and that if you want me cut off from all other women you had best leave me now as I cannot

Figure 19: The first two pages of Dreiser's 14 May 1916 letter, which aggravated Markham. (DPUP)



Chicago to New York, May 16, 1916
Theo Dear

Your today's letter was the most astonishing document of monopoly I ever saw. You say that if I claim the privileges for myself which you have claimed for yourself there is no point in our living together. I wonder do you realize how completely that statement gives you away. I know now that you are not faithful or your remonstrance against a little freedom for me would not be so decided. You say you do not want the woman you pick for your intimate day-by-day companion to be the plaything of others. Is that what it means if I have men friends? Then you must be a perfect toy, the way you answer to the whistle of various women. Or if we reverse it and they are your toys, I guess there can be no harm in my having a few. But I see that nothing like that can work. You want me if I don't intefere with your having contact with various women. That is for your development. All I can reply is that if contact is necessary, what about my development? Either I don't need it, which in the same breath proves you don't need it, or I do, and you are claiming definitely that you wish to dwarf me in order to keep me yours. I think that the former however is right. I need nothing for my development that involves unfaithfulness. You need nothing for your development that involves unfaithfulness. But you intend to take it. You hang the value of your work on the degree of license you achieve for yourself and then label it with some name like development or growth or insight, personality, what not. Well, if you wish to leave me, go ahead. If my having the same privileges as you have cancels all reason for our living together, it certainly means that your having those privileges alone should cancel all reason for my living with you. That which is food for the male is food for the female, and if you propose to eat exquisite things at other women's tables and keep me on bread and milk I would be pretty dull if I didn't remonstrate, wouldn't I? You settle this thing to suit yourself, but don't think that I would do anything as longas we are together. I make a lot of noise because I don't see that you are entitled to do as you do and at th e same time keep such strict bonds on me, but if you only weren't so free for yourself I would not care how tightly you held me. But you are free for yourself -- it is your development, you say. If we were married and I were expected to run the house and look after the children and never see a man except when you invited one home to dinner, and you stayed down at the club when you felt like it -- supposedly at the club -- we could not be more conventionally mated than we are. You are alwats scorning the radicals so, but the difference between them and you is that they do as they please and let others do as they please, while you do as you please, complaining all the time of being thwarted and yet set about trying yourself to regulate every one with whom it pleases xxxx you to come in close contact.

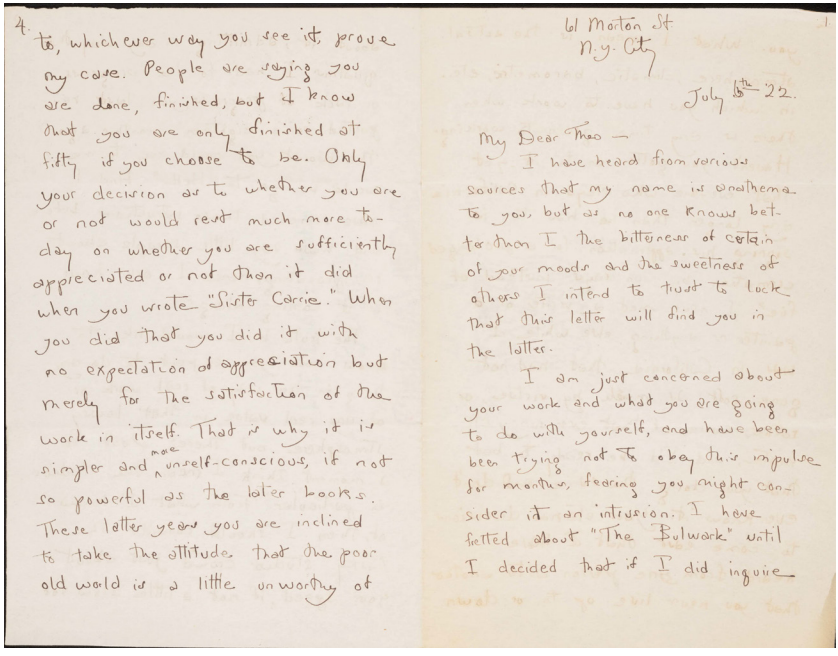
I am through. I wonder will you trouble to read this letter. I have so often seen you sigh with irritation at the letters that came not nearly so frequently as mine and lay them aside unread. Yet you would sooner lose me than those letters. I am of importance to you if I can be kept faithful and yet so much just female that I don't object if you are unfaithful. I wonder where we will end on this. Your wish to fix yourself now for next autumn still rankles. (Talk of being together) Only don't forget that if I should want any of the things you call self-development I would leave you before I would try to run them alongside of my love for you. Now you can decide on everything. As you always have done.

But, bub, I love you and I don't want us to separate. If you stick to me it means that you love me whether you claim to or not, but you do. And since you love me there can be no special privileges, Theo. I am entitled to any sort of development you

Figure 20: Markham's 16 May 1916 reply, where she gave as good as she got. (DPUP)



Figure 21: Theodore Dreiser standing before paintings by Anne Estelle Rice in his studio at St. Luke's Place, New York, 1 Nov. 1923 (DPUP)



4

to, whichever way you see it, proves my case. People are saying you are done, finished, but I know that you are only finished at fifty if you choose to be. Only your decision as to whether you are or not would rest much more today on whether you are sufficiently appreciated or not than it did when you wrote "Sister Carrie." When you did that you did it with no expectation of appreciation but merely for the satisfaction of the work in itself. That is why it is simpler and more unself-conscious, if not so powerful as the later books. These latter years you are inclined to take the attitude that the poor old world is a little unworthy of

1

61 Morton St
N.Y. City

July 6th 22.

My Dear Theo —

I have heard from various sources that my name is anathema to you, but as no one knows better than I the bitterness of certain of your moods and the sweetness of others I intend to trust to luck that this letter will find you in the latter.

I am just concerned about your work and what you are going to do with yourself, and have been been trying not to obey this impulse for months, fearing you might consider it an intrusion. I have fretted about "The Bulwark" until I decided that if I did inquire

Figure 22: First page of Markham to Dreiser, 6 July 1922, in which she sought to reestablish contact. (DPUP)



Figure 23: David Gaither. (Courtesy Anabel Cole)



Figure 24: Kyra Markham in 1916. Photo by Jessie Tarbox Beals. The inscription reads, "For Myrna—If I ever looked like this I hope I didn't. Yours Kyra." Merna Sallop was the daughter of Markham's friends Herbert and Helen Sallop. (Swanberg Papers)



Figure 25: The *Cosmopolitan* cover that so distressed Markham, Feb. 1929.

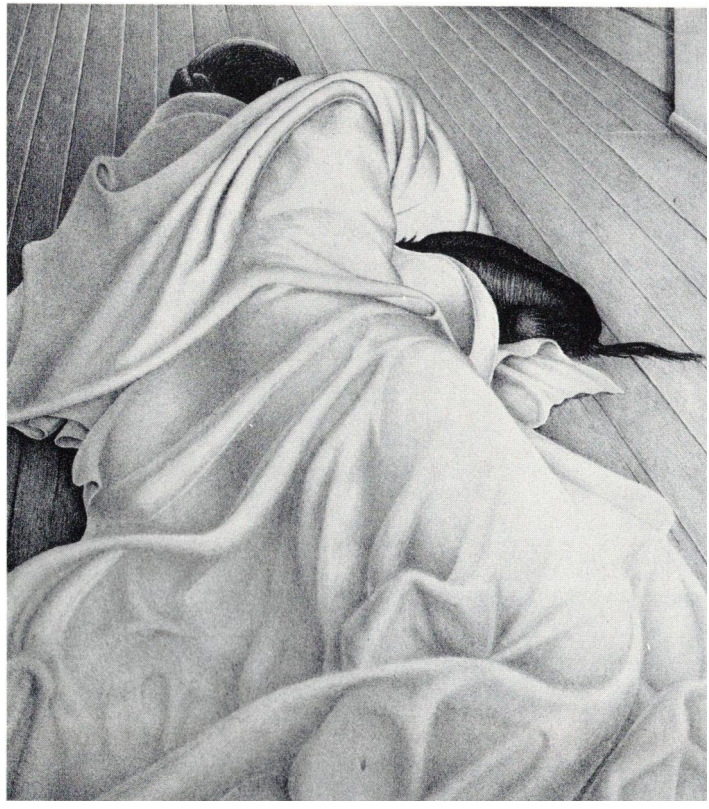
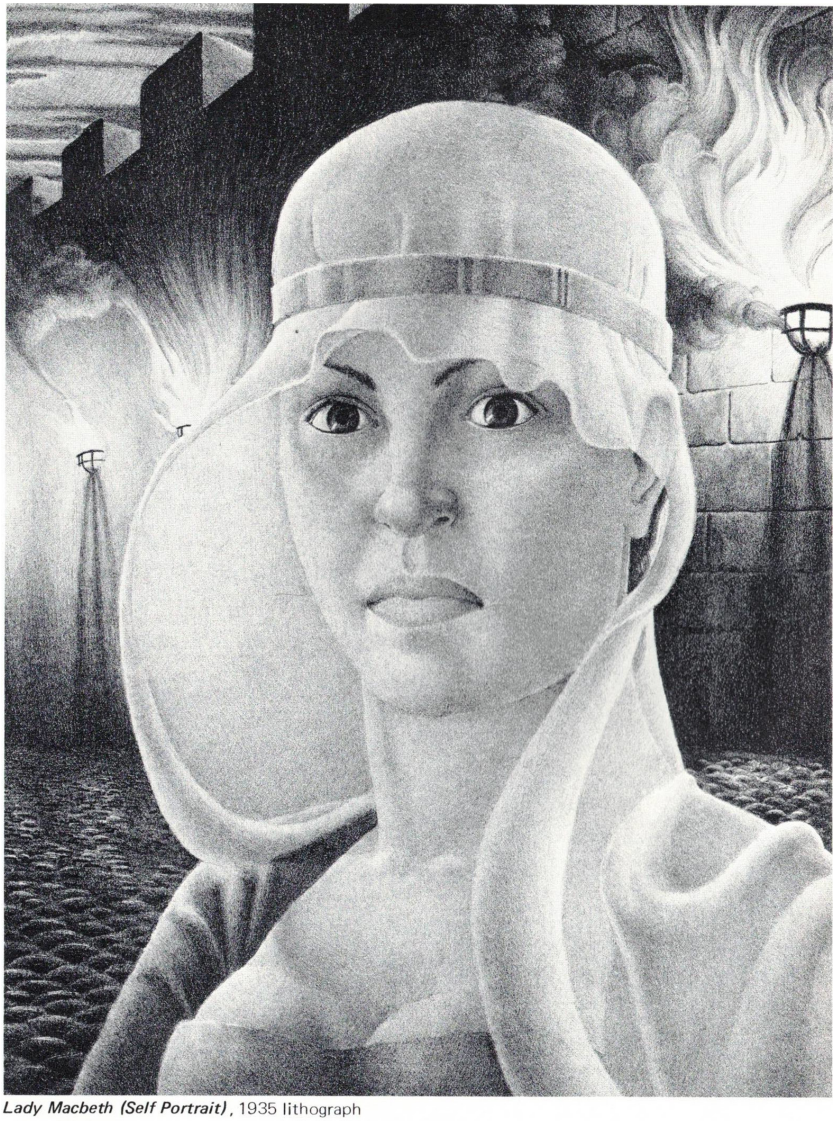


Figure 26: *Elin and Maria*, 1934 lithograph by Kyra Markham and winner of the Mary S. Collins Prize (1935). (from *Kyra Markham, American Fantasist [1891–1967]*, exhibition catalogue, Witkin Gallery, New York, 13 Oct.–7 Nov. 1981)



Figure 27: *Laughing Gas (Theodore Dreiser's Operation)*, 1943 oil, 24x20 inches, by Kyra Markham. (from *Kyra Markham, American Fantasist [1891–1967]*, exhibition catalogue, Witkin Gallery, New York, 13 Oct.–7 Nov. 1981)



Lady Macbeth (Self Portrait), 1935 lithograph

Figure 28: *Lady Macbeth* (1935 lithograph), self-portrait by Kyra Markham. (from *Kyra Markham, American Fantasist [1891–1967]*, exhibition catalogue, Witkin Gallery, New York, 13 Oct.–7 Nov. 1981)



"Why do you paint such stout women, Ernest dear?"

Figure 29: Frontispiece by Kyra Markham for *Romantic—I Call It*, by Ethel Harriman. This was Markham's first commission as a book illustrator.



Figure 30: Kyra Markham applying ink on a lithographic stone, 10 June 1937. (Federal Art Project, Photographic Division collection, circa 1920–1965. Archives of American Art, Smithsonian Institution)

The Lure
1914

"I wish I could hold you tight & never let go except to die"
—Dreiser to Markham, letter 135

Dreiser and Hyman (now Markham) remained in New York during the summer and fall of 1913, and their correspondence picks up again in January 1914, when Markham left, not because of troubles in their relationship, as biographers have presumed,[1] but rather to follow an acting opportunity, and that was to be an understudy in a traveling production of *The Lure*.

The Lure is a sexual exploitation melodrama, written by George Scarborough (1875–1951), a former Texas lawyer and New York newspaper reporter turned Secret Service agent, who had investigated coerced prostitution as part of his duties. The plot concerns a poor shop girl, who, seeking more remunerative work to care for her ailing mother, goes to an employment agency, whose proprietor is really a madam. A tense second act takes place in the brothel, where the shop girl is nearly coerced into submission by the play's villain, the madam's husband, until saved by the timely

How to cite this book chapter:
Newlin, K. (ed.) (2026). *The Dreiser–Markham Letters: The Correspondence of Theodore Dreiser and Kyra Markham, 1913–1944*. Pp. 207–352. Winchester: Winchester University Press. DOI: https://doi.org/10.21039/book5.b.
License: CC BY-NC-ND

arrival of a Secret Service agent. *The Lure* opened at Maxine Elliot's Theatre on 14 August 1913 but was closed on 9 September and its producers, Lee Shubert and William Harris, arrested on charges of indecency and immorality.[2] After a revision to place the second act in an employment agency rather than a brothel, *The Lure* reopened on 20 September, with advertisements capitalizing on its legal publicity, and played until 1 December before going on tour at various Shubert theaters.

Markham was hired as an understudy when the play went on tour, beginning at the Teck Theater in Buffalo for one week (12 January 1914), at the Princess Theatre in Chicago (18 January), and at the Shubert Theatre in St. Louis (22 March), where it was closed on charges of immorality on 26 March before traveling to Philadelphia, where it opened at the Adelphi on 6 April and ended its run after the Philadelphia engagement. Although she had achieved some success in the amateur productions of the Chicago Little Theatre, her months with *The Lure* marked her introduction into full-time professional theater. She was surprised that everything seemed to be for sale. As she wrote to Dreiser on 31 January: "Anything can be had for money. Right and left men are buying plays for absolutely unknown girls. All the time, once you are a little bit known, you will be offered parts if you will pay so much to get them. All the time stage managers will tell you frankly that if you will 'grease their palms' they will give you especial attention. Oh, it is strange, strange. Do you think I can really get anywhere on my own merit?" (letter 127). In his lengthy reply on 3 February, the seasoned writer agreed—"I haven't the slightest doubt that what you say is true"—and then compared the novice on stage to the tyro in publishing: "There are at least 2000 magazines competing for patronage. Writers are legion. Job seekers as many. How do people rise? By the favor of others or by their own efforts? No one seeks out anyone much unless you have something people want or that commands attention." He concluded by reassuring her that "As sure as fate if you stick to your conception and ideals someone whose judgement & influence counts will be fascinated by you and campaign for you" (letter 134).

While Markham was on tour with *The Lure*, Dreiser gave up the flat they had shared at 23 West 58th Street, put their belongings in storage, and moved to 611 West 152nd Street, but he preferred working conditions at his old flat at 3609 Broadway, where Sara Dreiser still resided while he waited for his lease to end. His major task was to finish *The Titan*, which Harper's was urging him to complete, and his letters offer a window into his daily progress and overcoming of obstacles. The letters also make clear how much his poverty impeded his desire to be with Markham. "My general situation is very bad," he wrote on 7 February. "Unless I do get through soon I cannot raise enough money on this or anything else & I need it as you know" (letter 141). By the next day, his despair had deepened: "But woe is me. My financial troubles are many." He then itemized his expenses and plans to earn money through sales and concluded with rare optimism, "If I really try I can write something that will get over. Then—well then I'll just go on living with Lyhon—being loved & loving & not caring about anything else at all but just her and maybe a baby or two. What? Did anyone say baby carriage! And who would heat the milk bottles at night?" (letter 142). The fantasy of a child informs several letters, as in one written the following day: "I mentioned having a baby yesterday & here yours comes today suggesting the same thing. We will, Kiddie, first chance. Lyhons little tummy will look as round as an apple with Lovers baby won't it!" (letter 143).

As was usual when distance separated them, Dreiser's letters oscillated between confidence and optimism for the future of their unconventional relationship and pessimism about that future. Both had come to rely upon each other for companionship and for sexual fulfilment, with Dreiser writing on 26 January: "I have found my mate now & I know it. If you will stick to me I will stick to you" (letter 114). And Markham wrote on 31 January: "Precious, I love you so. I want to lay my body out on yours and just lie there for eternity" (letter 127). By 1 February his mood had shifted to doubt and despair: "A sickening doubt and terrible rage overcame me. I cannot tell you why. I only know it did. If there is any change in your own mood or faith or that singleness [of]

affection or conduct let me know" (letter 129). He intemperately posted the letter—and then devoted another nine letters doing cleanup until Markham accepted his apologies. At back of his mind was Markham's earlier liaison with Floyd Dell in 1913; though Dell was now in New York and not Chicago, Dreiser's imagination led him to envision temptations by notoriously promiscuous theater people. "I love you but it would give me the only satisfaction I could get to end everything at once and for good if you were unfaithful to me," he wrote on 2 February. "I wanted to do it last spring because uncertainty is hell and when a thing is over—good bad or indifferent—at least [it] is over and we do come round somehow. To have that same sickening feeling begin again is enough to drive me wild" (letter 131). By the next day, he was in full apology mode: "I wish you would forgive me for the two very bad letters I wrote you Sunday & Monday" (letter 134). Eventually the damage was repaired and Dreiser's hunger for Markham, and hers for him, continued, leading him to a remarkably prescient desire:

> I wish I knew what you were doing this day. I wish they would so perfect the telephone that one could call up a thousand miles without paying $6 for three minutes and could see a picture of the speaker over the phone—a moving picture. No more truly agonizing moments there for one could call up and see. The beloved would come and speak face to face which would be something. (15 Feb. 1914, letter 152)

Had the pair had access to Apple's FaceTime, these letters would not exist.

But his mood didn't last. On 16 February he moaned, "I never was so miserable before in my life. Here you are dying to be with me—the one person in all the world that can make me happy & here I am a thousend miles away and unable to reach you. You'd better cut the tow line on me Lyhon & set me adrift. It looks as though I were lapsing into the indigent author stage" (letter 143). He had just about convinced Harper's to give him an advance so he could travel to Chicago. But then came disaster: on 18 February,

ironically the day after he completed the manuscript, Harper's rejected *The Titan* and Dreiser telegrammed that immediately he was sounding out other publishers and would be delayed. Dreiser himself wasn't clear about the reason for the rejection, writing to Markham on 24 February that he had asked Frederick Duneka, the general manager of Harper's, specifically why the firm had rejected the book they were urging him to finish: "I could get no real satisfaction out of Duneka as to whether it was the atmosphere of the book as a whole or some structural defect, or dullness or what that made him decide so suddenly against it" (letter 164). Dreiser added that the sole reason he was remaining in New York was to be present at negotiations with other publishers.

But in his depression and despair over the fate of his novel, he could stand the isolation no longer and left for Chicago, and he placed the fate of his novel in the hands of his good friend William Lengel to negotiate with publishers. Even by 6 March, he was still unclear why the firm had given up on the novel, writing Mencken that "Harpers, after printing a first edition of 10,000 copies of *The Titan*, have decided not to publish. Reason—the realism is too hard and uncompromising and their policy cannot stand it."[3] Not until he had returned to New York and talked with Lengel did he discover the reason for the rejection: as he explained in his letter of 24 March, he had based the character Berenice Fleming too closely upon Emilie Grigsby, the mistress of Charles Tyson Yerkes, who was still a prominent figure in society with close ties to the Harper firm.

With Lengel's aid, Dreiser concluded negotiations with the publisher John Lane, which would release the novel on 22 May 1914. He worked on revisions at the Staten Island home of his eldest sister, Mame Brennan, before joining Markham in Philadelphia while *The Lure* played at the Adelphi Theatre, remaining in a rented flat to conclude in isolation the revisions of *The Titan* while Markham returned to New York.

At the end of April Dreiser too returned to New York, and by July he and Markham had taken a flat at 165 West 10th Street, which would remain his home until 1919. His involvement with

Markham had turned his thoughts to playwriting—earlier he had written *The Girl in the Coffin* (April 1913)—but amid his financial extremity while *The Titan* was in limbo his letters are peppered with references to writing plays as a means of making money, fast. By 29 July he had completed three one-act plays—*The Blue Sphere, In the Dark*, and *Laughing Gas*—and sent them to Mencken, who accepted them for publication in *Smart Set*.[4] As he explained, he had already planned a book of plays to be titled *Plays of the Natural and Supernatural*, which he envisioned as designed for reading rather than performance, though he soon realized the error of that intention as theater companies began to request permission to stage his plays.[5] John Lane would publish the collection on 18 February 1916.

Meanwhile, Markham was seeking to further her acting career. During July 1914, the Shubert Film Manufacturing Company contracted with Alice Guy Blaché to direct a film adaptation of *The Lure*, expanding the play's 23 scenes to more than 100 and employing many of the stage production's actors.[6] It would be the Shubert organization's first film, with an intent to show their films via their chain of vaudeville houses and legitimate theaters. Markham had a credited role, her only film performance, but news articles and other sources do not identify the character. With her dark complexion she was probably cast as Carrie, the madame's mulatta maid, who has a pivotal role in the story (see also Dreiser to Markham, 25 March 1914, letter 169). The film opened on 24 August 1914, to generally good reviews. The five-reel film is now lost, as is the play script, though Scarborough turned the play into a novel, illustrated with six photographs from the play.[7]

In October, Markham had a small role in a revival of a Shubert production of *Panthea*, by the Irish playwright Monckton Hoffe (1880–1951), at the Majestic Theatre in Brooklyn. The play, a four-act melodrama, is about Panthea, a shipwrecked Russian refugee, who is rescued by an English family, falls in love, becomes involved with an opera manager against her will, and then kills him. Markham's role must have been small, for, in a review of the production, 14 cast members are mentioned by name and role but Markham's name is among the four listed without roles.[8]

Notes

[1] Dreiser's biographers misrepresent the nature of his relationship with Markham during the first part of 1914. Lacking specific details concerning that relationship—because Dreiser's letters to Markham were unavailable to them—they speculate with a sort of *ad hominem* attack toward Dreiser's womanizing tendencies. For example, W. A. Swanberg asserts that, "[h]aving long since formed a necessary habit of deception with women, he had not been truthful with Miss Markham . . . and he was spending part of his time with [Sara] at the Broadway apartment. When Miss Markham learned of it, she returned to Chicago" (Swanberg, *Dreiser*, 171). And regarding Dreiser's visit to Chicago in late February 1914, Jerome Loving concludes, "While Dreiser was back in Chicago seeing Kirah, who had temporarily returned there because of his infidelities, he underwent surgery to remove a painful carbuncle on his neck" (*The Last Titan: A Life of Theodore Dreiser* [Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005], 241). And Donald Pizer sums up: "She joined him in New York initially in October 1913 but after finding he was still entangled in a number of relationships, returned to Chicago after several months" (*Theodore Dreiser Recalled* [Clemson, SC: Clemson University Press, 2017], 300, n. 11).

[2] "'Red Light' Plays Halt: Managers Make Terms," *New York Tribune*, 10 Sept. 1914: 14.

[3] Dreiser to Mencken, 6 March 1914 (Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 132).

[4] See Dreiser to Mencken, 29 July 1914 (Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 146–47). The plays appeared as "The Blue Sphere," *Smart Set* 44 (Dec. 1914): 245–52; "In the Dark," *Smart Set* 45 (Jan. 1915): 419–25; "Laughing Gas," *Smart Set* 45 (Feb. 1915): 85–94.

[5] For the staging of Dreiser's plays, see Appendix 3: Productions of Dreiser's plays, in Newlin, Rusch, and Davies, *Plays*, 260–81.

[6] "'The Lure' to Blaché Studio," *Moving Picture World* 20 (May 1914): 829. Mindful of the stage production's problems with censors, Blaché ensured that the film would be approved by the National Board of Censorship for motion pictures ("Censors Pass 'The Lure,'" *Moving Picture World* 21 (July 1914): 283. For discussion of the film and the significance of its director, see Alison McMahon, *Alice Guy Blaché: Lost Visionary of the Cinema* (New York: Continuum, 2002), 173–77.

[7] See George Scarborough, *The Lure* (New York: G. W. Dillingham Co., 1914).

[8] See "Olga Petrova at the Majestic," Brooklyn *Standard Union*, 13 Oct. 1914: 6.

95. Dreiser to Markham

Monday—Jan 12 [1914]

Well Lyhon Cryhon:

Here I be in a deserted room—the last of the furniture has just gone and I am working at the little table that stood in the hall.[1] Tis a lonely youth & no mistake. Twice in the night I had the strangest psychic sensation of your being right with me—your arms around me. I felt so strangely about it that afterwards it seemed a little uncanny. Were you thinking about me.

Saturday night (as I learned Sunday) Mrs. Jarmuth called and left a little book—"Mary Mary"—by James Stephens which I will mail to you.[2] She also left word that you were to send her a picture—please. Obviously you have made a great strike. Sunday I went down to Mames[3]—to blue to come home early & when I did I learned that Mr. Wright, Mr. Lemon[4] & several others called—I fancy Krog[5] for one. It grieved me much. To day I have been since dawn getting the storage men, getting trunks packed, gouging a little money out of the Century Company and getting the typewriter & piano people to come. You left your syringe, Hygienik,[6] slippers & several other things all of which I placed in a bundle and sent Parcels Post to Teck Theatre. For the time being I shall take my old P.O. Box 39—Hamilton Grange Branch P.O. Address me there. Your fathers letter & check came, both of which I enclose. Also I am enclosed this Edison check which please sign & return. I am glad your father likes the Travel Book.[7]

I am very, very, very tired & in no mood for love making but if you were here I would make love to you. You are so nice Lyhon—at once the worst & the best. Will you be very good & really love me. And do you miss me—truly-ruly. Write soon. I shall write again tomorrow.

Lover.

[1] While Markham was in Buffalo with the Lure Company, Dreiser had returned to 3609 Broadway, where he was still paying rent on the flat he had formerly shared with Sara Dreiser. (Dreiser had telegraphed Markham on this day: "Writing today Check came furniture moved address 3609 Broadway luck.")

[2] *Mary, Mary* (1912), by Irish author James Stephens (1880–1950), was published in New York by Boni & Liveright with an Introduction by Padraic Colum under that title and as *The Charwoman's Daughter* in London by Macmillan. The novel traces the adventures of a poor girl, Mary Makebelieve, in Dublin as she dreams of escaping poverty and discovers herself in the process.

[3] Dreiser's sister Mary Frances, called Mame (1861–1944), was married to Austin Brennan (1848–1928) and lived in Staten Island. Her early life would become the inspiration for *Jennie Gerhardt* (1911).

[4] Willard Huntington Wright (1888–1939), author, journalist, and editor, was at this time editor of *The Smart Set* and would shortly leave to become literary critic for the New York *Evening Sun*. Under the pen name S. S. Van Dine he would publish the popular Philo Vance detective novels. Courtenay Lemon (1883–1933), socialist activist, writer, and former dramatic critic for the *New York Call* and later assistant editor of *Pearson's Magazine*; from 1922–1930 he was a play reviewer for the Theatre Guild. He is perhaps best remembered for being the common-law husband of Djuna Barnes, from 1916–1919.

[5] Frederick Henry "Fritz" Krog (1884–1962) was an editor and writer whom Dreiser hired at the *Delineator* and later placed as the nominal head of *Bohemian*, a magazine Dreiser briefly operated in 1909.

[6] Presumably Dreiser is referring to a brand of douche.

[7] That is, *A Traveler at Forty*, which was published on 25 November 1913.

96. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 39—Hamilton Grange Branch

Jan. 13—1914

Honey Sweet:

How are juice? and the Lure? This has been a dull day for me as you can imagine without Lyhon Cryhon to love & pet me & wonder where I am. I've had no word yet. If any letter had arrived at 23 W. 58—it had not done so by 3:30 P.M. I left a change of address for you & for me, ordering all mail sent to P.O. Box 39. I saw the furniture safely stored

in a nice little stack in the Manhattan Storage Warehouse—that very large one at 52nd & Broadway & have a reciept. The cartage was 2^{00}. Storage per month—$2^{00}. My last belongings left at 3:30 today—a grip & small bag & for a day or two. I am here at 611 W. 152nd. Unless I see my way clear soon I shall work at 3609 for a while though Mame says she proposes to take a house at Bensonhurst Feb. 1 & that I can come there. I wish to heaven I were with you in Chicago.

Did you get your fathers letter & check & the Electric light refund check? I think of you all the while honey—10,000 things. Theres no use trying to enumerate them—I think & think all your ways & charms. Please be a nice girl & write me. I am very lonely. Lots of nice reviews are coming in all of which I will mail to you soon.

Your
L—

It's zero tonight. Your missing the 1st bitter weather we've had.

97. Dreiser to Markham

Jan 14—1914

Dearest Kiddy:

I had my first note from you this A.M. (Wed). I'm glad you have a nice room and a lovely view but I miss you. Six months of Lyhon has spoiled me terribly. As this rate a year would undo me completely. I felt as though I were taking a life apart when I dismantled the room but perhaps I take things too seriously.

It is still very cold but still here now—bitter cold. I went down to the P.O. & my fingers hurt after the 2nd block. Looked for a Feb. Smart Set & found it. It contains a review of the Travel Book—quite favorable.[1] I told you I finally got some money out of the Century Co & so here I am trying to finish the novel. Would that it were done & we two were together somewhere. I am as hungry for you already as mortal well can be.

Lovingly
L—

[1] H. L. Mencken, "Anything but Novels," *Smart Set* 42 (Feb. 1914): 153–154; excerpted in Salzman, *Critical Reception*, 159–60.

98. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 39—Hamilton Grange Branch

Jan 14—1914

Honey Pet:

I was so glad to get this first long letter which came today. It made me want to rise & go to Buffalo. If I knew how we would get along for a little while in Chicago I would come at once. Living alone is no great fun I can tell you—& religious talk is a poor diet. Still I am making some progress on the book & if I could finish it before I make another move that would be something. Do you go direct to Chicago from Buffalo or where? Have you changed your route? Do you like your work such as it is? Will you be able to get yourself any clothes when you are in Chicago? I wish we were rich. We would have such a good time fol de rol-ing between work. But I'm still fixed on the Japanese servant to clean up all the time. He would simply have to follow in the wake of L.C.[1] & gather up the peices & the discards.

It's not so cold tonight. I have worked hard all day & made some progress. Ten to 15,000 words now will surely finish the book.[2] Then what. I think I shall talk to Doran[3] soon as I want a contract of some kind & see no other way out. Did you get the Jarmuth book I mailed.

Honey I think of you all the time but since I cannot do anything right now I try not to think. It's so funny. I think now more of last summer than of this fall although we have had such splendid times—day after day—delicious hour. When I think of the splendid vigor with which we have tousled & romped with each other I hate being alone. Write me more at once.

Lovingly

L—

Remember the book I inscribed to the cause of suffrage. Here is what happened. (See clipping & please return it)[4]

[1] Lyhon Cryhon.

[2] Dreiser refers to *The Titan*, for which Harpers was awaiting the final chapters. For Dreiser's summary of his progress, see Dreiser to Markham, 18 Feb. 1914, letter 156.

[3] George H. Doran publishing company, founded in 1908. Dreiser had been unhappy with the revisions required for *A Traveler at Forty* and was considering contracting with Doran who, he wrote Mencken, "will give me full liberty this side of criminal libel & will arrange for debts" (Dreiser to Mencken, 10 Nov. 1913; Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 124).

[4] The clipping is not enclosed with the letter.

99. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. 59—Hamilton Grange Branch N.Y.C.

Jan 16—1914

Lyhon Cryhon:

Sweety Pet:

This is merely to say that in another hour or two I will have written you a much longer letter than this. Delays, business—several things which I will narrate have been and interfered but I love you fully and wish only I had you here. The strain of having you away—of not having you to hold tight at night is very great. But another letter will reach you about the same time as this.

L—

100. Dreiser to Markham

[January 16, 1914]

Lyhon Cryhon:

Mailed another letter today & sent you a night telegram.[1] Yesterday I could not write for at 8:30 Franklin Booth called me up & told me young Krog was in the Tombs & wanted me to help get him out. It seems that he broke down under a nervous strain, tried to get himself appointed police commissioner & tried to pass a false check on a bank no longer in existence. He was arrested & locked up on a charge of attempted Grand Larceny. I had to go down & see him, assistant district attorney Train, the manager of the hotel, the detective who arrested him & several friends & it took all day long. Even then I didn't get him out. This A.M. I went again before the grand jury where I couldn't write you and explained and explained. It didn't do any good but I think he

will be let off Monday on a suspended sentence.[2] I am very tired and disturbed.

And then not being able to write you a long letter has disturbed me. Your letters are so pathetic. I know how you feel because I feel the same way. I want you in my arms to do all the things I want to do and being here & you away hangs heavy. Just the same under the circumstances I think you had best go on until I see my way clear. Money is absolutely essential & I have very little money just now. I should finish this book above all things & make a contract for something else that will bring me a little money.

What a queer, dull thing stage life is in its routine aspects. Your descriptions do not cheer me any as to your lot. It's a shame you should not have a leading role in something for you deserve it. Your whole attitude toward life is so vastly different from that of the average woman. Franklin Booth said yesterday he thought you were one of the most beautiful and artistic looking women he had seen in a long, long while.

It is warmer here now—much more comfortable. Your check came & I am enclosing mine. I won't thank you for I love you too much not to give or take freely if my means were ample. Lord how I wish I could strike it now. Am going to work at 3609 for a few days beginning Monday. 611 W. 152nd is too much. I am going to think & dream of you all the while & wish you were here. Oh your pretty face & beautiful body, Kiddie. I wish I had you with me now. Just wouldn't I. Oooh!

L—

[1] The telegram read: "COULDNT WRITE YESTERDAY YOUNG KROG IN JAIL TWO LETTERS WENT TODAY INCLUDING CHECK AM HARD AT WORK BUT MISS YOU MUCH DON'T GIVE UP LOOK OVER CHICAGO SITUATION FIRST AND SEE WHAT YOU HAVE TO SUGGEST BE SURE AND MAIL OR WIRE NEW CHICAGO ADDRESS I AM CONSUMED WITH LONGING

[2] Dreiser's summary is also reflected in the 29 January 1914 letter he wrote to the judge overseeing the case, George C. Nott, in which he urged that Krog "ought to be warned, frightened, perhaps, and then set free" (Elias, *Letters*, 158.) The emotionally unstable Krog

was eventually released on probation but jailed again, and this time remanded to Bellevue (see Dreiser to Markham, 7 March 1915, letter 239; 8 March 1915, letter 240). For more on the specifics of the January arrest, see Swanberg, *Dreiser*, 170.

101. Dreiser to Markham

3609 Broadway, N.Y.C

Jan 17—1914

Honey Sweet,
Peaches Pet,
Lyhon Cryhon—

Just to greet you on your arrival & wish you luck in Chicago. If we can fix up any reasonable scheme of living and you are going to stay any length of time I will come. Why not get your father to let us live & work at 4830 for awhile. I want to finish this book in peace.

Lover.

If not lets try living on the West Side for a little while—near Garfield Park—perhaps.

102. Dreiser to Markham

Sunday Jan 18—1914

Lyhon Cryhon—

You are on the train as I write and probably will be until tomorrow morning—if you took a slow train as I presume you did. I recieved your letter written after my telegram and the one with the lovely poem. Clever Kiddie girl—warm, generous artistic. I think of you all the time, your traits, your indifference to little things, your geniality, your good humor, your variability, your emotion & passion. I love you for the way you slam into things—life—better shelter and pick up the peices afterward or leave them for someone else to pick up. I like your pagan spirit that goes straight to the thing you want without circumlocution and without show. All the arts of femininity at times and at other times no arts. A woman

and yet a man in mind. Hot flesh, tears, dreams devotions and yet cold logic, disbelief, doubt, indifference, up to the hilt. You ought to do splendidly on the stage if you only stick. You know the one thing that comforts me most now that you are gone? It is the sketch you made on a sheet of paper one night—the one we fought over and you tried to destroy. It is quite crumpled and the lines light but it brings you close to me and me to you in the way I most want at moments and you did it, which makes it realer. I feel as though I were cut off from my very subsistence not to be able to wrestle with you in the one sweet struggle that is worth while. Oh the times, the times. Do you remember those particular times on the couch at 23[1]—when you were all dressed—once in white slippers and stockings. The deliciousness of it—the full, heavy, responsive abandon.

Well here I am, hungry, for that & you. It seems so ridiculous that I should not have money now when I most want it. Perhaps The Titan will turn the trick—who knows. I am slaving at it. In two weeks surely if I can keep it up it ought to be done but yesterday I awoke for the first time in my life with neuralgia in my shoulder so I couldn't lift my right arm and so couldn't write. I worked at it nearly all day suffering badly at times & finally gave up in dispair. I managed to drop you one note. Today it has been much better & I have been working from 9 to 4. I am tired now & after this letter I am going for a walk,

Kiddie Pet, what can we do to be together.

I think of you all the time—your sweet form, breasts, limbs—the wonder of sex with you and I need the emotional relief that comes that way through you intensely. Nothing else will do. You are so rich and heavy and responsive. When I work I think of you & the same way when I rest. If I could manage it I would come out this week.

Krog is still in jail. His case comes up tomorrow morning. More loss of time. I shall have to be in court. It is clear—beautifully—and cold, but nice & dry. I went to look up Madge Jenison[2] last night but found her out. Ditto Maud Stumm[3] & Ditto. Then sought the Henrys,[4] but they had returned to Narragansett.

So I came home & went to bed, finishing The Heart of Darkness—a long short story by Conrad which is splendid.[5]

Send me more sketches. Write me nice letters. Advise me how your father acts, how he feels & if I can finish this story & borrow $300 or $400 from Harpers afterward I will come out but we will have to live simply. But Lord I don't mind so long as I am with you.

L.

[1] That is, their flat at 23 W. 58th Street.

[2] Madge C. Jenison (1874–1960) was an author of short stories and novels and in 1916, with Mary Mowbray-Clarke, opened The Sunwise Turn, the first bookstore to be owned and operated by women. The bookstore's second event was Markham reading from *Plays of the Natural and Supernatural* on 30 April 1916. See also Dreiser to Mencken, 23 April 1916 (Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 228).

[3] Maud Stumm (1866–1935), painter and illustrator.

[4] Arthur Henry (1867–1937), journalist, editor, and novelist, at this time was married to playwright Clare Kummer (1873–1958). Dreiser became friends with Henry in 1894 when, as editor of the *Toledo Blade*, Henry offered him work. Later with Henry's encouragement and editorial assistance, Deiser completed *Sister Carrie*.

[5] The novella "Heart of Darkness" originally appeared in *Blackwood's* in 1899 before being collected in *Youth: A Narrative, and Two Other Stories* (1902).

103. Dreiser to Markham

Grand Union Hotel
Opposite Grand Central Station.
New York

Jan 19 1914

Lyhon Cryhon:
Honey Sweety Peaches Pet:

Your last two letters arrived from Buffalo today. I am writing you a letter every day—some word of some kind so if by any chance you don't get one day you may depend on it to arrive the next.

There should have been two letters for you Monday, one mailed Saturday and one Sunday.

I suppose you are wondering why I am writing on Grand Union Stationary. I am waiting to pick up Benson[1] here—7:30 and using the time to catch up. I wouldn't be out with him except that I was crowded out of 3609. I went there today & located "thin pry"[2] but there was a tea on with people coming at 4 and so I beat it. Fortunately I had to go to Harpers to stop them from putting the galleys in page form until I write chapter heads & that took up all the intervening time & then I phoned Benson & here I am. Do you think it is a good idea to put chapter heads in The Titan. I thought the type was so small it might help to lighten it and besides it seems to me some of the chapters would read better—have more force—if they were given a clear, indicative head. What do you think?

Your letters today made me very lonely and very anxious to pack up & come to Chicago. I am tired of N.Y. anyhow and being alone in it is no fun. I work very concentratedly now & that helps some—makes me forget & helps get the book done, but even writing don't help enough. I miss the one presence I really crave and the color and sweetness you lend to everything. It's too bad you had to go or that I couldn't go with you. I think of all the things we have done—the places we've been,—the delicious days together and then—well & then.

You know Krog isn't out of jail yet. He hasn't been indicted yet, but will be tomorrow, I understand. I called up Dr. Greil[3] last night and went up there to see her. She has a daughter on the stage somewhere and talks of some romance between her & the (or a, perhaps) Russian Ambassador. It seems she visited him last summer in St. Petersburg. What do you know about that?

I am so anxious to here from you now that your are back on your native heath. I want to know what your father said to you & what he wants you to do. I can see you hunting up all your old friends & reporting progress but please don't forget me in the excitement. You know when I read your letter I felt all the time as though much more than half her joy and cheer was due to the fact that

she felt that your job took you away from me—out from under my immediate influence and that much was to be hoped for from that. Very good. Let her dream.[4]

Lyhon pet I do feel so depressed at times. You know my temperament—the heavy sighs that used to startle you so. How do you think they are now. Evenings I miss you most for then we used to relax & get out—(when I didn't go somewhere—wretched me). Now that you are gone I begrudge every hour I ever spent away from you—so you see how the wicked get their just deserts. Will you forgive me if I promise never to do so anymore—or nearly never. Will you.

How are you physically? Allright? No colds or anything. I think I wrote you about the cold in my shoulder. It's better now but I had a slight twinge today again. I wish, I wish, I wish that I could have all the kisses I want tonight & hold you in my arms & sleep close to you. Sweety Lyhon Cryhon—do you love me as much as I love you?

Heres Benson & we have decided to go to a vaudeville show—the Palace—if the show is good enough. Love, Love, love.

L—

Heres a good one—

"Roses are red—violets blue
By me's alright—how's by you?"

Also:

"On the floor above us lives kikes.
On the floor below lives Jews
That makes us swell Kikes."

[1] Allan Benson.

[2] Dreiser's nickname for Sara Dreiser, who was still living at 3609 Broadway. A "thin pry" is a small prybar, a term apparently reflecting Dreiser's attitude toward support payments.

[3] Cecile L. Greil (1873–1940) was the medical director of the Manhattan School for Girls.

[4] Dreiser refers to Belle Hyman's disapproval of her daughter's relationship.

104. Dreiser to Markham

N.Y.

Jan 20—1914

Lyhon Honey,

What a sweety girl you are to want to send me the money. You must [not][1] do that. Keep it for yourself at present & if you don't see anything to do with it buy American Express checks payable to yourself or put it in a bank. If worst comes to worst and we don't have enough we may use it. I am waiting to hear on how much we can live on out there somewhere.

Sweetness I think of you all the time—feel of you. I can think of nothing better than to have you here now & cover your mouth with kisses & hold you close and make you my very own until this dreadful yearning should be temporarily satisfied. I used to run away from you for short whiles but I was always eager to return & always waited eagerly to here your step when you were out. Now there is nothing of you to be had save letters and they are so little where we have had so much. I think of your nice graceful body, your restless mind, your moods, your enthusiasms—they were all one & the same to me—satisfying, gratifying. Won't it be heaven when we get together again and hold each other close and sleep body to body as we have so often done.

Tell me more of what you think. I don't think I can stand this much longer. I work & work—but hell. The show last night was only fair,—many punk acts and we came away dissatisfied. I saw in the Tribune a review of a play produced I presume by Mme Yorska[2] and conclude that she must be more or less of a lemon. I enclose it. Dr. Greil told me that Mrs. Jarmuth was very much interested in you but that she didn't believe she could do you much good. I agree. But you will make your own way eventually—as sure as shooting ducks.

Peaches sweet I'm so fond of you. Do you love me very much? Very, very. Come here & let me hold you very tight and kiss you and feel your lovely body. And then. Write me honey & wish that we shall soon be together again.

L—

[1] The context suggests Dreiser inadvertently omitted "not."

[2] Madame Yorska apparently was born as Elsie Stern of New Orleans but passed herself off as French and, at times, as "Countess Venturini." She received extensive coverage in American newspapers, and at the time of this letter was the director of the French Drama Society of New York, whose mission was to create interest in French plays. Yorska, a protégée of Sarah Bernhardt, later went on to act in film, the most notable of which is *It Happened in Paris* (1919). The review Dreiser refers to is probably of *Britannicus*, by Jean Racine, at the Harris Theatre, in which Yorska played the role of Britannicus ("Theatrical Notes," *New York Tribune*, 20 Jan. 1914: 7).

105. Dreiser to Markham

Jan 21—1914

Good morning. I forgot this last night.[1] Do you miss me much. I hope you do. I feel lonely all the time.

L

[1] Dreiser may have forgotten to enclose the review he referred to in his letter of 20 January.

106. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

Thursday. Jan. 22nd 1914

Peaches Sweet:

I hate somehow to think of your being in a company such as you are in now where the presence or attitude of such a woman as you describe is tolerated. It is one thing to know life thoroughly—another thing to be compelled to live its wretched phases day by day. I know from trying to represent it day by day that art is not concerned with degradation and vulgarity save as the most distant suggestion of a deadly fact. Vulgarity is the soil out of which many things grow. It is a kind of mulch or manure that fattens the earth perhaps but the flowers of art need little

of it and you are a flower of art, sweetest kiddie. Life for you should be lived with your equals—or peers—at least on the basis on which they would expect it to be taken. To have to live it with your inferiors adds nothing save a disgust and memories you would rather not have.

People are so dull. Because of the mouthings of an ignorant Christianity they have come to identify all sex joy with vulgarity. I can think of no greater indictment of Christianity and current conventional morality than that. You and I know better. We know the art and spirit in loving physical contact. I wish you could rise by sheer refinement of art so that the vulgar would be sloughed off as a snakes dead skin or a grubs homely shell. You are entitled on the larger stage to some such atmosphere as prevailed at the Little Theatre only eventually you will have to create it for yourself.

It was a short letter you wrote me today. I wonder how long you will be in Chicago? Harpers are nagging me to hurry and I feel the necessity of driving to get this thing done but it takes so much time. I feel as though I ought to stay here long enough to get this thing done which I keep hoping from day to day will only be a matter of a week or so but I cannot be sure. At the end I thought I would take a little vacation and wherever you are (Chicago I presume) run out to see you. It seems sometimes that if I could just have a few days every three or four weeks I could get along but I need our deliciousness[1] unity to help me live.

Concerning the little sketches why not put them in a perfectly plain envelope without mark of any kind save the address on the outside & mail them. Don't draw any signature of any kind or use paper that could be identified. Then it would be well enough. They could not be identified as either solicited or sent.[2]

I miss you so much. Often I look at the crumpled sketch and wish it were once more real—my delicious, beautiful, pagan girl. No tremulous, half way measures for Lyhon Cryhon. The utmost and with all the force of being. I miss the delight of that more than anything else. When shall we twain meet again.

L—

[1] Dreiser wrote "deliciousness" but meant "delicious."
[2] In his letter of 18 January Dreiser remarks about the crumpled sketch "we fought over and you tried to destroy" (letter 102), and in her letter of 23 January Markham writes she is sketching herself "in my dressingroom gazing in my mirror" (letter 108): the context suggests the sketches are nudes.

107. Dreiser to Markham

Jan. 23rd—1914

Lyhon Cryhon,
Peaches Sweet,
Juicy, Lovely Girl.

When I don't get a note or letter from you promptly in the morning I begin to fancy all the fanciful disturbing things that a naturally lonely and morbid temperament is prey to. You come into my life, hug and kiss me for a while, cradle and rock me in the comfortable depths of your mothering temperament and then you jump up and run away, taking all with you that I live and need and here I am brooding about it and feeling my nerves hurt and wishing I could have once more for an hour that delicious feel of your body and arms that soothes the strain and causes me to think that life is somewhat to me though neither you nor I may be of any import to all the world beside—particularly me. I write and write but who reads and anyhow for me, life is loving. There is nothing else. The whole scheme of things may tumble and crash or rot and decay as it will but with the chemistry of love distilling—creative Nirvana what difference does it all make. So you see how important your letters become.

I went last night to see a Mrs. Herberman, a daughter of one of Brennans sisters whose husband died last year and who having a little money on her own and some looks still is out to make a second match.[1] The way I came to go (39 ½ Washington Sq) is this. For years & years—ever since I began to make any showing for myself—she or her mother rather has ding-donged at me to call. The other night because I was lonely I went down to see Magdalen Schuyler[2]

& together we went over to that Italian restaurant in 11th Street and ate. Who should appear going out but the ONeills and Mrs. Herberman. She is, by the way, a rather fine realization of the Aileen[3] idea at say 35 or thereabouts—very showy, sensual, vain, a catholic, semi religious, semi-pagan etc and of Irish extraction. She sat herself down and began to monopolize the conversation. I froze—for Miss Schuylers sake. Then seeing that she couldn't reasonably stay she asked me if I wouldn't come & take her out to dinner soon. I promised. So last night I made good. I decided I would go down & be as bearish & disagreeable as I could be and see what would happen. In times past she used to freeze me—sweetly but effectively. I did so. We went to the Brevoort. She talked & talked, read my hand, wanted me [to] describe my impression of her as I saw her then. Here is verbatim—as I replied to her then and there—"handsome, in a material way, conventional, religious, sensuous, vain, dull"—She never turned a hair until I said dull—was smiling sweetly and ingratiatingly. Then her face changed. All evening she asked over & over whether I believed she was really dull. She insisted that I was unkind and bearish but she set out to change my mind. Actually I felt a little sorry for her. She worked hard and was fairly interesting but I couldn't see her. We went up afterwards to the Wintergarden[4] to see the dancing but it was very poor & so strolled home. Coming out I met one of those silly men that danced with you at the Liberal Club[5]—the little dull man. He said that Floyd Dell had had word that you were in Chicago. To whom did you write? Today I have from 9 A.M. to 3—this hour at this table and shall be here until six when I shall go up to see Miss Jenison or try to get in touch with Courtney Lemon—a dull life very.

Are you a good girl Lyhon Cryhon—faithful and true or have you found someone in the theatrical company or Chicago whom you like better. Don't run with anyone else. I am waiting for you. If I have any luck ten days should finish the book.[6]

The Lonliest Man.

[1] (Mary) Carmel O'Neill Herberman (b. 1878), the daughter of Josephine Brennan O'Neill (1852–1938), who was the sister of Dreiser's

brother-in-law Austin Brennan. Carmel had been married to Alexander Herberman (1852–1912) and lived with her mother at 39 ½ Washington Square South. In later letters Dreiser would routinely add an extra "n" to the spelling of her name.

[2] Magdalen C. Schuyler (b. 1873). Not much is known about Schuyler: she sold the lots that became the Schuyler Arms, named for her, in 1904, and later was the private secretary to J. K. Gwynn, who had been the Secretary of the American Tobacco Company.

[3] Dreiser refers to the character Aileen Butler, of *The Financier, The Titan*, and *The Stoic*, whom he depicts as possessing "self-conscious vigor, vanity, and tendency to over-ornament" (*The Titan*, ch. 3).

[4] The Shubert organization opened the Winter Garden Theatre on Broadway in 1911.

[5] The Liberal Club was founded in 1912 and in 1913 moved to 137 MacDougal Street, above the popular restaurant Polly's, run by Paula (or Polly) Holliday. The Club's motto was "A Meeting Place for Those Interested in New Ideas," and it was a center for social gatherings among Greenwich Villagers.

[6] Dreiser attached a brief comic clipping about backsliders in church.

108. Markham to Dreiser

Jan. 23, 1914

Sweetheart precious

I had the strangest feeling this morning that there was going to be no letter at the theatre today, and true to the idea, none has come and I have been nearly frantic. I have been fighting the inclination to wire since 3 o'clock, but have decided to wait until morning to see what a new day brought. I have been so silent and morbid with Father that I finally had to tell him it was because of no letter. I know endless places to live in the art students' neighborhood, sweetheart, and am waiting patiently now to hear that you are coming. The man at the box office said today that we are to run the rest of the season. The one question is how long is the season. Nonetheless, that means no short run, and so hurry, hurry, hurry.

I have done a sketch of myself this evening sitting here in my dressingroom gazing in my mirror. You know Father is such a

stage door Johnnie and so unreasonable about the . . . name that every one at the theater knows I am Elaine Hyman and the girls lunching, with Dad and me all the time, call me Elaine.[1] It is a dreadful mistake. It doesn't do for me to be playing in Chicago.

Lover, only write me when you are coming. I wish I had more engineering ability. I am going to take what of Monday I can spare and go and look for places. It is the very first minute I have free. I told Father tonight that I was going to cut the social act and that I was expecting you soon. He simply acquiesces in everything and merely warned me to be careful and avoid notoriety.

I miss you so, darling, and I cannot stand it much longer. My body aches to be touched and kissed, and my heart aches for the beat of you, close. Come, lover heart, come and hold Lyhon close and tell her you love her, and that she is a sweet thing. She wants to be told that she is nice, lover, and by only one person. Goodnight, darling. Goodnight. I hope I do not dream that I am alone tonight but that I am in my lover's arms. It is the only heaven on earth.

[1] The ellipsis is in the transcript, and it's unclear whether Markham inscribed the ellipsis or whether the transcriber substituted it for the name itself or for an epithet.

109. Dreiser to Markham

Saturday, Jan 24—1914

Lyhon Sweety Lamb: My Lovely White Enticing Girl:

What between writing a chapter or nearly one, reading a new set of galleys—123 to 149 and corrected some recently written pen written ones, going down to Harpers in the rain, etc this rather long day—9 – to 7:30 P.M. has gone, mostly at this table. I had two letters from you today, one written at breakfast time at your lady Shirleys and one after you had seen Louise.[1] I love Louise. It is so true. It is like you and [your] own father & me, only in a different sphere. It is Paris, it is art, it is life. Always I see the old women venders in the morning in the gray streets—always I hear at last

the fathers dispairing cry. Oh, it is a lovely work of art, music and all, so modern, so Balzacian, so French, so Parisian. I get sick of Italian tragedies at times, but Louise, Louise. I want to go and see it again with you.

All day, as usual my working thoughts have been interfered with longing thoughts of you. I suffer so Lyhon in my nerves when you are away—I can't tell you how exactly but I do. I don't know whether I can stand to finish this book or not here. Something pulls me so always—as if I must get up & go. It is only when I am working very hard that I forget. Today I was thinking of the plume of rushing water on the canal & how we stretched out between the rocks & let the water tear over us. Then I thought of that night at Rockaway when we went out in the star light to sketch the canal & afterwards up into the room to lie in my reading the Smart-set, me lying comfy against you[r] soft, white naked body. Delicious girl. Then of the time we found the bittersweet—great masses of it—then the Saturday night we stopped to buy pillows & things in 3rd Avenue and went home into the bare to study read Thais[2] and love and love. Delicious day, delicious days. How I wish we were together again doing it all over or doing different things. Do you love me Lyhon Cryhon? Will you be really faithful to me.

It is raining here with a thick fog thrown in. It's not cold—only muggy. Tonight I promised myself to look up Courtney Lemon but I'm giving it up—too tired. I went up last night to see M. C. Jenison—a dreary, grinding woman. After I left I thought my God! think of living such a life—a serious book chaser without a touch of real romance in her whole soul. Compared to you she is nothing at all—a bundle of sour straw. She asked after you—wanted to know enviously if you were going to India with me.[3] I said sure if I went and she hoped we would have a fine time. My plan is to stick it out a few days more if I can to finish this book—then hold up Harpers for a few hundred if I can, make an arrangement with Doran if I can & beat it to Chicago to work out some short stories & articles so that we can live. I shall bring The Genius for you to

copy and my books. Will finish Holy land[4] & see what else I can do. But just to have you every night to hold tight and love will make me well again. I do hope, in spite of what your letter said that you are not really going to be sick. I can't stand that.

Other than what you write there is no news that I know of. Plays are going on here, there is much political talk, Krog is out of jail at last so there you are. I haven't been to the Liberal Club & shan't go. I have no plans of seeing anybody anywhere at all while I finish this book. The moment I do if I can fix it I am coming. Why don't you find a good room in a west side boarding house—no board—just a room.

Well, sweet I'll stop now but I could on & on saying I love you, wishing to hold you tight, telling you of lovely things I think about you. Don't fail to write me a daily letter.

L—

Send the dandy drawings but change your handwriting on the envelope & don't mention them until I tell you that I have recieved them.

[1] The opera *Louise* (1900), by Gustave Charpentier (1869–1958), which was performed by the Chicago Grand Opera Company, opening on 22 January. It is a tale of a working-class Parisian seamstress who loves an artist, whom her parents reject, but who nonetheless leaves with him to find happiness.

[2] *Thaïs* (1890), a novel by Anatole France about the love of a hermit Paphnuce for the libertine Thaïs, who repents and becomes a saint.

[3] Dreiser had hatched a scheme to go to India to dog the steps of Emilie Grigsby (the inspiration for Berenice Fleming in the Cowperwood novels), as part of his research and to write a travel book based on the trip. Although Douglas Doty of the Century Co. had rejected the idea, writing in a 7 November 1913 letter: "'I believe it would be wiser to wait until this book [*A Traveler at Forty*] is out so that we can see what sort of reception it gets, before we decided on the nature of your next travel book'" (qtd. in Swanberg, *Dreiser* 168), Dreiser was still contemplating the excursion.

[4] It's not clear what Dreiser refers to.

110. Markham to Dreiser

[January 24, 1914]

Preciousest Mine;
Dreamer Boy from the Stars:

My heart aches for the one I love tonight, and yet it is happy for it has had a letter today and my lover is all right. But the windy street and the clouds and the sad faces are infinitely more sad seeing them alone. People pass, sombre, tragic, and I ask myself: Is the one you love far away and are you lonely?

I don't think I told you in my last letter that I saw Margery Dell recently and that she is going to give a party soon for me. Not the party nor the seeing her are so impressed on my mind as the fact that I suddenly realized that people who are physically unlovely, at least in Margery's way, are actually repulsive to me. Somehow the memory of Margery dressing one morning is ever present when I am with her, and I cannot remember those shrunken little breasts and all her skinny little body without repulsion. Isn't that terrible? Do you think if I had an unlovely child I would feel the same way? But we could not have an unlovely child, could we, lover? Our boys and girls would be clean and straight and strong, I know they would.

Oh, sweetheart, loneliness is so dreadful. I find so many, many times, when I think I am dreaming of nothing at all, or just resting, that you are surrounding and covering my subconscious self like a protecting shawl, a rich cloth out of Kashmiri—

> "If you meet my love
> Greet him me,
> And catch him by the corner of his shawl
> And invite him to come to me.
> But if he refuses to accept the invitation
> May Allah forgive him for it."[1]

My lover does not refuse, does he? I feel him close, so close, entering into the spirit of me and the body of me and filling me with contentment. Oh boy, I want you, I want you. Don't you feel me pushing, pushing against you, lover, begging without words to be taken and loved again? The heart of me is pounding against your ribs, the mouth of me is seeking the mouth of my love with longing.

I am so mad, lover. I sometimes feared before I came away that my mouth was too eager even[2] for you. But oh, I love you, lover-heart, I do. Somehow, away from you, I find Father the gayest of us two, and exert myself continually to meet him sufficiently not to appear morbid.

Goodnight now, sweetheart. I love you. You know it, and so no more.

[1] The source for this poem is unknown, and Markham may have written it herself.

[2] While the transcript has "ever," the word was probably mistyped in the transcript.

111. Dreiser to Markham

Sunday. Jan 25—1914

Honey Sweet, Lyhon Cryhon, Peaches Pet, My Baby Girl:

Still wishing am I and thinking. It's a better day today, clear & bright, but I'm no better. I went to the movies next door last night after writing you & saw one good thing concerning Paris underworld life. It suggested a fine novel of the Carmen[1] type if only one could find the writer to do it. Lengel writes he is coming East Feb 9 & Masters[2] that he will correct the legal points in my story if I will send it on. I want to go for a long, long walk somewhere today & stretch my muscles & shall probably wind up at my brother Eds[3] for a change. No news & no change. I live all the while in memory at 23 W. 58 and go around there doing things or waiting for you. All the while I go over things we have done together—mostly the most intimate—when we have gripped and twisted in each others arms. It is so hard to do without sex when it is the one soothing outlet to your disposition. You pull me so because you have always met me so fully—so unreservedly. When we are together once more—ah me.

Have you been around to the Little Theatre or seen anything of Miriam Kiper, Mrs. Tobey or see Mrs Dell?[4] If so you are as silent as the grave. Who do you see? I called up Miss Gonzalez & am

going there once anyhow. Will get some local news that way. Have neither seen nor heard anything of Lady Donna or Shiel.[5] What did you do with that note from Miss Rice?[6] I must answer that & I haven't the new address.

I am not going to write more now for it is noon & I want to walk. But tonight or early in the A.M. I will write again. I wish you were here or I out there. I do, I do. Did your father say anything at all about me. If so, what?

L—

I wonder what you are doing today.[7]

[1] *Carmen* (1846), a novella by Prosper Mérimée that inspired the opera by Georges Bizet, is about a gypsy girl who charms a soldier, who then deserts and becomes an outlaw.

[2] Edgar Lee Masters (1868–1950), Chicago lawyer and poet. Masters had been a partner with Clarence Darrow from 1903–1908 before moving on to establish his own practice. Dreiser met Masters in December 1912 when he arrived in Chicago for research on Charles Tyson Yerkes (the inspiration for Frank Cowperwood), whom Masters had known. Dreiser was instrumental in finding a publisher for Masters's *Spoon River Anthology*, and Macmillan's 1916 edition was very successful.

[3] Edward Minerod Dreiser (1873–1958) was an actor, under the name Edward Dresser, who had most recently appeared on Broadway in 1908–1909 in the play *The Traveling Salesman*, by James Forbes.

[4] "Mrs. Tobey" may be Virginia Forrest Tobey (1892–1985), the second wife of Dreiser's friend Berkeley Tobey, business manager of the *Masses*. She later acted in the Provincetown Player's 1916 production of *Sauce for the Emperor*.

[5] For George Shiel, see Dreiser to Markham, 21 May 1916, letter 321, n. 1.

[6] The American Fauvist painter Anne Estelle Rice (1877–1959), whom Dreiser met in Paris in 1912 while gathering material for what would become *A Traveler at Forty* (1913). At the time, Rice was involved with the Scottish painter John Duncan Fergusson; after their relationship ended, she married Raymond Drey on 27 December 1913. She had written to Dreiser for advice on establishing a studio and mounting an exhibition in New York before her arrival in November

1914. Dreiser based "Ellen Adams Wrynn," a sketch in *A Gallery of Women*, on Rice.

[7] Inscribed at the top left corner.

112. Dreiser to Markham

Sunday, Jan 25—1914
2nd letter. I came back to write this.

Honey Sweet

Baby Precious: Your letter of Friday urging me to come just got here now (Sunday 1 P.M.). I went around to the P.O to look. I will surely come very soon now—just as quick as I can finish this mss & turn it in. You couldn't be any crazier to have me come then I am to get to you. Every day seems a year. I want to kiss and bite you and wear myself limp in your arms. And I will soon. This book complicates things for the moment. I have, since you left completed about 9 difficult (very) chapters, edited all galleys to 106 for the 3rd & final time and edited all galleys from 106 to 140—for the 1st time. There are some thirty or forty more galleys all told to come. I have these 9 chapters to take out tomorrow & have typewritten. I have about 6 or 7 more chapters more to do—not more than that. A week should do it. I want to get a strong box & put all my mss in it & send it to the Manhattan Storage Co. I want to pack my books & shall bring all my clothes—three trunks all told I think. Can we get a room with ample closet space? I want to see Doran and I am through for the time being. If hard work will bring me out by next Sunday or Monday I will come. If not as soon afterwards as possible. I do wish we had some money & that you could clinch that arrangement & stay down here. But as it is. Don't worry sweet. I only think of you & want to be with you all the time. Don't you truly know that—Sweet ___, Sweet ___ Lovers Girl (what). Can't you fill these in for yourself—Precious, rubbery, baby girl. Oooh how I want to get hold of you again.

L—

There are 149 pages of the book here in page form & more coming right along. They want to issue it Feb. 26.

113. Markham to Dreiser

Jan. 25. 1914

Sweetheart preciousest mine

Lyhon Cryhon has a dreadful headache tonight and is longing so hard to be petted and babied. When lover is not her baby then Lyhon wants to be his, and she wants so much to be tonight. She would like to sit on his lap and be held close and rocked and rocked.

My head is aching too ferociously to read Jennie aloud tonight, so we have loaned it to Vincent Serrano, who came begging a book to read.[1] At the theatre I was most often introduced as Miss Hyman, and next most often as Mrs. Markham. Where it ever came from I don't know. Arthur Ficke was there and we had lots of fun. Oh, lover, am I ever going to be able to do the really big thing in such a world as this? Your last letter held such wonderful dreams of the artistic theatre,[2] but it seems so nearly impossible when I look around now. The stage is so full of little people, of crude people, of utterly awful people. However refined the atmosphere of one's individual circle, one cannot bring it to the theatre, I am afraid. The only thing to do, it seems to me, is to be big enough to ignore all the associates of the working hours excepting those one chooses to keep as friends. Even then the remainder of the company must not know that you have done such.

Sweetheart, I am waiting to hear that you are coming with an anxious heart. I cannot wait until morning for my next letter. Come soon, precious lover boy. Come soon to . . . . . .

[1] Markham refers to Dreiser's novel *Jennie Gerhardt* (1911). Vincent Serrano (1866–1935) was a Broadway actor who played the lead role of Special Agent Bob McCauley in *The Lure*.

[2] Markham seems to refer to Dreiser's letter of 22 January, letter 106.

114. Dreiser to Markham

Jan 26—1914
Monday.

Lyhon Sweet:

No letter waiting for me this A.M. and so I was duly grieved as you may imagine. I have been writing ever since (3 P.M.) and have not been around so there may be one waiting. It makes me smile a little comfortably (though I cannot be comfortable away from you) to think that last Friday when you were so distressed that you were going to wire me, I was equally wretched because two letters before had been short and inconsequential & no letter had come for me. But I would rather think of it in retrospect than to live it over again. I have no real peace away from you. I have found my mate now & I know it. If you will stick to me I will stick to you. We can be happy anywhere together if only we have enough to live on. I see it so plain & I never felt it before in connection with anyone. I was always thinking I should require so many outside things.

The book proceeds apace but it is so hard. I now have 250 pages in page form & am toiling over the last chapters. The headings look very good. As I suggested I saw Carman. We went to an Italian restaurant in 47th St (name forgotten) and then back to her studio because it was raining. (Changeable weather here) She read Rabindranath Tagore[1] & talked of her experiences with Buzzell.[2] One of the delicious things I never heard nor you either I suppose was that for weeks after she left her old studio in Washington Sq. he kept his mirror standing on the floor quite as she had hers—books around it—and when he wanted to shave sat down in front of it Turkish wise to be truly—what? Oriental? Whenever I think of that I could roar. She also said Dell had called several times & that he had phoned her that you had gone to Chicago. She has no job yet and is now perfecting her dances to do them for society people. She said she was thinking of going abroad—England or Paris—and I am sure she had some man of money on the string. She was repeatedly phoning to the Seville to learn something concerning a telephone call which had not reached her.

There is no other news. I am tired but industrious. I liked ever so much the little picture of yourself which has something of you but not all. You have no idea Lyhon how sweet your face is to me. At times the very look of it—coaxing & honeying sets up a kind of frenzy in my blood. At other times it soothes me ineffably. And your voice—I love it. It is like fur and a caress. Kiss me, peaches sweet. Oooh if I could but take you tight in my arms once more—warm and sweet and persuasive. I shall work so hard that I may, soon.

L—

[1] Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941), Bengali writer and mystic who was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913. "Carman" is probably reading *Gitanjali*, a volume of poetry translated into English by Tagore in 1913 as *Song Offerings*, with an Introduction by W. B. Yeats, and published by Macmillan.

[2] Francis Buzzell (1882–1929), a Chicago newspaper reporter, moved to Greenwich Village in 1912 in search of a literary career after publishing two poems in *Poetry*. He married Miriam Kiper, Markham's co-actor at the Chicago Little Theater, in December 1913 in Manhattan, and then the two returned to Chicago.

115. Markham to Dreiser

Jan. 26, 1914

Dearest my lover

He did ask today who I was seeing and what I was doing, and here I've been telling him all the time.

. . . . I met Mr. Binskell, the manager of the Fine Arts Theatre, as I was going into the building, and he told me that he saw Winthrop Ames[1] about two weeks ago and had the opportunity of telling him quite a bit about me. Ames had expressed his regret that I was too tall to play with Marguerite Clark.[2]

I have been trying to figure out who the dull man from the Liberal Arts Club was and have decided that it must be Parmelee.[3] I have written once to Marjorie and Floyd together, and since once to Marjorie. She has written quite often, but I have not yet answered her last letter. She wants us to live nearer the club when

I return to New York,[4] in the hopes that we may see more of each other, but again I swear "I shall not do all the seeking."

[1] Winthrop Ames (1870–1937), American theater director and producer, who at the time of this letter was the director of the Little Theater on West 44th Street (now known as the Hayes Theater), at the time the smallest theater on Broadway (597 seats). Ames had founded the theater to produce experimental dramas by new playwrights.

[2] Marguerite Clark (1883–1940), Broadway actress who shifted to film in 1914. Her most recent role at the Little Theatre was the lead in *Prunella, or Love in a Garden*, by Laurence Houseman and Harley Granville-Barker, which closed on 24 January 1914.

[3] Maurice Parmalee, author of *Principles of Anthropology and Sociology and Their Relation to Criminal Procedure* (1908) and *The Science of Human Behavior: Biological and Psychological Foundations* (1913). Parmalee lectured on nudism at the Liberal Club, later publishing his theories in *Nudism in Modern Life* (1927).

[4] Marjorie Jones and Floyd Dell had recently moved into a flat at 106 West 13th Street in Greenwich Village, where they were near the Liberal Club at 135–137 MacDougal Street and the apartment Dreiser would rent later that year at 165 West 10th Street.

116. Dreiser to Markham

Tuesday, Jan 27—1914

Lyhon Sweety:

I had two letters today (none yesterday) one saying that Mrs. Dell was going to give a party for you—the other that you had been to the Little Theatre.[1] How did the Browns and Mrs. Reckitt[2] recieve you? I wonder. Your suggestion of how you felt concerning Mrs. Dell—her looks—tallies with my own emotions concerning such things. A cold chill runs over me when I think of anyone physically defective—particularly a woman—if any form of intimacy should bring him or her near me. I fairly shake and curl up like that sensitive plant that so dreads fire. On the other hand physical perfection in man or woman warms me in a happy way. I expand where I am moved to believe that the

temperament is satisfactory. In the case of a beautiful woman of my kind—but why should I tell you. Think over the last six months. Mere physical beauty in a woman is exhilarating. Where love and special passions enter as in our case!

It is cold and foggy here tonight. Out in the river fog bells are going most dolefully. I have been working hard all day to expedite matters in connection with the novel so I can get it to you. I have galleys now up to 163 corrected and there cannot be more than 40 more all told to come after I shall have turned in the last chapter. The printers are hurrying things some now and if I have luck in finishing the book in the next four days it will not take me long to see about the rest. I doubt whether I shall bring the Genius along to Chicago to copy & for this reason. When I come I shall want to work on a short story or so and an article or two—perhaps more and if you copied those you would be doing enough. Beside that Miss Westervelt[3] that copies this so cheaply—1 copy and carbon at 50 cents per thousand words works in the Century Co where the mss is. If she will make me three copies for the same money—and I think she will on so long a job the whole book should not cost me more than $120 or $130 and 10 chapters of it are already done. If I thought you could do it swiftly I would bring it along for I would like to get it out next fall. But since I doubt very much whether you can. I am debating. If I had three copies made I could send one at once to Sutphen[4] to butcher and then I could revise from that with an original to work from. Oh me I am so anxious to get to Chicago.

There is no news. Mr. Katz writes that we must come to dinner Thursday eve. A representative of Doubleday Page wants to see me on Wednesday night—take dinner with him! Why? On Friday night I take dinner with my sister and so it goes. But I have someone who is with me all the time in spirit—you know who. I can feel you loving me—making life endurable and worth while. When everything else is rotten I think "if I can just get to Lyhon she will put her arms about me & by love and emotion make life alright." Oh Lyhon sweety-baby mine, lovely lilly girl—tall and slender—and Indian lilly I am so fond of you. Put your head back now, put your arms about me. Do you feel my lips on yours? Do you feel

my hand on your neck and hair? Do you love me—peaches, baby lamb—my soft, cozy, comfy baby? hunh?—even at this range it feels so at this moment. Write me baby—one note a day anyhow. Will you come as far as South Chicago to meet me.[5]

L—

[1] See Markham to Dreiser, 24 Jan. 1914, letter 110.
[2] Elizabeth Goodrich Reckitt.
[3] Edna H. Westervelt, Dreiser's typist, was employed by the Century Company.
[4] William Gilbert van Tassel Sutphen (1861–1945), the Harper's editor most responsible for the editing of *The Titan*.
[5] Enclosed in this letter's envelope are two letters from Markham, both dated 27 January 1914, to Florence Brinkman and to Clara Rubey, regarding an introduction of Rubey to Brinkman, who is residing in Berlin.

117. Markham to Dreiser

Jan. 27, 1914

Sweetheart darling

It seems to me like a big risk to come on with all your trunks when we don't know how long we will stay, but I guess it is a risk one has to run. Your little Sunday letter was so dear. How I love my boy, how I love his yearnings and his longings. I cannot wait for him to come. We will get to work writing the articles as soon as you come, and Lyhon will do the typewriting and we ought to have a lot of money in no time with a little hard work. Oh, sweetheart, to think of seeing you soon! It is too wonderful. I shall try so hard not to be so wearisome and too exacting. You know, don't you dear, that it was only because I loved you so. I think truly that my lover feels or has felt during my absence a little as I felt before I had my work, when my love made me jealous. I was going over some of the letters of last spring and found one in which you said that jealousy was simply too much love, and that if your love seemed too exactly perhaps I had better give you up.[1] It seemed

very funny to come across such a thing after this autumn, and I had to smile. How dear it will be to be together again.

I talk to Father of you continually, and he is always interested. I relate endless anecdotes and tell of dear times we have had and he is always interested.

Sue is on another dope bout tonight and has a trained nurse in attendance. I had already started to dress when she arrived on the scene. Mr. Martin nearly died laughing at my disappointment.[2] He thought I'd be scared green. We have been having great fun over it all.

Goodnight now, baby boy. I love you so very much it is hard to think where to stop, but I am going to be very good. You are having time enough to see all the people you want now, aren't you, sweetheart?

[1] See Dreiser to Hyman, 23 April 1913, letter 49.

[2] Susanne Willis was a stage and film actress who played the role of Carrie, the madame's maid, in *The Lure*. Markham had been about to step up from her role as understudy to take on the maid part. "Mr. Martin" may have been the production manager.

118. Dreiser to Markham

Wednesday, Jan 28—1914

Honey Girl:

Do you get a letter regularly every day or do the mails slip now & then and bring two the next? I write one every day about the same time. I have been hustling so far today—what with Hitchcock[1] ding-donging for pages and a lot of letters to answer. I have oked pages up to 321 which is all of half of the book. I have corrected galleys up to 163 which will carry the book 3/4^{ths} through. I have written full half of the copy which makes the last 1/4 and now on the final 1/8th. I can see the end soon if they rush corrections. That brings me all the quicker to you.

It is so fine here today—just like spring. It makes me think of the day last year when we went to High Bridge.[2] How I wish it were here now—only it be just as lovely when I get to you in Chicago.

The past holds nothing better than the future promises in so far as you are concerned. I'm happy when I with you and I'm not happy when I'm away from you. And we will be together in the spring.

What a lot of lovely things we have done together. Do you remember the night at Holland Beach—and the still bay—and the night later on? Then Canarsie where we sat in the boat. And that day when we chased the fishes at Long Point—or some such place. And the day you caught the bird at Baileys Beach? Do you recall the night sitting on the railing of the Hall of Fame? And the spring day in the woods over near Fort Lee? (we went from the photographers) and the night at Poughkeepsie? And the night at Rockaway, the Brevoort,—the days in the tower. Oh the dandy days I have spent with Lyhon Cryhon! Do you remember the morning you first wore that light, armless tunic with the sandals and how I raged over your lovely body several times the same day. You cried because the sweet agony of passion was not mutual—lovely delicious girl.

Honey the best days of all have been with you—the most perfect—the most rich. I think of you all the time meditating your career and I know you have a lovely future. You are so warm & generous. Love me sweety—deep & strong—for I need just your love. It makes the game livable, rich, happy. Let me have years of you & I shall not grieve to die.

"But being dead we shall not grieve to die."[3]

The Lonliest

[1] Ripley Hitchcock (1857–1918), art critic, historian, editor. As an editor, Hitchcock believed in active editorial intervention to make manuscripts more saleable, with one prominent example being his service while at the publisher D. Appleton in bringing out Stephen Crane's *The Red Badge of Courage*. Hitchcock joined Harper's in 1906 and remained there until his death from heart failure in 1918. Earlier he had worked with the manuscript of *Jennie Gerhardt*, and his editing was such that it prompted, in part, the re-edited Dreiser Edition of the novel in 1992. At this time Hitchcock was working with *The Titan*.

[2] See Dreiser to Hyman, 30 March 1913, letter 27.

[3] The last line of the poem "Grave," by William Ernest Henley (1849–1903).

119. Markham to Dreiser

Jan. 28, 1914

Sweetheart

Did he truly miss his Lyhon so much, and is he so sure now that she is the right one? Lyhon is filled with contentment that he should love her so much at all. She thinks of him all the time and all the time those thoughts run in her heart like an old song.

I have come to the club well ahead of time for my appointment with Dad so as to write you and plunged face to face into two cousins the minute I got here. The idea of running into any one that I should have to visit with had not entered my head. However, I soon excused myself and here I am, in spirit with my well beloved.

I slept badly all night, for it was another very close night. I awoke with a strange and ugly premonition feeling, and as soon as I was seated at Madame Huntingford's[1] found a cross-eyed woman examining me. I have managed to shake it all, but I hope everything is all right.

You know it is perfectly funny. So many people are so impressed by the play that they cannot bear to meet the people who play the ugly parts. Kruger is one of those, and Miss Dorr another.[2] I have known people to refuse pointblank to be introduced to either of them. Many women are quite sure that Kruger is a cadet.

Darling heart, we are going to try to see Fannie's First Play[3] this afternoon, but if we fail to get in we are going to start that much earlier to find places to live. The girls were thinking that we could find small furnished apartments somewhere. Mr. Kruger says he has found one, and he was paying only ten and a half a week for his hotel room and is now paying a great deal less for his apartment.

Oh, I love you, baby boy. I am glad you liked the sketch Lyhon did of herself. She wants her lover so that she is trying to think all the time of ways to bring herself nearer to him. It is time for Father now, so I am going to close. Sweet boy, angel child lover, Lyhon wants you and loves you.

[1] Madame Huntingford was an English scalp and hair specialist who operated a salon in Chicago's Auditorium building before taking her products national.

[2] Otto Kruger (1885–1947), American actor who debuted on Broadway in 1915, chiefly as a matinee idol before turning to villainous film roles. Kruger joined *The Lure*'s cast in Chicago, replacing the original "cadet," George Probert (1879–1949). Dorothy Dorr (1897–1987), stage actress from 1902–1915 and then film actress from 1921–1925. In *The Lure*, Dorr played the role of Kate Lockwood, the madame, and Kruger played her husband, Paul, the villainous cadet who is the play's chief seducer.

[3] *Fanny's First Play* (1911), by George Bernard Shaw, a popular satire on plays and theatre critics, with 256 performances in New York before closing in April 1913.

120. Markham to Dreiser

Jan. 28, 1914

Sweetest Being on Earth

Lyhon has written one letter today, and then left the note book in which it was reclining in one of the dressmaking establishments where I have been today. Father is going to give me two new dresses, and I can pay him back when I am able to do so easily.

121. Dreiser to Markham

Jan 29—1914

Dearest Lyhon Cryhon:

It is so like you to send back this check endorsed after I told you to sign your name on the back and cash it. You can cash it there if you wish. It cannot be cashed without your "Kirah Markham" on the back. Then again it was so odd for you to say that I have all the time I want now to visit. Are you still mad at me at times. Does it please you when I pay up for my sins of omission & commission. I really don't believe it. You are too generous and loving. I don't only believe this—I know it. True I have time now Lyhon—but I am so lonely. You might well let me go occasionally when I am with you for it is the only time I care to go—when I have first enough of my Lyhon Cryhon—(the antidote to the welt-schmerz.) When you know that you are my first & really only need—what more?

But you don't write me much of anything these days. Do my letters satisfy you so that there is no ache to write or are you too involved with other things. The only time in the day that I can feel really in touch with you is when I take up my pen & think of you as near me & loving you. Oh honey, once we get together again I won't want to think of parting from you again. It is too hard. Can't we scheme out something to avoid it?

I am still wrestling with the book hour after hour. It is an awful task. Last night I took dinner with a man from Doubleday Page & Co—a Jew by the name of Alfred Knopf[1]—very interesting & afterwards went with him to a reception at the Littletons—the same being Editors something or other (he at least) of the Times. Dull, dull, dull. Nothing could be worse. Dull, dull, dull. Dancing, singing, piano playing, supper—much conversation. But the people! Oh, Lord. Dull, dull, dull! Beyond belief. I beat it at midnight leaving the alleged "merry rout" at its task. The night was fine. A street car seemed charmingly human, the subway perfect.

Darling, love me in your letters won't you. Fondle me as only you can. I love the feel of your arms even in thought. You can cuddle my very soul to satiation. Give me your mouth, your tongue, the tight grip of your arms and thighs.

L—

[1] Alfred A. Knopf (1892–1984), American publisher. Knopf had just become an editorial assistant at the publishing firm Mitchell Kennerley, after having worked as a clerk at Doubleday from 1912–1913. In 1915, with Blanche Wolf, whom he would marry the next year, he founded his own firm, Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.

122. Markham to Dreiser

Jan. 29, 1914.

Sweet boy

We are quite dead tonight, as we spent an immense amount of time today hunting places to live and finding pretty nearly

nothing. Tomorrow we are going to look on the South Side. We are so afraid of the West Side, as no one knows their way there at all, but we will try that as a last resort if the South offers nothing.

Father bought me a perfectly beautiful grey and orange suit today, exquisite. He does not think it quite simple enough for street wear, but I convinced him that I needed things much more for when I want to look extremely well than for everyday life. It will go exquisitely with my little new bonnet with the orange bows on it.

Mother arrives in town Saturday and will stay as long as I want her to. It depends entirely on her attitude as to how long that shall be. She wants to see the Lure Saturday night, but it is utterly impossible to allow her to do that.

We have been having great fun talking about your coming of late. This evening Lola[1] was warning me not to let Sue Willis know about our relationship and then she described Sue in the most wonderful way as being too putridly physical.

Am looking forward now with great expectancy to your coming. I shall surely come to South Chicago or 63d or whatever uptown station I have to to meet you. Darling boy, to think of meeting you in the entry and holding you close! Oh, it is so sweet I can hardly bear it. I hope I shall be all moved into the new place by the time you get here. It will be so precious to have my darling all to myself in our own little nest, soon, so soon. Let us only hope I find a pleasing nest, a nest with plenty of room and yet cozy enough for me to cuddle my little bird up under my wings and love him very much. Father told me the cutest toast last night: "God love you and keep you. I would, but I can't afford it."

Goodnight, little heart of mine. There are many things I would like to question about or tell you about, but it is late and Lyhon must sleep. I love you, baby. I do.

[1] Lola May (1889–1971), American silent film and stage actress. May played the role of Nell, the other corrupted girl, in both the stage and film versions of *The Lure*.

123. Dreiser to Markham

Friday. Jan 30—1914

Lyhon Sweet:

I became so restless without a picture of you around the place—one that I could put my hands on quickly that I went down to the storage warehouse today and got the two I most like—the Nordfelt portrait and the one I had framed. When I came back though I went to the post office and found only a perfunctory note which dis-appointed me some. Chicago seems to be entertaining you again as it did last spring and when that is happening you get along very well, don't you. Well I haven't started yet and there is plenty to do here.

But really I don't mean that either. It is just a passing wave of feeling that I will get over. You mean well but some days I think you are less thoughtful then others—possibly because you are more hurried. But I have written you most feelingly the while.

I went to Mr. Katzs to dinner last night. He has a handsome place in a new 12 or 14 story apartment on the 11th floor. Coat, servant and everything staringly new. Some abominable new paintings he has acquired some where. Katz had a good mind but he is coarse & vulgar terribly so. While he takes to realism in literature he seems to know but one phase of life—that of the chorus girl-gambler-prostitute and idler-shark. It has phases of value. At other times it falls.

I went also to Harpers & had a talk with Hitchcock. He likes the book now since he had read to galley 163 and believes it is dramatic. He thinks I ought to do the Bulwark[1] or the historical novel next—not "The Stoic." I'm not so sure. The latter has splendid possibilities. He wants to edit The Genius and put it on the market next fall. He also asked after you.

I didn't sleep well last night for some reason & so today I am feeling punk. You won't like this letter because I am dull & your letter seemed remote to me. Tomorrow I shall be alright again. Life is a deadly thing—isn't it? It is so unstable—ourselves most of all. I think I shall forswear love some day and guard against it as I would the plague.

L—

I don't mean that Lyhon either. I love you & think I always shall if you will be loving & faithful to me.

[1] Dreiser conceived of *The Bulwark* in 1912, when he met Anna Tatum, whose story of her Quaker father gripped his imagination (see Dreiser to Hyman, 3 May 1913, n. 4, letter 59). Although he worked on the manuscript intermittently over the years, it would need the editorial assistance of Louise Campbell before being published posthumously in 1946. Although Dreiser was ready to begin to write *The Stoic*, the third volume of the Cowperwood saga, immediately after completing *The Titan*, instead he turned to *The "Genius,"* whose problematic reception stalled work on *The Stoic* and other novels until 1925, when he completed *An American Tragedy*. *The Stoic* would be published posthumously in 1947, with the last chapters organized from his notes by Helen Richardson Dreiser.

124. Dreiser to Markham

Friday, Jan 30—1914
2nd letter.

Baby:

Just a word to say not to hold up my first letter today against me. I felt very bad. I always do when I don't get the right word. Your second letter (1st written) was sweeter—so much. Cuddle me in your arms, even by mail. Have been working hard correcting typewritten mss. When I get this book done how quick I will beat it. Can't you fix on a place beforehand so we can go direct to it instead of a hotel or do you want to wait & have us look together? Under the circumstances I won't try to bring three trunks—just one & some bags. It will be such a delight to have you again. You needn't worry about any cross-eyed people in so far as I am concerned. They won't mean any danger to my love for you anyhow. Will you be fixed up all cute and sweet so I can rave over you & love you a long time straight off. Think of the 1st night when we go to bed together again to hold each other tight till morning. Nighty-night, kiddie & dream of me as I will of you.

L—

125. Markham to Dreiser

Jan. 30, 1914

Darling boy

We have been sitting here in the dressingroom reading Jennie once more, until Lola got to weeping over Jennie's letter to Lester,[1] so that she couldn't go on for fear of washing her makeup off with her tears. I have heard that we are to have until the first of April at least here. That is not so bad, is it? We could have two months. I look each mail for word as to the definite day of your coming, and each day it is only a promise of a few days more. I have found a possible place to live, too, and am going out tomorrow to make sure.

Oh, sweetheart, I received a most wonderful present today. You remember my little sapphire and pearl bar pin which is just the conventional thing and not particularly interesting? I decided to turn it in and get a pair of earrings for it or something more individual. Father had nothing at the store I cared to exchange it for, and said I might go next door to Uncle Maxi[2] and see if he had anything I wanted. I went, and Uncle Maxi got ahead of Dad where he failed to a year ago with the check, and gave me a perfectly beautiful pair. You will love them, darling. I know you will.

We had luncheon today at Rector's. Amy Leslie, the well-known drama critic of the Daily News,[3] was all alone at a table not far from us, and finally came over and had a drink with us as a finish to her luncheon. I never knew her to be so witty before, and we had an awfully giddy time. I saw Mr. Bogardus[4] come in with some man and we bowed, but he did not come over, as Father was along.

I suppose you are right about the Genius. If there is to be other material to type, then I would do better not to tackle the Genius.

Your yesterday's letter asked how I was received at the Little Theatre. Very well, indeed, dear. I learned from Bess that she had been trying to reach me all week, that she and Charles had even been to call at the hotel twice.[5] Father and I are invited to be Mother Goodrich's guest at the Little Theatre next Sunday.

Your talk of spring and being together makes me wonder when I will really see you. In spite of the chill it is so springlike tonight, and you do not tell me these last few evenings what you do at all. I feel lost when you do not tell me where you go, what people you see, and what they say. I feel left out of your life when you don't tell me.

Precious heart, the sunset was so beautiful tonight. The West had long, soft, fluffy wisps of cloud, and there was heavy smoke rising in slow widespread films of deep purple. Suddenly all the little clouds grew pink and flushed and flushed like Lyhon's heart when her boy is near. It became deep brilliant pink, and then as quickly paled and died to grey again. We have had no sun since we came, darling. Come and be my sun. Come and make the world bright and glad for Lyhon again. It is so sad now, waiting, waiting. I love my boy. I want to be held close and slapped and kissed and bitten and loved, lover-boy, loved. Come soon, soon, Oh, please, or I shall be very unhappy.

[1] In Chapter 34 of *Jennie Gerhardt*, Jennie writes a long letter to Lester Kane, explaining that, growing ashamed of their illicit affair and with her daughter Vesta growing old enough to understand, she feels it necessary to leave him. (Dreiser edition, ed. James L. W. West III [Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1992], 244–45).

[2] Max Holzheimer.

[3] Amy Leslie, born Lillian West (1855–1939), achieved acclaim as a singer before retiring from the stage in 1899. In 1890 she began a forty-year career as an influential drama critic for the *Chicago Daily News*, the only woman drama critic in Chicago and one of the few in the nation. Earlier, she attained some notoriety as the paramour of Stephen Crane, from 1895–1896.

[4] Edgar Bogardus (1868–1948) worked for the Standard Oil Company.

[5] Markham refers to her friend Elizabeth Goodrich Reckitt and her husband Charles. See Dreiser to Hyman, 22 Feb. 1913, n. 3, letter 13.

126. Dreiser to Markham

Saturday, Jan 31—1914

Lyhon Pet:

I had a delicious letter from you today, so warm and cozy. I am all fussed up nervously because I want to come so much and yet still have so much to do. The end of this coming week should surely see me ready—packed and all. I can't have more than five or six chapters to do at the outside and I am working so hard. Today yet I hope to do one or a great part of it. And more tomorrow.

Im so glad you have the nice new dress. When I get there what fun we will have—billing & cooing. I won't fuss at you much then for a while for wanting to sit in my lap. I'll do the holding and kissing until this fever is abated a little. I didn't know I could want you so soon so much after all the satiation that went before but if anything I want you more. My arms ache to hold you close and warm. I shan't be willing to give you up soon again. How could Sue Willis or whatever her name is affect our intimacy by knowing? I wouldn't tell that stripe on principle however. They are much too much to have around.

This A.M. I opened the World & found this review of A Traveler at Forty.[1] Isn't it nice. I also read an attack on it in Vogue & Life, but a much more friendly notice in Travel.[2] It is so funny how my books divide opinion. I have clippings diametrically opposed in every detail. It has been so with every book. I wish you wouldn't lose the clippings I sent you. Better return them. Preliminary announcements of The Titan are already beginning to come in.

Baby mine do you love me very very much & will you be faithful to me. I often think of you now in the theatrical profession. That is such treacherous work. It seems at time as though there couldn't be any faith in it. The idea is all so different—so opposed to singleness of affection. I often wonder if we will stick, I want to so much—to me single minded & simple. Do you suppose we can?

It is raining here heavily. For days now it has been foggy—a rich woolly fog in the streets. Last night I lay & looked at your picture wondering over your complex character & moods. I can be so happy with you from now on if we can only stick—but how

shall we manage to go to India or Africa together when I ought to go?

Sweety I fear you will have a row with your mother. I don't believe she will see you at all or your tendencies. Don't be emotional or nervous with her. Take your stand & don't row. If she won't give you any peace don't let her come near you. But don't get all fussed up and into silly arguments. She will never see your point of view I am sure. When I come I hope she avoids me because I want to be with you and work hard.

Lovingly—
L—

[1] "A Traveler at Forty," *New York World*, 31 Jan. 1914, 7.

[2] "What They Read" [rev. of *A Traveler at Forty*], *Vogue* 43 (1 Feb. 1914): 88. J. B. Kerfoot, "The Latest Books" [rev. of *A Traveler at Forty*], *Life* 63 (22 Jan. 1914): 152; rpt. in Salzman, *Critical Reception*, 156. E. F. A. [Edward Frank Allen], "A Traveler at Forty," *Travel* 22 (Feb. 1914): 58.

127. Markham to Dreiser

Jan. 31, 1914

Sweetheart boy

Forgive me if I seemed "mad" with regard to your having all the time you could want to visit. I was just depressed, and to tell the truth, a little pleased that now, when you can have the time, as you said, you want Lyhon so much more. It is so dear to hear you say you want me all the time now that I fear I gloated a little, though at heart it only makes me more lonely and more sad that such a condition should be.

Precious, I have our home all ready, and shall move in Monday morning, just about the time you will be reading my letter. I am paying 42 a month, and could have got one for a little less, but windows for you were the most important thing. This has no view, and really no sun, but lots of light and really ought to be

charming, though I don't know. It is such an awful problem. We could stand more closet room than we have, too, but I think this will have to do. Almost everywhere they expect you to take board with your room. We can be happy there for as long as we have to stay in Chicago, can't we, sweetheart? And I will put up a good hunt when I can get back to New York for a really happy place, or at least when we know that I can be in the city for some length of time. It is funny how independent I am when I have not you with me. I have gone about this thing and settled it quite naturally, and yet if you had been along I should have been quite unable to decide anything. As it is, even writing to you makes me wonder have I made the right move.

Precious, I love you so. I want to lay my body out on yours and just lie there for eternity. The more I learn of the theatre the more trying and difficult it seems, though nothing could discourage me. But Lola has told me so much. Anything can be had for money. Right and left men are buying plays for absolutely unknown girls. All the time, once you are a little bit known, you will be offered parts if you will pay so much to get them. All the time stage managers will tell you frankly that if you will "grease their palms" they will give you especial attention. Oh, it is strange, strange. Do you think I can really get anywhere on my own merit? It would seem that one ought not have to pay for his success with money, when one pays with so much discomfort and hard work besides.

Boy, it was nice when I sat on your lap in our old home, and you caressed my body and played with me, to think that to have such a work was the most important thing. But now when we both have a work, and are far, far apart, I think we cannot have half enough of each other. I think of death, or changes of affection, and I think we cannot spend too much time in each other's society while it is possible. Oh boy, baby, boy, my heart beats all the time, come, come, come. My heart cries out and I weep as usual, but oh, such lonely, lonely tears!

Baby man, I love you. We will have such happy times when we are together again. The days will not be long for us—nor the nights, nor will arms and limbs ever be weary of clasping.

128. Dreiser to Markham

Sunday Feb 1—1914

Lyhon Cryhon:

I have the strangest feeling today—it has been haunting me for the last three hours—that you are not playing fair with me. Have you run into anyone else in Chicago who interests you? Do you find that loving me can only be worked as a main warp accross which must be woven other affairs. I ask this because I want to know. I hate these intuitions of mine that have so often eventually proved true. Once I told you that if there was a second affair I would quit and I will, on the word and the mail.[1] But if you can be interested in anyone else that need not disturb you. Please don't decieve me. If you find interest in others don't decieve yourself that I am all essential or bring me to Chicago. If I should be long nagged in this way by my subconscious self I would take steps to discover and it will come out in the end. I don't want to (and can't) deal with a double or treble minded woman. The single spirit for me or I am going East instead of West. I am not going to apologize for this letter except to say that something that I have had prompt me before prompts me now to write. If you are playing a double game just as sure as you breathe it will come out eventually & that day I quit. Now take your choice—but for heaven sake don't take my time now—to string me along for awhile longer. I can use it to better advantage.

D.

[1] See Dreiser to Hyman, 15 April 1913, letter 42. The emotions prompted by his letter didn't dissipate until 9 February, when Markham finally forgave the effects of his harsh words.

129. Dreiser to Markham

Sunday. Feb 1—1914[1]

Lyhon:

I wrote you such a strange letter today—if—. I could not help it. A sickening doubt and terrible rage overcame me. I cannot tell you

why. I only know it did. If there is any change in your own mood or faith or that singleness [of] affection or conduct let me know. It will be so much better now. I cannot say more. Later I should say so much or so little. It will be much better if all is made simple & plain now if I am not erring beyond the wildest dreams of fancy.

D

[1] In the top left corner Dreiser wrote: "This is the 2nd letter I wrote but didn't mail" and enclosed it with his 4 February letter.

130. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 1, 1914

Feb. 1st, and no lover yet. Dear heart, I pray that tomorrow's letter will tell me when you are coming. Mother arrived last night and is much distressed that I am moving. Father and I did not tell her that you were coming. She has not mentioned you, so I have not. If we are to live in such alienated worlds my little visit with her need not distress her if that is the way she feels about it. She seemed quite well, looked especially well, but is not so well today.

I dreamed last night, boy, that I came home to Forrestville Avenue, which was empty but for one maid, to find that you had come. I ran up to the little telephone room where you sat calling up friends to let them know you were in town. You were busy and so held out your hand to me and went on talking, and of course I was hurt. It was quite funny. Oh, I wish it was true. To have you any way at all would be such heaven!

131. Dreiser to Markham

Monday, Feb [2]—1914[1]

Lyhon Cryhon

I was so glad to get your interesting letter of Friday which only came today after my mood of yesterday. I can't tell you how I was haunted by something. I am so fond of you that naturally I would be angry with life and would do all that I say & more if it were

true. But I suppose you would say it is a shame if nothing more than a mood is the cause to write an ugly letter. I would agree myself except that my intuitions have so often proved true & when they come to me in your case as one did last spring I get horribly out of sorts. I love you but it would give me the only satisfaction I could get to end everything at once and for good if you were unfaithful to me. I wanted to do it last spring because uncertainty is hell and when a thing is over—good bad or indifferent—at least [it] is over and we do come round somehow. To have that same sickening feeling begin again is enough to drive me wild. I know one thing—clever or dull—you would never get away with it for long. But don't think because I say this that I don't love you. Jealousy is more love thats all. It simply means that I would hate the guts of you forever & ever. A second lapse and no tears and no explanations would fix anything at all. I would quit for good.

I went on invitation last night (Sunday) to the studio of C. B. Falls.[2] Four years ago he illustrated some of my sketches for the Bohemian. He is small, plump Irish looking individual of about 40—and very individual—dark, gray eyed, temperamental. He it was had The Masses & showed me Dells article which he said read to him as though it were slightly malicious.[3] He had never heard of Dell & hasn't seen me since you & I met him in some restaurant—once in the 11th St. Place I know. Where else did we meet him. He wanted me to come to a play he is giving on the 19th but of course—until we should fall out very badly over my intuitions—I won't be here. With him I went up to see a Miss Hoyns and a Miss Arthur & the four of us went to the Palais de Danse,[4] where he got peculiarly gay—almost foolishly so. One of those girls Miss H—is a model, very good looking, blonde, and a true strumpet at heart I believe. The other, small & dark, seemed clever but less savage. At one thirty A.M. we delivered them at their respective homes—Miss H—at 139th Riverside & departed—or rather I did for he stayed to talk with Miss H—with whom he is intimate I presume. The other lady we dropped at 89th Street on the way up. Falls says there is considerable talk among artists here concerning a Traveler & that they like it.

Sweet torture, you ask in this letter if I am not coming at once. Truly I hope to this week. I am doing my best to wind up this book within the next 48 hours. I may not be able to but I will try. After that I hope to see Doran & Harpers, arrange some method of editing the proofs quickly (getting them) & pack. Then I will come. If there is any hitch in this it will be due to difficulties in writing. It is such a difficult book to do properly. So far I am very well satisfied. I do hope that when I come we can stay awhile and rest. I need a change very much.

Lyhon don't hold it up against me that I am jealous of you. I can't help it. Love would never carry me to a second forgiveness but I love you just the same. Don't play fast & loose at all until you are ready to quit on discovery—thoroughly satisfied to. You write such charming letters but you did that last year at the very time you were making a sickening mark of me. You can't do it a second time. Nothing would ever straighten it out but I wish you wouldn't. We have [a] chance now to be happy if you want single happiness. If not, the sooner you admit it & let me quit the better. You will only stir up hate and you may move me to something else which would be even worse for you & me.

L—

[1] Dreiser had erroneously dated this letter "Feb 1."

[2] Charles Buckles Falls (1874–1960), known professionally as C. B. Falls, an American artist most known for his book and magazine illustrations. In addition to illustrating some of Dreiser's *Bohemian* writings in 1909, he illustrated Dreiser's *The Color of a Great City* (1923), a collection of 38 sketches of New York City, 20 of which had previously appeared in newspapers and magazines.

[3] The *Masses*, a socialist magazine noted for its innovative graphics and frank content, was published from 1911 to 1917, when it ceased publication after Federal charges of publishing "treasonable material" and conspiring to obstruct conscription during WWI. Floyd Dell became managing editor in January 1914. The article Falls showed Dreiser is probably Dell's editorial, "Indicted for Criminal Libel" (*Masses*, Jan. 1914: 3). In July 1913 the *Masses* had published a paragraph accusing the Associated Press of slanting its coverage of

a strike on behalf of the employers. The AP had sued the editors for libel in December 1913, and at the time of Dell's editorial, the editors were still waiting for a trial date to be set.

[4] The Palais de Danse occupied part of the façade of the Winter Garden Theater, on Broadway and 50th Street, before closing in September 1914 to reopen as Chez Maurice, a restaurant surrounding a dance floor.

132. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 2d, 1914

Sweety boy

Lyhon is all moved into the new home and can hardly wait for her lover to come. Her nights will be filled with dreams of the yet to come, and the days with planning for your arrival. Lola and Vernie[1] and you and I are going to have a reading circle, one afternoon a week, to read some worthwhile things.

I am very, very tired, and wishing that I was at home, but it is better for me to wait and go south with the girls than go alone. It has been a hard day. I got up after a bad night, dreaming all the time that white slavers were after me. I have dreamed that for three nights.

Oh, sweetheart, sweetheart, come to Lyhon soon. I ache with the thought of the Friday letter and your being so provoked at Lyhon that you could say such things at long distance. But I don't care, baby. I just want to hold you close and pet you and tell you and show you how much I love you. My body aches to be loved, dear heart. My breasts are yearning for two hands that fold over my shoulders from behind and hold them all night long. My lips are hungry for the kisses of the one I love, and my eyes for the sight of two deep grey eyes that hold the light of the world. Sweetheart lover, come! Oh, I ached when I read "well, I have not gone yet. There is plenty to do here." Can't you manage not to say such things, dear? I doubt whether I have said anything more cruel than that in my most distressed moments, but I know that tomorrow's letter will be better. At least I trust so. Somehow I ached

today the minute my fingers touched the envelope and knew there was something wrong. The gone feeling leapt into my throat like a shot.

But sweetheart, I believe you love me enough not to wound me when you can help it, and so I will wait for the morning for comfort and know that I shall find it.

[1] Lola May. "Vernie" is perhaps another understudy or staff person for *The Lure*.

133. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 2d, 1914

Sweetheart darling

You are not going to foreswear love while you have Lyhon, are you? After a long cry over the Friday letter[1] I managed to dry my eyes sufficiently to read the others, and felt a little better. Nonetheless I shall not be content until I get you here. You need not worry, though, about the possibility of my wanting—even after you have been here a month—to sit on your lap oftener than you want me to. If I want to do it I shall control the desire and do it less, so that, if possible, you shall never know and always want a little more of me than you get. It sounds funny to tell you this plan right out, doesn't it? But I am not going to let you weary of me again and shall try any plan, except making you jealous, to hold your interest. I love my lover too much to weary him with an overbearing affection.

But, lover, I love you so! If that damn Cowperwood doesn't get through with Chicago pretty soon I'll kill him. I'm glad Hitchcock asked after me.

I stood mother's domineering gentleness as long as I could yesterday, and then finally, when she would not go to the Little Theatre with Father, I left her on poor Father's hands and went alone. Poor Daddy is another person when Mother is here. He has been so gay, such good company. Now, as always, he is expected to take the back seat, to look like sort of a prosperous background, so to speak. He was so glum yesterday that he was almost as unbearable

as she. When I got in from the theatre I phoned the club to say goodnight. He was not in yet, so I left word for him to call me, but he knocked at my door five minutes later. We had a dear visit. He does not believe that Mother is sane at all. He even realizes that she is the courtezan spirit, the non-marriageable sort, and I was quite surprised. One minute she is so glad that the three of us are being seen publicly together. At the next she feels that every one is pointing at her and then she does not want to be seen at all. I do not think that a more utterly selfish life was ever lived. You know she has the intellect bug, too. She believes that she is quite a brilliant mind, and that in every way Father's superior. Poor little thing!

Well, precious heart, this is a long letter, even though it does not cover much paper. Oh, one more sad piece of news. Edwin Holt[2] who plays the big political boss had a stroke of paralysis up his left side yesterday and is in the hospital.

Goodbye for now, sweet love. I love you so, precious. Tonight I will sleep in our bed, and dream my lover is there, mussing me up, kissing me, hugging me to extraction, biting me with sweet love kisses, being the baby at my breast

[1] That is, Dreiser's letter of 30 January, letter 123.

[2] Edwin Holt (1863–1920), American stage and silent film actor. Holt played the role of Wilson, the corrupt political boss in *The Lure*, replaced after his stroke by veteran actor Harold Russell.

134. Dreiser to Markham

Tuesday, Feb. 3rd 1914

Honey Sweet:

I wish you would forgive me for the two very bad letters I wrote you Sunday & Monday. I couldn't help it. It seemed as though I was possessed by seven devils. But it was not because of loving you less—that is so plain but more, if anything. I hate the thought of anything coming between us & I would hate for the same reason. I could not help it. It would be inevitable with me. . . . Both your Saturday and Sunday letters came this A.M.—the one telling of the taking

of a room for us, the other telling of the arrival of your mother. I wish you had gone into some details as to what you and your mother talked about—the essentials. You are so enigmatic. You must have talked about me—either directly or indirectly and I wondered what you gathered. I suppose, of course, she wants you to leave me & is living in hopes that you will. I see a future of contemptuous opposition there but it is little I care. I am convinced that she is a highly temperamental, illogical and narrow minded woman at bottom and as for ever meeting her I would really rather not.

As for the room it sounds promising only I do wish we had a view. What does it look out on—a court only or a street or alley. What floor is it on & where—or don't you want to tell me. Never mind. I don't care. I would just as soon learn on my arrival all about it.

In regard to what you hear about the stage I haven't the slightest doubt that what you say is true. If you go into the publishing field you find 1200 novels published every year—novels alone. There are at least 2000 magazines competing for patronage. Writers are legion. Job seekers as many. How do people rise? By the favor of others or by their own efforts? No one seeks out anyone much unless you have something people want or that commands attention. On the stage it seems to me plays are endless—most of them unimportant. What difference does it make if one thousand men buy ordinary plays for ordinary women every year and then sleep with them the while. That does not necessarily suggest an artistic triumph for anyone. It doesn't mean that anyone particular personality is going to be acclaimed or remembered. Ability has authority & dignity. You cannot help remembering a talented person. It will not aid you or anyone to be smiled upon temporarily by some sex loving piker who has no conception of art in the abstract. As sure as fate if you stick to your conception and ideals someone whose judgement & influence counts will be fascinated by you and campaign for you. Many will. They will remember you & so will the public. You will get over & stay over. But only a fine conception of art will do it. I wouldn't let the mess & ruck of cheap stage life affect me one way or the other. I wouldn't let the plaints of the half-baked make me think I was half baked. They say of the

dancer—she thinks only of the music. They say of the artist he sees only the picture. In the hurly-burly & whirl and clutter & clash of cheap things the artist sees something—life, beauty—an artistic perfection as it might be. He hears only the music—he sees only the picture. All else is baggage, wreck, rot—to be cleared out of the way. Listen only to the music, Lyhon. Never mind the plaints the tales of the impossible. Fix your mind on some beautiful thing & as sure as you seek it you will eventually find it. You cannot escape it & it cannot escape you.

Write me lovingly. I long for you so. When I think how sweet you are—how warm & loving & how troubles slip away when you hold me close then I want only to be with you. I really don't care what happens. If I had a definite income I could live with you in some peaceful little spot for years & years. . . .

The book is not quite done. About three or four chapters still remain but one or two may be done today. I expect to arrive by Sunday or Monday but don't bank absolutely on it. I will come the very earliest I can. Every day I think now tomorrow I shall be able to name the day & hour, but I haven't managed to do so yet. Tomorrow perhaps.

L—

I think your earrings must be lovely. Won't you be cute. And won't I take you in my arms & smooth & kiss you & crush you in my grip.—The delicious, soft, yeilding feel of you.

135. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

Wednesday, Feb 4—1914

Honey Sweet:

I had two such lovely letters from you today and in turn sent you a short telegram. Your letters must have been written Monday. I love the love in them & I love the way you make love. I never knew a girl in any way like you—so wilful, so sensuous, so loving. I long for you all the time. You are never out of my mind for a single moment. I feel a physical, material pull to you that

is as strong as anything material could be. It seems to me that I feel it—like a filing being drawn to a magnet. Do you feel that way about me.

I am so sorry about Sundays letter but I couldn't help it. I even wrote a second which I wanted to make slightly different but I couldn't.[1] I had such a wretched feeling of something which irritated, hurt & cut me beyond endurance. It seemed to come direct from you. If I had been near you and there had been anything—what an ugly storm. As it was I suffered intensely. From your letters today so loving & coaxing I should judge it was all a fancy of the mind—a temperamental aberration and I hope so. I really trust you completely ordinarily except that at times—far weeks apart—there comes the uncontrollable fits of doubt that leave me sick at heart. Then & then only I want to quit for ever & ever—and never think of you any more. If you value me at all peaches lamb don't trifle with me until you are satisfied that you will not want me anymore. I suffer so—horribly. You have no idea.

It is beautiful here today—like spring—one of those days I once spoke to you about. I have been at work—hustling—since 7:30 A.M. Last night I was up here reading proofs until 1 A.M. So you can see how hard I am working in order to reach you quickly. This book could not possibly come out February 26 and I could not leave here for weeks yet without inconveniencing the work greatly unless I were working so. Yesterday I wired Miss Tatum to come to New York & help correct proofs & copy & she is here today hard at work & will be until Saturday when I hope to have things done. Oh dear, sweet heaven I hope so. I do want to start so much. You haven't any idea how I yearn & yearn. My nerves are all on edge—so much so that I can scarcely work at times.

It is a strange book Lyhon. 143 galleys are now in page form—over 450 pages and there will be at least 100 pages more when all is cast making a book as long as Sister Carrie or a little longer, since the type here is smaller. It has gone through amazing changes, cutting, rearranging, rewriting, filling in. It has gone much farther then where you stopped & has been filled in with many disturbing scenes. To me it is godless thing,—cold calculating, driving—but

it is one angle of life as sure as anything & as true. Whether anyone will read it remains to be seen. Pray to heaven that it sells.

I have solved for myself at last philosophically what God is. Hows that?

Since I wrote you I have not seen anyone except Miss Tatum this A.M. Hitchcock said no word of his marriage & I saw him again today.[2] He looks no worse for wear. Hoyns[3] said today Harpers would try to push the Titan—but who knows. I had a card from the Liberal Club announcing dancing lessons by a Miss Kurger or somebody & a reception at which Edna Kenton, Henrietta Rodman & Miss Potter would recieve.[4] Police! Think of it! Great Christ! I haven't seen Courtenay Lemon yet. No time. The Katz dinner was dull—he is so vulgar. And the lady about whom so much curiosity was involved didn't materialize. Doty[5] is sick in bed—nervous breakdown—& I had a letter from Gertrude Barnum[6] inviting you & I to a reception. I wish you were here but more I wish I were in Chicago. When I think of your nice little room—ours—waiting—I could weep. But oh I shall come really soon now & I shall be so glad to get there—to rest a few days & have you love me & let me love you. I long for your sweet body Lyhon. I want to get it close to me, hold it tight, kiss you & feel the warm loving heart of you. Oh dear life is so short & love is so sweet—this love. If only I can rest in it now without any more aches or pains. If I only can. Love me, honey baby. Send me sweet thoughts. Write me & when I come make over me as only you can. I love every inch of you everything about you. I wish I could hold you tight & never let go except to die.

L—

[1] See Dreiser to Markham, 1 Feb. 1914, letter 129. Dreiser also sent a telegram on this day which read, "Please forget Sunday and Monday letters am writing differently."

[2] Ripley Hitchcock married Helen Sanborn Sargent (1870–1958) on 7 January 1914.

[3] Henry Hoyns (1868–1945), then sales manager of Harper's. In 1916 he became the firm's business manager, vice-president in 1918, and president in 1929.

[4] Henrietta Rodman (1878–1923) was a teacher and feminist, who in 1913 had riled education officials by refusing to give up her teaching job, as was required, when she married. Grace Potter (1874–1943), then a social worker and later a psychoanalyst, was married to Ernest Holcombe and, together, were the leading proponents of the Liberal Club.

[5] Douglas Z. Doty (1874–1935) was an editor at the Century Company and had recently handled the publication of *A Traveler at Forty*. He moved on to write film scripts and became the editor-in-chief of the Palmer Photoplay corporation in 1923.

[6] The daughter of an upper-class Chicago family, Gertrude Barnam (1866–1948) became a well-known labor activist. In 1913 she was one of the strike leaders of the International Ladies' Garment Workers' Union, and in December 1914 she was an investigative agent for the U.S. Commission on Industrial Relations.

136. Markham to Dreiser

[ca. February 4, 1914]

Your telegram, saying that you were writing differently, has come, and I have torn up the two letters that I wrote yesterday but did not mail, hoping that today's mail might bring a change of heart. It has brought no letter at all so far, but the telegram has come, therefore I shall wait before giving up the apartment, to see how differently you are really writing. If I seem cold or hard in this note you must not blame me. You blamed me with harsh ugly words this autumn because I was jealous. Now my blood runs cold with the words you use being jealous yourself. If the months that have passed since last spring have not proven my powers of faithfulness, nothing ever will, and you ought to know it. All I can say with regard to your intuitions is that if one has enough of them certainly there ought occasionally be one that is right, as in the case of last spring. I shan't write again until I hear from you, for it is hard to believe that after two such letters you could have changed altogether in a day.

137. Dreiser to Markham

Thursday Feb. 5—1914

Lyhon Sweet:

I don't know what you are thinking these days since I haven't heard—and no letter today as yet but I know one thing I have a very bad cold & my chest is very sore. It began last night or yesterday morning—heaven knows how & has been getting worse right along. I have a slight fever and a sore throat too. This P.M. I have to take some stuff down to Harpers but I don't want to at all. I would really rather be in bed. However I am up & working—pushing along but not doing very well as you can imagine under such circumstances.

I wish I might say in this letter, if you still want me, that I would arrive Sunday night but I don't see how I can. The work seems to drag so. I encounter a thousand difficulties that eat up my time & yet I can see that I am making some progress all the while. If by Saturday it is done I will surely leave Monday or Tuesday. Failing that it will be a little later in the week.

Sweetie girl, I'm so sorry. I wish it were now. I wish I were a swifter worker & a nicer man & richer & heaven knows what all. But you may rest assured I am doing all I can—the very best to hurry matters up. Tomorrow or Saturday I may have the good word.

If your terrible mad at me Lyhon—don't be. I'm a wretched, moody person at times. You know how it is don't you. Ill grow better as we live longer together.

L.

138. Dreiser to Markham

Feb 6—1914—

Lyhon:

I am more or less down & out with a touch of grip.[1] I have a slight headache and some little fever. Yet I ventured this morning in my fur coat to go round & get your letter which dismisses

me shortly or rather holds my fate in abeyance pending my future good behavior. From one point of view I realize my doubt seems wild—to one who has ever suffered qualms of apprehension or intuition it will not seem so. I thought, after I had written the letter & when I was still comingled of sorrow & jealous hurt that whatever might have happened or hadn't happened your love was so much that you wouldn't give me up without a plea for understanding—a kind of explanation of myself to myself. Instead this letter. I'll admit I did wrong. Mere feeling or suspicion is nothing to act on as I did. True love perhaps should be full of faith. I don't know. Love can be without basic faith or assurance. It can encompass hate or rage & still be love. In my heart of hearts I should always hurt for you though I never saw you again. And yet I can say now these moods might come again—so little do I understand myself or seem to control myself. You that talk of moods & give way to them, who admit to doubt of me and suspicion—you have said to me that you could never feel quite sure—how is that you see nothing in my present state except a reason for quitting because the last six months have proved nothing. Haven't they.—to me or to you? Supposing they haven't established absolute faith. If you loved me wouldn't it be worth something to work for—even yet. I am sick & can't go with this. I feel too bad, physically & mentally. If you want to know how I really feel reread my letters but let me say too Lyhon that if you can't love me in spite of myself and make me come to see & feel what I am crazy to do—if you can give up the room & put me on a silly probation you can go to with my compliments & there will be nothing more. I am heart-sick and brain sick but dear Christ I can live years & years without love or anything else. If you love me write me so fully and without any rage or hate for a temperament that is almost beyond me. If you can't do that don't write me at all.

T.D.

[1] Influenza, from the French *la grippe*.

139. Dreiser to Markham

Feb 6—1914

Lyhon Honey:

About an hour ago I mailed you one kind of letter—not so bad but gloomy. Now I am mailing you this just to say that I'm so glad you saw fit to write me as my loving girl first—never as an angry critic. You are so much finer loving than being mad at me. I'm feeling so wretchedly that I am losing ground on my work but am hoping for a better day tomorrow. My lungs hurt me. Whats good for a cold on the lungs? Am sorry you couldn't have had a pleasant discussion with your mother but after all you don't need her. And I'm sorry your father is in such straights. If he fails he will no doubt be truly hard up. Why he doesn't advertise floors me. But I can't go on tonight. Just forget every other letter or fact save this that I love you & don't be anything but loving to me. I am lonely & heart hungry & thats a pretty bad combination. Hope to be with you next week sometime.

L.

140. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 6, 1914

Sweetheart Pettikins

I did not mean to let the short letter yesterday be my entire message for the day, but the family trio were under such a tremendous strain that I could not gather my thoughts together enough to write. Last night Father was on the verge of complete failure and we did not know whether we would have a cent in the world tonight or not. As it happened, his bank has consented to carry him one more year with all expenses cut to rock bottom. I shall get nothing—at my request—unless I am short, or especially need it. Father told Mother she would have to get along on a hundred a month. Yesterday noon she started to pick on Father for having sold a lot of stuff from the house which she would have liked for camp. It would have cost over a hundred to ship it down there. Today she started the same song. I said: "There is no use crying

over spilt milk, Mother." As a result we parted with hard words, for she immediately said I was impertinent and will hold it up against me for ever and aye. She went to Rockford some time this afternoon. Father and I are so glad she is gone we are just ready to hug each other, and he has grown hours younger since her train left. If he cannot make good this year it won't be his fault, for everything is in his favor. Bob is going to be the biggest problem. He will have to be taken out of school and put to work and that will bring him back among the racy, extravagant associates the family wanted so much to get him away from. Dorothy will have to work too, whether she will work her way through college or what she will do I do not know. I know very well now her every intention is to cut me definitely.

I am so glad you have Miss Tatum helping you. Every day that brings you nearer gets me more and more excited. I am beginning to thrill violently at the thought that day after tomorrow is Sunday and that the next day, or the next surely, I can expect you. Oh, precious boy, to hold you close, to have you love me!

Last night at 11:30 I came up my long dark block from the car alone, and men passing right close to me, peering into my face, made me very nervous, until I came to a deep-set window of a shop and found two lovers leaning together in the shadow. Somehow I forgot the men I had seen and went home with a sense of starlight and a long hill to a high house in Boston, with a thought of a soft goodnight in the shadows. Oh, sweet baby, to be with you again! To feel spring coming with you beside me! Come!

141. Dreiser to Markham

Saturday, Feb. 7—1914

Lyhon Sweet:

Here it is two P.M. & I am not yet done. My illness has delayed me & I am having a great deal of trouble. Will you bear with me until I do get through. My general situation is very bad. Unless I do get through soon I cannot raise enough money on this or anything else & I need it as you know. So I am pressing on night &

day as it were. My cold is the least bit better this A.M.—not much and I am hoping that by keeping indoors it will pass. Yesterday was cold & rainy—awful. Today it is brighter but cold. I am longing with all my heart for spring, the conclusion of this book next week and a few days of rest in your arms before I tackle anything else. I am so tired.

Honey I love you. I think of you all the time. Half my trouble springs from impatience & nervous unrest in being away from you. It almost unfits me for work. Send me soothing work thoughts so that can get done. If this keeps up I will be weeks under way & courting financial disaster. I need so much to hurry. Please forget all the rowing on my part & be faithful & soothe me at long range. I must get out of this & I know I will but it's so hard just now. Write me & know that I think of you all the time & wish you were here or I there.

L.

I can't go Monday now—though still hope for the coming week.

142. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]
Feb. 8th 1914

Darling Kiddie
Darling Baby Girl:

Didn't get any letter Saturday at all but went round to the P.O. at 1[30] P.M. & found your telegram as well as your letter telling me of your fathers financial troubles and your row with your mother. She will certainly think you twain are conspiring together to ignore her and I think there is some truth in that. For I think you are much nearer your father and he to you than is he to the others[1] or you to them. You are such a wonderful little Kiddie, Lyhon—so warm and optimistic & courageous in your way. I love the loving heart of you sweet heart. It wouldn't make any difference to me if you never had a cent in the world if only I could make it. My ragged girl would be finer than any Princess to me just because of her swell soul, but you won't be that. It is quite possible that even

doing my best financially I shall not make so much—but you will get along in some way & if fate is not to rough we both will. All I want now is the delight of living with you—of loving & being loved & not to leave you anymore. I never knew I could suffer so much over the absence of anyone. To be without the sustaining feel of your affection has been plain hell & is to me.

It was so sweet of you to telegraph. Fortunately this morning my throat was better. Last night I worked from 8 to 11 with Miss Tatum revising galley at her boarding house—135 W. 72nd & when I came home I coughed & coughed for fully thirty five minutes at bed time. I fairly ruined three handkerchiefs with phlegm & thought I was getting worse but after that it quit & I slept well. This A.M. I was feeling much better & I got up at 8 & worked until 1:30 when I went round to the P.O. Am just back. I had what I call good luck in finally managing to properly organize a chapter on the Illinois (Springfield) situation in my story—one of the big points in the last final climax.[2] It gave me courage to go on to the last two or three scenes—four perhaps that are now before me & then!—but I scarcely believe the book can ever really get done. After struggling with it one whole year & more—13 months I can scarcely believe that it could get done. It seems to me it should go & on interminably. If I do the 3rd volume it probably will—but what a story. I wish I might do The Stoic. It would make a splendid book as I see it now. If I had the courage—if it didn't sound to boastful—I could call the whole thing "The Epic of Cowperwood" instead of "A Trilogy of Desire"[3] or perhaps both would do—the one as a sub-title of the other. Then (1) The Financier, (2) The Titan (3) The Stoic. Would that I might.

Sweetest Peaches you make me terribly hungry when you speak of the costume consisting of a pair of jade earrings. You know how I love your body anyhow. As Amick[4] used to say—"Everything goes black before my eyes." I often think of the terribly thrilling moments that have come to me through you—the moments that seemed about to cause a break somewhere. I remember how lovely you were at Holland Beach in the big picture hat & nothing more and how perfect the night you danced for me! What an exquisite

girl! how graceful & spirited. Oh Lyhon baby peaches don't you see how really much you mean to me.

It is clear today—but windy—awful. The wind just blows & blows & blows here all winter long from November to April one and then some. There are little flows of mildness or stillness but not many. I should love to live in a climate where all was still for awhile. Next summer if you don't get an engagement—but you will though & besides you ought to be in N.Y. Lets see if we can't find some nook on Staten Island or Long Island. If you do catch a stock job I would so love to come & be your stage door Johnnie. I do want you to get along Lyhon not half so much because we need money as because I want to see you attract some real attention. What a horrible ass & fool your mother is—not to see you. It gives me her measure completely. And as for your sister let her cut you. Hell she hasn't a suggestion of the substance or grip or spirit that makes you. You are my girl—the one girl for me—& if I can just come Thursday I shall be willing to make such an effort at anything in order to be able to stay & keep us comfortably together.

But woe is me. My financial troubles are many. I read that A Traveller has gone into a second printing but I owe them $853—$300 of which I will be able to pay out with an article. I owe Harpers $3000 against which they have Jennie, Carrie, The Financier & The Titan. If that should sell all would be well for the three thousand would wilt away like snow on a stove. If it don't I'm up against it until I can produce some things that will. I have The Genius which is being typed & which I will let be published next fall.[5] I think I shall bring An American Laborer[6] along & work at that outside of short stories or articles—if I can think of any. I won't do anything pending my final decision as to the next thing I really want to do—play or book & if book—which one. I have in mind "The Rake" (which is really too much like Cowperwood or The Genius) "The Bulwark"—which is truly different, "Asshur-ba-in-fal"—which is the historical novel[7] and one more which I have always wanted to do under the title "Howley, Haviland & Co" or "The Simpletons."[8] Either title fits. Then there is "The Stoic" of course. I forgot to say that on Feb. 22 I must pay $237^{00} on my life

insurance policy or lose it. Woe is me! These are parlous times aren't they.

But honey with your love I can do anything. Honestly if you will back me up and never be unfaithful to me & love me as you do so wonderfully I can try & try & try. Life takes on new lustre with you. The game is worth while. With your dear sweet white body in my arms, your mouth to mine—your loving soul to cuddle to at night—to drive away all the agonies & miseries why I could live & go on & make a real showing. There must be a place for me sometime. If I really try I can write something that will get over. Then—well then I'll just go on living with Lyhon—being loved & loving & not caring about anything else at all but just her and maybe a baby or two. What? Did anyone say baby carriage! And who would heat the milk bottles at night?[9] Police! But you could tame anybody, Lyhon, baby, honey Sweet, even me. If I have any luck, this week sees me in Chicago—

L—

[1] That is, her sister Dorothy Hyman, then a student at Vassar, and her brother Robert Hyman.

[2] The sequence referred to in *The Titan* has Cowperwood negotiating successfully with the Illinois state legislature to pass a law that would allow municipalities to grant long-term franchises. In the end, however, the Chicago City Council is influenced by a number of forces to turn down Cowperwood's bid for fifty-year franchises on street car lines in the city.

[3] The novels came to be known as "The Trilogy of Desire" and indeed were published under that title by World Publ. in 1972, with an introduction by Philip Gerber.

[4] Robert Amick (1879–1969), painter and illustrator. Dreiser had known Amick since his days as the editor of the *Delineator* in 1910. See also Dreiser to Hyman, 20 April 1913, n. 4, letter 47.

[5] *The "Genius"* would be published on 1 October 1915.

[6] Dreiser offered the manuscript of *An Amateur Laborer* to the Century Company, but there was no interest in it. The incomplete manuscript was published nearly forty years after Dreiser's death—see *An Amateur Laborer*, ed. Richard W. Dowell; textual editor James L. W.

West III; general editor Neda M. Westlake (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1983).

[7] There is no evidence of Dreiser's work on a novel of this name.

[8] While Dreiser had thought of doing a satirical novel based on his experiences at Howley & Haviland Music Company, which employed Dreiser as editor of *Ev'ry Month* in the 1890s, the project was never realized.

[9] Elsewhere, they seriously contemplated having children. See, for example, Markham to Dreiser, 24 Feb. 1915, letter 223; and 4 Feb. 1916, letter 267; and Dreiser to Markham, 27 Feb. 1915, letter 228; and 8 Feb. 1916, letter 270.

143. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

Monday, Feb 9—1914

Darling Kiddie:

Such another dandy letter today. When you write me so lovingly as you have recently I feel so near to you—not far away at all. Your feeling bridges the distance and gives me the firm support I need. Do my letters—my love—sustain you in the same way. They ought to. My feeling ought to, for it is pouring out to you in a steady stream—wireless.[1] I know truly that real feeling does obviate space and strikes where it thinks instantly. I'm sure of it. Your love helps me as you feel it—at the same time. Your indifference would hurt as much.

I'm so sorry Lyhon that you wrote Dell about me. I didn't intend to stir up to any action. As a matter of fact I don't mind at all. To tell you the truth I like the review, because it is a good add & it confesses some merit even where it assails.[2] I wasn't sending it to indicate I was hurt and to prove it the next day I sent down for fourteen copies to send it to people who would enjoy it. What I wrote on there was in a spirit of gayety or jest. I do not feel that he can do me any harm. I do not feel that critical reviews of that type are dangerous. Anyhow the critics in bookland cannot really break you. They can only help make you. Books—like other things—more or less make themselves. Your writing gives

him the chance to feel that he can really hurt you—through me or yourself—which is just what he wants. He would like to feel no doubt that he can hurt me. That is rediculous. He will have to grow awhile & considerably. I don't mind your sending the play back.[3] It would never have served you much—but to roast him never. I wish you hadn't done that. Don't attempt to defend me. I will take care of myself & you too later, I hope.

It is still blowing sixty here—cold & clear. The novel is toiling along. I believe you will think if I don't finish today or tomorrow that I am lying to you—but all last night & this A.M. I was interrupted by the necessity of stopping to correct first & 2nd revises. A new batch—15 galleys—has just come & it means careful work just now. However it helps me to leave the whole book in page form before I leave which I had not hoped to do. Two or three more chapters including the one I am on ought to do it & then there will be nothing much else to do. Wednesday ought to see it done. Miss Tatum who has read the story to date likes it. Hitchcock says it is good as far as he has gone which is farther than you went. Sutphen says it is fine so far. I don't know. The end must tell & it is the End—a real, colorful dramatic one that is causing me all my trouble. I have worked & worked over phases of it. You know how I do.

You spoke in your letter of having no part in this story. Wait till I show you the parts that are you (new) & that you have not seen. Actual scenes. I draw on your character all the time for inspiration.[4] You are my model—my living figure—from which I borrow much of my psychology. I study you & love you at the same time & the more I study you the more I love you—warm, sweet, baby kid. How we have fought & how loved but love wins with you. I want my baby girl all the time—want to hold her tight. I mentioned having a baby yesterday & here yours comes today suggesting the same thing. We will, Kiddie, first chance. Lyhons little tummy will look as round as an apple with Lovers baby won't it! Huh. I'll tell you as soon as I can how soon I start—& oh how I want to. . . .

L—

I suppose you got my message.[5] I didn't know where to send it club, house or theatre. Didn't know whether you were living at 2426 as Mrs. Markham or what. Finally I gave two addresses—club & theatre. Hope it reached you Sunday. Kisses, Kisses, Kisses for your sweety mouth.

[1] Dreiser had a strong sense that individuals could communicate with each other through mental—and emotional—telepathy, qualities he attributes to Carrie Meeber in *Sister Carrie*, what Dreiser terms "the contagion of thought." And in *The Genius* he attributes Eugene Witla's transmitting his mental depression as "an impression, a wireless message" (*The Genius*, ed. Clare Virginia Eby [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2007], 307). At the time this belief in human "wireless" messages (derived from the model of telegram, radio, and telephone systems) was widespread in many psychic, philosophical, and psychological movements. Literary figures such as Upton Sinclair (*Mental Radio*, 1929) and Hamlin Garland (*Forty Years of Psychic Research*, 1936) wrote books concerning the concept. And scientists such as Alfred Russel Wallace (*World of Life*, 1910) also sanctioned the idea. See also Dreiser to Markham, 10 March 1915 letter 244, where he remarks on Markham's ability to set up a "wireless agitation" in him.

[2] Dreiser had sent Floyd Dell's review of *A Traveler at Forty* to Markham, who had then written to Dell about his comments. Despite Dreiser's assertion about the review having "some merit," it assails Dreiser's quality of mind, most boldly put as "Mr. Dreiser simply doesn't understand the most outstanding features of contemporary European Life" (Floyd Dell, "Mr. Dreiser and the Dodo," *Masses* 5 (Feb. 1914): 17; rpt. Salzman, *Critical Reception*, 162–64.

[3] Dell had begun writing plays for the Liberal Club and apparently showed one to Markham for comment. She would act in several, including *My Lady's Mirror*, which was dedicated to her and which was published as *Legend* in *King Arthur's Socks and Other Plays* (1922). See also Dreiser to Markham, 11 March 1915, letter 245.

[4] In *The Titan*, Dreiser modeled the character Stephanie Platow on Markham. Years later, Markham would complain about this depiction in a letter to Sherwood Anderson in the context of commenting upon Dreiser's plagiarism of Anderson's "Tandy": "in writing Stephanie Platow around my life in such a way that no one could fail to

recognize me who knew my background, yet making me out a perfect bitch, he calmly took two lines from one of my poems to show the kind of verse the girl wrote" (Markham to Anderson, 9 Sept. 1926; Sherwood Anderson Papers, Newberry Library). For Dreiser's use of the poem, see Hyman to Dreiser, 9 May 1913, letter 71. For the plagiarism charge, see Dreiser to Markham, 3 March 1928, n. 2, letter 355.

[5] On 8 February, Dreiser sent a telegram that read, "ALL RIGHT TODAY WORKING DELAYED BEYOND WEDNESDAY WRITING LOVE."

144. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 9, 1914

Sweetheart Baby Boy
Lover Precious

I wish you were well, or were here. I ache and ache with the thought of you being ill and out of reach. The letters answering Lyhon's first one after the little breach came this morning. How infinitely happier it is to be tender than hard! But oh, lover, Lyhon's letter did not dismiss you, and you know it, nor did it even wait on future good behavior. It simply wanted another letter, doubting perhaps, still apprehensive, but not full of harsh words as the first one was. One more letter I wanted, for my fear was that you would not write at all until I wrote assuring you that I loved you.

But we will forget all about it! We are going to be so happy soon—if the book ever gets done—and the days won't have hours enough in them for Lover's cold to pass and the two lovers to play in. Goodness sake, how I shall doctor you and fuss over you if you don't arrive in good health. You had better take good care of yourself even while there is all this work to do, for if you don't arrive in a healthy condition I shall medicate you within an inch of your life. Moved today, sweetheart, over to the Bradley Hotel, where we are registered as Mr. and Mrs. Dreiser. No one except Father will call me there, as I have given people generally only the theatre address, but even so I shall be Miss Markham to the telephone girl, and the whole arrangement is, I think, all right. Our room, double, is only ten-fifty a week. I don't know how much

I get off until you come. Come soon sweetheart. Mrs. Lover is very lonely. I God-speed the book all the time. I have had a hard time deciding whether or not to send you copies of my new pictures, but have decided I would rather be with you when you see them.

145. Dreiser to Markham

Tuesday, February 10 1914

Honey Sweet:

My Baby Girl: Here it is Tuesday the 10th and I am no more started than anything. I feel horrible. I have done one long chapter between 9 A.M. & 5:30 P.M. which it is now and I have a[t] least two more to do. Possibly three. But when I say I know at last that that is really all I mean it. There won't be any more letters saying that I have still 3 or 4. I know where I stand. If I can do one tonight & one or two tomorrow why Thursday I will take up finances with Harpers & if things can be fixed as I hope & fancy they can be—will pack Thursday night. Possibly if I am delayed it will be Friday or even Saturday I can't tell. I was so run down by my cold last week that I was all knocked out even up to yesterday—working very slowly. Yesterday however I bought a bottle of Vinol[1] & found it a great tonic. It made me sleep & braced me. The directions said one table-spoonful after each meal. I think I have taken one every hour or oftener. It hasn't done me harm but good. You know me. It has iron, alcohol & some stuff out of the livers of cods but no oil. It's something like Hemaboloids[2] only better.

Your letter today made me feel very bad. It was so anxious. I am anxious but driven by work & when I am lost in it forget for moments. But when I get your letters I want to drop everything & run. Last night I worked till 2 A.M. Then quite wrought up I lay & thought of you—such thoughts. You know how one does don't you. We were together. I was loving you in a thousend ways. When I think about you that way you are so close. I can fairly feel you, hear your words, experience the blisses & sweet tortures. At 3 perhaps—or 245 I fell asleep & slept fine till eight—when I got under way again. Tonight I am tired but afraid to stop. Harpers are after

me much more sharply than you are. They want me to close up the story. Thank God—the ghastly thing is about to end. It's a wonder we aren't both ending together.

So you can't find a room. Well 2646 will have to do. I think I called it 2624 the other day.[3] When I come I think I will by Lackawanna or B & O.[4] I want to see pretty new scenery. I shall wire time of arrival & whether the train stops at 63rd Street or where. Shall I arrive in the A.M. P.M. or midnight? I expect I can find a train for almost any hour—there are so many. I would love to arrive about 5 or 6 P.M. but if you have to go to the theatre I shouldn't like the waiting. It would be sweet to go from the train to our little downy for the night.

Sweetness I think of you all the time? Do you get tired hearing that. I think of you on my lap & talking to me & planning as you always do—such splendid plans. I never knew such a planner. I think of your moods & passions & your loving willingness to do so much. Never was there such a kid. We get along so well because we love so many things in common. And then passion with you is a dream. It is like incense. It is like holding flowers. I love & love & love you. Isn't it too bad that just when you make a break for yourself your father should have so much trouble. I don't think he is cut out for business as much as he thinks he is. Ethics don't work in that game. Business is a shrewd canny struggle & a man is a fool who deludes himself that sweetness & mercy & light go there. They don't. He should cut out ethics, advertise & get down to hard pan. If he won't his successor will. You never mentioned ever seeing the late Miriam K. Is marriage the same as death with her.[5] And what about the delectable Mrs. Tobey? Police! Police.

Lots of kisses for sweety Kiddie. Oh won't I hold you tight for hours & hours & hours.

L—

I shall retain P.O. Box 39 for you & I.[6]

[1] Vinol was a patent medicine containing extract from cod liver and other ingredients, marketed as a tonic for coughs and general weakness.

[2] Hemabaloids was patent medicine, with small amounts of arsenic and strychnine, for treating anemia.

[3] It's not clear where Markham was staying. In his 9 February 1914 letter Dreiser had referred to "2426," but he addressed his own letters to Markham to the Princess Theater, c/o *The Lure*.

[4] Dreiser is choosing between the *Lackawanna Limited*, operated by the Delaware, Lackawanna & Western Railroad; and the *Capital Limited*, operated by the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad. The *Lackawanna* was a fast train making few stops that traveled through Delaware Water Gap, the Poconos, and the Susquehanna and Genesee River valleys; the B & O route went through the cities of Philadelphia, Baltimore, Washington, and Pittsburgh. Dreiser eventually decided upon the B & O (see Dreiser to Markham, 24 March 1914, letter 168).

[5] For Miriam Kiper's marriage to Francis Buzzell, see Dreiser to Markham, 26 Jan. 1914, n. 3, letter 114.

[6] Inscribed at top left corner.

146. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 10, 1914

Sweetheart Precious

All day I have been singing inside of me—all day I have held my special delivery in my hand inside my muff and felt you near.[1] Suddenly this evening, however, has come the gone feeling and I have wondered hopelessly are you perfectly well? Just a sort of depression, an unexplainable gloom settled over me. It is not as keen now at 9 as it was an hour ago, and it may be just weariness, but oh, it makes me very miserable. I stopped here to go out and see if there was any more mail, and oh, exquisite thought—one more letter with the song of a baby in it![2] Isn't it queer that we should be thinking of babies at the same time? Oh darling—precious-lover-heart, such wonderful, beautiful letters! I can hardly wait for you to come—and we will love and love and love, sweetheart.

Surely now, love, we should be happy where I have moved to this time, for after all, for short living in a place I guess a hotel is

best.[3] This morning the sunlight poured in at my window, far to East the lake lay, pearl grey, with a cloud bank above it and grey gulls wheeling above the chimney pots that filled the intervening space. Slowly this cloud bank rose, the sunlight faded, and the snow commenced falling again. Snow, snow, black Chicago snow that has lost all Heavenly qualities before it has reached the city at all.

[1] Dreiser had sent his 8 February letter via special delivery to ensure a speedy arrival.
[2] That is, Dreiser's letter of 9 February, letter 143.
[3] Markham is staying at the Bradley Hotel.

147. Dreiser to Markham

Wednesday, Feb 11th—1914
5^{30}

Lyhon Sweet:

I forgot to say yesterday that just one year before—Feb 10—1913—I was leaving you in the Harrison Street station for N.Y.—gloomy thought. This day a year ago I was on the train. Tomorrow it will be just one year since I began writing on this book & tomorrow—Deo Volente[1]—I will finish it. I have been working since 9 A.M. here at this table and[2] tonight will still find me here. I must if I ever expect to get away. I wish I were leaving for Chicago tomorrow but it can't be did. I see that plain. I had to stop this P.M. to read pages & galleys & there are more to come. But I am going on writing now. I have oked finally to 447. It will run about 600 pages as I see it.[3]

This A.M. got your little daily note. When all is sweet & peaceful 4 Pages is your limit. It is only in time of stress (nearly always) that you do better. I was wondering why you hadn't & was sorry that you didn't send me those sketches.[4] Bad as they may be (you know the sense) they help just the same. They bring you to me which is as it should be isn't it. Love is so sweet & so helpful when it is complete in abandon and every other way. But

I presume you might as well wait now. Surely Friday or Saturday will see me enroute.

The cold is better—I am tapping on wood—though my throat is dry & my lips chapped. I have no news to tell because I have scarcely been out of doors. I like the sound of the Bradley with the room on the 7th floor & a distant view of the lake. I do so want to play just a little while before I take up anything else so heavy as a book. Tonight—just a few minutes ago I stopped to sit in a rocking chair & look over the river at the sunset. The light was nearly gone—the river very silvery & lavender, the clouds fading. I saw one of those big cars come down the slope above the ferry & then I thought of the night we struck out to walk in the country on the Patterson car & how we got off far out and finally after walking the track awhile caught the car back again & went to our studio. I always think of what a dandy sport you were last summer—so ready to turn in on anything and always loving me. The feel of your love was & is so sustaining. It built me up & does. I want to get to you again so your arms & heart will make life a little easier for me. With you I can do so well—push on—but alone is a tough struggle.

So I never got to see the first room at all. I hope nothing happens to the second. One night here—I forgot just when (I guess it was when I went to see Mrs. Herbermann) I crossed Washington Square & saw the fiery cross & our room lighted at midnight or thereabouts. I can't tell you how it hurt—thinking of the brilliant days & hours—the days we started off the canal, for Belmar, for Holland Beach, or Long Beach—ad infinitum. How sweet they were. Don't you wish they could be again. Life! Life! How to step away & how it hurts. If it could just last & last. Its golden hours.

Honey tomorrow surely finishes the book Wish it luck & that we earn enough to do many things. I want to put my head in Lyhons neck & have her make the ache of life go way—to hold tight so it won't hurt so.

Goodbye for tonight Sweetie
Think & dream of me—
L—

[1] Latin: God be willing.
[2] At this point Dreiser crossed out "P.M.," which coincided with the end of the line, and began the next line with "A.M.," which he probably intended to cross out, as well.
[3] *The Titan* in book form comprised 552 pages.
[4] Dreiser refers to Markham's sketches of her nude self.

148. Dreiser to Markham

Thursday, Feb. 12—1914

Sweetheart Babykins:

My Honey Kid: Just year ago I hit N.Y. thinking of you & I've been thinking of you ever since. Today I had your letter with the violets and the lots of love in it and it only made me all the more hungry to get to you. I haven't finished the book quite but I have the end in hand & anyhow they are piling proofs on me 1st 2nd & 3rd revises & pages until I can't rest. If I could skip those without rereading I would get along faster but I can't. All day long I have been moiling—thinking of you—thinking of you & tomorrow by noon I expect to take down the last & hold them up if I can.[1] I must have 237 for insurance & three hundred for Chicago to let me stay there a little while. Meantime I hope to be able to write something to pull us out until we find out how the book does. If this thing don't sell, heaven help me. I'll have to hunt a job I guess.

Talk about a cold day—this is it. It must be zero or more with a whipping wind but clear. You know that cold of mine. It has never really left. It's down deep in my chest & at night between eleven & twelve or one & two—or three & four whenever I happen to wake I cough & cough. Vinol helps & in the morning as a rule I feel fine but at night it gets this way again. What shall I do—do you think.

Honey I want to come so but please don't worry over these delays. Bear with me & help me to bear it. It's just as hard on me as it is on you. Only the pressure of work keeps me from going wild. Your like a kind of sweet poison or drug to me. I must have you &

I long so. Only work—work, work—work—helps & I work all the time. But it's sure to be over now in a day or so—Saturday at the outside I should say—and then three cheers. I was thinking today how wonderful our mental side & our sex side has been—both so splendid, so full. It will all come back again won't it. As you said—meaning something so much more intimate perhaps—we'll love & love & love. Oh, Lyhon precious. Write me that you can stand it with me as long as I must & I'll come hurrying at the very first hour.

L.

Saturday I hope

[1] Dreiser refers to bringing the proofs to Harper's and "holding them up," that is, begging an advance.

149. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 12, 1914

Sweetheart Precious

Your darling letter which came today, saying that today you might be starting, or rather finishing with Harpers', fills me with delight. Lover may arrive on Saturday, just in time to be Lyhon's valentine. Sweet, sweet, sweet! How I love you!

It is bitter cold here. The East wind is howling around our windows and the lake looks like a piece of frozen north.

Precious angel child, Lyhon wants you—wants you tight in her arms, breast to breast, lips to lips, oh so close!

149. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 12, 1914

Dearest Heart of Mine

Your Monday letter was rushed through in 24 hours, whereas the special Sunday arrived after 36, and as a result I have no letter today because the mails got ahead of themselves. I can hardly

wait till morning to see what news there is, for I am quite sure the morning's letter must tell when you will come. Oh, I can really, truly never sleep, I know.

(The stage) . . .[1] Oh, lover-heart, I wish we could make Lyhon a real play. I wish there were a dramatization of Jennie Gerhardt. Lola says I would not have to act it, I am it. But I must get a start, and I must do real work. This loafing around on the chance of some one getting drunk or being killed off does not please me.

Sweetie precious, it will be so good to have you here. I can hardly wait. What a love feast we will have to start out with! How we will play and laugh and cry all together, sweetest, and dance in our little room. Do you know I thought of a costume wonderfully bizarre—that ought to be most interesting—a black jet necklace, black earrings and black velvet ribbons with tiny bows tied round the ankles and wrists. What do you think? Oh, sweetheart, we will have such joyful times together again. When, oh when, will you be here? I have a feeling that this letter will not reach you until after we are together, but then it does not matter. I think you must feel me writing this to you, even as I write, telling you from my inmost heart how much I love you, adore you, worship you, my tender, cross, gentle, beautiful boy.

[1] Parentheses and ellipsis are in the transcription.

150. Dreiser to Markham

Friday Feb. 13—1914

Lyhon Pettie:

Well it's actually done. The trick is turned. There is certain amount of rough revision to be done tomorrow but the die is cast. I don't believe I could do much better if I had endless time. Sometimes I think that under pressure we work as well as any other way. But great heaven how I have slaved & how tired I am. It's a long book. The chapters are long. I have poured into them I don't know what—lust, pain, terror. But is all over now & I'll have to look for some other book to do. Woe! Woe! I thought it would never end.

And still I'm not on my way to Chicago am I. Well I'll see how much I can clear up tomorrow. If I can do anything you will here before you get this by wire.[1] If not your apt to hear anyhow Monday, if not earlier. Pretty girl I expect you think I'm a fake but I'm miles from. Days & days at this table have almost put me under it. I'm not feeling any to spry tonight. Mrs. Jarmuth phoned last night. Wanted me to go to Patterson to march for Mr. Boyd.[2] Did you ever know such a woman. Said she had a letter from you & that you were bored with Chicago & that she heard that I was out there. I simply said no, but that I might soon be. Would that I were.

Baby I'm so tired I can't write & now at 10 P.M. I must go down to Miss Tatums & take some stuff. But at 11:30 or twelve I'll be back & in bed again. I wish I could think of all the sweet things I want to. They are legion. But it all comes under the head of love of you & how I want to be with you. Soon now—very soon and then.—why everything. I'm strong for the costume you described today.

L—.

[1] At 8:15 A.M., before writing this letter, Dreiser sent the telegram, "LOVE TO MY KIDDLE AND BEST OF LUCK NO LETTER TODAY SO DONT NO HOW YOU ARE GETTING ALONG BUT KNOW YOU ARE REAL ARTICLE AND WILL HAVE YOUR DAY WHETHER NOW OR A LITTLE LATER AM LONELY AND WISH YOU WERE HERE WRITE TODAY AND TELL ME NEWS LOVE."

[2] Frederick Sumner Boyd (b. 1885), an English-born I. W. W labor leader, was convicted of inciting sabotage during the Paterson Silk Strike of 1913 by advocating that striking workers put vinegar in the silk dye. At the time of this letter, he was out of jail on bail while his sentence was being appealed. He served a year in prison, from March 1915 to March 1916, before being released on parole.

151. Dreiser to Markham

Saturday—Feb 14 [1914]

Lyhon Cryhon:

Just now I am going out to send you a telegram and then come back to get some reason.[1] There is a heavy blizzard on here today

with snow 8 inches deep and neither Duneka or Leigh was at the office.[2] I have been sorting over some things, reading proofs and waiting. As I wrote you I have to have some money & I really can't move until I get it. I couldn't talk until the story was actually in or at least done and since it is that now I can speak. Monday early I will see what is doing and wire again. I'm sorry very, but I can't feel as depressed as I did before for the book is done and that means something. Until it was I was never able to tell what new difficulty in the telling was about to arise. Chapters are horrible. A scheme of progress is a dreadfully elusive thing. One minute you have it—the next it is going. Maybe no one will care for the Titan. I wouldn't make a guess—except to doubt—but when it was done just the same I jumped up and down out of a sheer sense of relief. I had worked so long & it had rested so heavily on me. But it has gone like a bad dream & now I am free to tackle something else. Oh strange thought—oh almost halcyon conditions. And if it does not sell how tough will my condition be. Why weren't you born rich Lyhon.

Be that as it may I love you as never was. I haven't been able to say it now for several days as it seems to me but I feel it just the same. I am so anxious to be enroute that at times it seems as though letter writing, even to you, were a waste of time—as though I ought to be travelling. However bear with me while I get things in shape here & hurry along. It may be Monday or Tuesday. If not I'll wire. Isn't it a shame to have to delay so.

L—

[1] Dreiser's letter was postmarked at 9:30 P.M.; his telegram, sent at 11:56 P.M., read: "DELAYED, DUNEKA NOT IN TOWN EXPECT TO ARRANGE MONDAY BOOK DONE EDITING NEARLY SO. HOPE TO LEAVE EARLY NEXT WEEK. PLEASE DONT GET DISCOURAGED AM MORE ANXIOUS TO COME THAN CAN SAY WRITE AS USUAL UNTIL YOU HEAR. WILL WIRE PLANS MONDAY LOVE, WROTE YOU, A LETTER TONIGHT."

[2] Frederick A. Duneka (1863–1919) became the general manager of Harper's after working as city editor at the *New York World*. He became vice-president of the firm in 1915. Frederick T. Leigh (1861–1914) was treasurer of Harper's.

152. Dreiser to Markham

Sunday. Feb 15—1914

Honey Sweet:

Here I still am resting a little, wondering myself how soon I shall be able to start. Are you getting disgusted with me. Last night I sent you a telegram. Tomorrow I certainly hope to be able to wire something favorable. But you will know all about that before you get this. I wrote a little postscript for my book this A.M. which I may include before I leave.[1] I'll have it set up anyhow.

It is so fine here today, bright clear, not so windy getting a little warmer. Some of the 12 inches of snow that fell yesterday & the day before is melting. You should have been here to see the fine storm. One gust of northwest wind broke the storm window outside my working window and a pidgeon flying alone for some reason came very near being dashed to death against it. It escaped by a few inches it seemed to me, swooping helplessly to the street below & then up into the sky. A great wind. I once saw a pidgeon injured by an automobile and another killed by a street car!

Already I am trying to think of something new to do—I am so restless. I wish I might write some short stories or a play. Anything to strike pay dirt. Miss Tatum says The Titan is fine—but who knows really. Would that it were.

I wish I knew what you were doing this day. I wish they would so perfect the telephone that one could call up a thousand miles without paying $6 for three minutes and could see a picture of the speaker over the phone—a moving picture. No more truly agonizing moments there for one could call up and see. The beloved would come and speak face to face which would be something.

Yesterdays and the days before letters were dull weren't they. I was so hurried & worried. If I were to stay here they would be better but I expect to be with you so soon. I have been going over certain things I want to bring with me or leave—books & papers. It is no small task. I have a lot of letters to write & my mss to look after.

Sweetness have a little more patience. Think how things will be when I get there—how I'll gather you close in your soft richness & love & love & love you. Won't that be fine? And won't we be happy

again. All my happiness is in you now truly and the wonderful something of force & affection and eagerness and taste and skill that you mean to me. Great girl, Lyhon, you. Some baby-kid. And what a rich, rich, glowing animal. Come to me close and lets—yes?

L—

[1] The concluding section of *The Titan*, part of the final chapter—The Recompense—is entitled "In Retrospect" and consists of eight paragraphs.

153. Dreiser to Markham

Monday Feb. 16—1914

Honey Sweet:

I am horribly disappointed tonight—as disappointed and weary as anyone you ever knew. There was no letter from you Sunday & none today—(5 P.M.) presumably because you decided I would be there before you could write. Alas! alas! I went to see Harper & Brothers this A.M. I wanted $500 at once seeing that I have so many things to meet but they put me off until tomorrow or Wednesday, presumably tomorrow with the statement that they could not see how they could do it—business is so bad. They are to let me know. Then I went up to Doran—offering him "An Amateur Laborer"—a part of which is done or the India scheme.[1] He wants time to consider and nothing could make him budge on that. So there I am. I went down afterwards to see Doty and he says the travel book is doing fairly well but that nothing will get another dollar out of Ellsworth until settlement day is due which isn't until July 1—I've another iron in the fire. I know a man who is connected indirectly with Scribners[2] who could take up the matter of a deal there but I couldn't get in touch with him this P.M. and so here I am stranded. I have been getting things together to leave but unless I get some money I shall have to abandon the idea for the present and work down at my sisters[3] or here until I can write something which I can put over—a short story or two. The worst of it is that I am so fagged out from this long seige that I feel as though I should like to go to

bed & rest a week but I am so distressed by my desire to be with you that I can scarcely do that. Honey you don't know how I long to come. I never was so miserable before in my life. Here you are dying to be with me—the one person in all the world that can make me happy & here I am a thousend miles away and unable to reach you. You'd better cut the tow line on me Lyhon & set me adrift. It looks as though I were lapsing into the indigent author stage. I get endless talk but no money & I haven't struck the cue yet whereby I can reach it. I shall wait until tomorrow until I hear what Harpers decide—then take up the matter with Scribners and then, alas, unless I turn some other trick, see what I can do with a short story. I'm as blue as peacock & very very lonely. It seems to me if you were only here—but I wouldn't have you leave your place out there for anything. You need the money too much & I don't seem to be able to turn anything advantageous at the moment. I felt fairly well satisfied that Harpers would come over with something but it appears not. The thought of waiting day after day—working at something away from you & wanting to be with you so much is maddening. It just seems as though I couldn't stand another day of it.

But, Sweetie, please don't grieve too much. Things must work round eventually. I love you so much that I can live & work out somehow if you will only to continue to love me. Just the thought that you won't change in your feeling for me, whatever happens & that you will be patient with me a little while longer is something. You will won't you—honey girl? You won't change your mind about me yet. I want you so much tonight—I couldn't begin to suggest how much or how gloomy I feel. Until tomorrow then—with endless love.

L—

I wired you today—Princess Theatre[4]

[1] For the "India scheme," see Dreiser to Markham, 24 Jan. 1914, n. 3, letter 109.

[2] Charles Scribner's Sons, the publisher, founded in 1846.

[3] That is, Mary Frances Brennan.

[4] Dreiser's undated telegram to Markham at the Princess Theater read: "MONEY DELAYING MAY NOT ARRANGE SEVERAL DAYS PLEASE WRITE LOVE"

154. Dreiser to Markham

Tuesday. Feb. 17—1914

Lyhon:

It looks to me tonight as though I had raised the money and will leave tomorrow or Thursday. Will wire time of arrival. What's the use of writing when I can wait a day or two and take you tight in my arms. Have a very sore chest & the doctor is coming tonight but I hope to be alright tomorrow.

L—

155. Dreiser to Markham

[tel]
February 18, 1914

KIRAH MARKHAM
THE PRNCESS THEATRE CHGO
DONT GIVE UP POSITION WILL ARRANGE SOON HARPERS HAVE TURNED DOWN TITAN MUST FIND NEW PUBLISHER DORAN CENTURY SCRIBNERS CONSIDERING YOUR LETTER TODAY EXPRESSES MY OWN FEELINGS TOWARD YOU JUST REVERSE THE STRAIN AND ANXIETY WILL CERTAINLY ARRANGE MATTER BY SATURDAY AND LEAVE AT ONCE INSURANCE CARED FOR LOVE WRITING

L

156. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]
Wednesday. Feb 18—1914

Lyhon Sweetest:

Yesterday at this time I thought that by today at this time I should be en route. I had thought as I rather indicated in a very brief note that I had fixed things up. I talked with Leigh and he said he saw no objection to making an advance and that he would let me know this A.M. by phone. Personally he said he liked the story very much as did others there. This A.M. much to my chagrin and anger he

phoned to say there was a hitch—no money and he wasn't sure whether Harpers would want to publish it! Would I come down & see him & Duneka. I went. A very brief conference. Duneka had just been reading it.*[1] He said he didn't like it. It wasn't immoral. There was no inartistically vile situations. It was interesting but the critics would say it was merely a catalogue of amours and Harper & Brothers couldn't stand for it. They were playing another game.

I asked just how the book stood. 10,000 copies of the first 336 pages had already been printed. The rest was practically paged. He had only read to 336. He wanted me to take this book away & give him the next one or the refusal of it! And also to leave the three books they now have. I laughed. I asked what terms he would make any other publisher. He offered to go on completing this book & printing an edition of 10000 which he would make over to whoever took it plus plates at cost. On that basis I saw Scribner, Century and Doran. Scribner[2] was most cordial—will read the pages (which will come up tomorrow) at once & let me know. He said he had read Sister Carrie Jennie Gerhardt & the Financier and liked them—the Financier particularly! Doran was quite anxious. Wanted pages at once. Would rush the edition into book form if he could stand the story & make an advance of $500. Doty said the same though of the Century I have some doubt for I believe Ellsworth is getting cold feet. He wants to run a conservative house. Still they may bid also. There the matter stands. I have no immediate cash—not enough to leave on & clear up other things & so I am compelled to wait now until I hear. Isn't it hell. I can't tell you how bad I feel.

However, honey sweet, if your letter was discouraged and showed that you felt bad it was balm to me in my wretched state for it showed me that you care truly. I was beginning to fear from the light letters of several days past or none at all just what you were beginning to feel about me (aren't we the sillies?) that you didn't care. This letter with its longing & suggestion of indifference actually made me happy for it showed me that you love me. With your true love & longing I can stand anything. Without it I am down and out. Don't give up your job but wait a few days more. I know I must be able to make some arrangement

somewhere & the moment I do I'll bolt. If worst comes to worst I'll take your offer until I can rest a little & do something on the side. Then we'll come back together.

Lyhon sweet never think that I don't love you. I love you all the time. My mind is really never off you. There is a physical pull out to you that never stops & that hurts all the time actually hurts. When you say you feel as if you would go mad you feel no differently from what I do. I am sad, angry, impatient but with your love able to bear it for a few days more only.

Honey Sweet don't give up. Don't get tired of me or let a reaction set it. Something favorable is bound to happen. I had my brother-in-law Brennan[3] handle the insurance for me for the present until I get on my feet. Oh how I truly love you. I love every inch and atom of your sweet body & heart.

L

You never mention Miss Kiper or the wondrous Toby[4]—Why?
In regard to Red Book. I wrote young Lengel (who by the way is here now) and he (writing for Red Book) told the Editor.[5] Hence etc.

[1] Dreiser added the asterisk and a note at the bottom of the page: "* This is all so much like the Sister Carrie incident of 1900." See also Dreiser to Markham, 24 March 1914, letter 168.
[2] Charles Scribner III (1854–1930), president of Charles Scribner's Sons.
[3] Austin Brennan. In March Dreiser would temporarily live with Brennan and his sister Mame (see Dreiser to Markham, 24 March 1914, letter 168).
[4] Dreiser has misspelled "Tobey."
[5] The editor of *Red Book Magazine* was Ray Long.

157. Dreiser to Markham

Thursday, Feb. 19—1914

Honey Sweet:

I was thinking today when I recieved your very loving letter of Tuesday—the one of the typewriting how much you must have

been disappointed with my very short note which must have reached you about the same time. At that time I thought I was surely leaving the next day as it was Harpers were leaving me. Just the same I think the book is a good book—one of the best I have done and am in no way ashamed of it. I can't be. It is too true and too sure. But we will see about that later. This letter of yours cheers me in my loneliness for it [is] so loving & thoughtful—the typewriter and the table. And would you truly come to me on a weeks notice? I'm wondering what we'd live on unless I get an advance at once.

It's so odd—my life here. I feel as though I were camping out—very much out. Ever since you took charge of me I've been so petted & spoiled that the absence of the goodies daily showered on me makes me seem as forgotten as a hermit. I go about my work silently and without a pet or caress from weeks end to weeks end but thinking of all the delicious things that have gone before and may be soon again. I long so to turn in at night & pull my lovely naked Lyhon to me & hold her tight until I drowse & dream. How many happy, happy nights I did that!

There is no news yet. Pending negotiation I took up An Amateur Laborer & began working on it today. So little work will soon throw that into book shape that it will be a shame not to do it. When I come I want to dictate it to you—such times as we are home together & not playing. But I want to play so to. It will be such heaven to stop when the mood seizes me—or when Lyhon creates it as she so often does—and tousle her all up. I want to take her in any one of her lovliest costumes & make her my very ownest own. What fun we will have again, peaches sweet—won't we.

It is sleeting here today. We had a blizzard. The snow is deep, slushy, banked & most of the cars are not running or delayed by wagons. And now the walks & trees ae covered with ice. Yesterday a two or three pound peice of ice falling from an 11 story building missed me by about three feet. You wouldn't have heard any more from me after that precious for awhile anyhow.

I wish you would look at this funny envelope. Pete McCord[1] did this years ago, 1907, when I was sick in St. Lukes. I came accross it today re-arranging my trunks. I was in the surgical ward recovering from the loss of my appendix & Pete used to send books & fruit. He made another of me reading "Acts" of the Bible and referring to it as "a swell yarn this". Somehow this silly picture always amuses me. I look so boyish—and Pete was so fond of me.

I'm wondering now myself when I will get to come. In each case I have asked for an immediate decision but there may be a delay of a day or two. Surely by Monday or Tuesday anyhow. If things don't pick up I think I'll take your advice & come anyhow continuing the negotiations at long range. It's tough luck isn't it?

Honey how do you know you won't have enough for Lyhon and a Theo Jr without a Thermos? You might turn into a fine little jersey under pressure. And as for the play—I'll enter in on with all my heart or anything else with which you are connected. Love me hard Lyhon—intensely—and send your sweet wishes here to help me. They keep me up.

Lovingly & with kisses—
L—

[1] Peter McCord (1870–1908), newspaper artist and watercolorist who was among Dreiser's close friends when they both worked at the *St. Louis Post Democrat* in the 1890s. Dreiser placed a memorial sketch of him, "Peter" at the head of *Twelve Men* (1919).

158. Dreiser to Markham

Thursday, Feb 19—1914

Lyhon Pet:

This is just to surprise you at the hotel & to wish you luck for the day or night. Also to return OReillys letter which is interesting. How I wish I were with you now in our room. Wish me to you Kiddie. Perhaps you can if you try real hard.

Love & sweet thoughts
L

Enclosed is the original of The Voyage[1]—I found it also today.

The Voyage
A moon on high, a silvery-pathwayed sea,
A boat to land, to meet thee and set sail
Far and oh far might well the journey be
And well the wafting gale.
Laughter and kisses—kisses and one old song
Wording anew love deeper than the sea
And all the night, and all the stars for long
Eternal company.

Theodore Dreiser

[1] "The Voyage" was published in *Ainslee's Magazine* 14 (Oct. 1904): 136, before being collected in *Moods: Cadenced and Declaimed* (1926).

159. Dreiser to Markham

Friday, Feb. 20—1914

Darling:

I long for you so tonight—I can't tell you how much. All evening my nerves have been a tingle. I think much of this persistence of cold has been due to nerve strain & the nerve strain is due to being away from you. I think of you all the time & I feel so lonely. Tonight I went to Jacks[1] with young Lengel & then to the Palace Music Hall[2] & then to the Palais de Danse but the interest of it was next to nothing—no relief at all. Jacks reminded me of you and the dancers at the Palace & Palais de Danse did the same. I kept wishing I could just lay hold of your hand & so ease the strain. Whatever shall I do while I wait & wait?

There is absolutely nothing new to say. I had a letter from you today on your fathers stationary but it was rather disjointed & wrought up for some reason—I couldn't quite make it out. You spoke of so many people & so many things in rambling overwrought way. I didn't feel much as though you were writing to me particularly but just making notes on your experiences for your

own amusement. Just the same I hope you get to be one of the leads at the fine arts.

Your an enigmatic person at times to me. Some times I feel as though I had only the vaguest conception of what you really think and do. You float about so freely & hold such friendly relations with so many. Sometimes, like today, after a letter of this kind or when you have been away from me in New York I feel as though you were miles away & that after all I had but a small sectional interest in your life and that at bottom there might be but few things if any special and peculiar to us—in which others do not share. When I get to feeling that way the intense yearning to be with you dies & I say to myself that it doesn't make so much difference. Then the feeling passes after a time and I think so much better & so differently of you. These things hurt so and sicken me—I wish they would never come at all.

How does your play progress and do you have to be at the theatre every night & matinee for the full performance or can you leave after a half hour if all is going well? It might prove very dull unless you liked the people pretty much. Speaking of the stage I had a letter from Olga Nethersole,[3] somewhere in Canada. She is reading sister Carrie.

There is no news of the book yet. I suppose I shall have to wait & wait. Harpers have had nothing more to say & neither have I. The objection was that there were too many loose women & too much talk of sex. The parts objected to you have already read. There was no complaint of the business sections.

Tomorrow unless something turns up on the book I shall work all day on a short story. Tomorrow night I am invited to an artists ball and Sunday to dinner at the Raymond Lee Harrimans.[4] Tonight as I was walking along Broadway three people whom I did not know nudged each other & mentioned my name. I have been trying to think where, ever before, if ever, I saw them. I can't remember.

Well Sweet I'm afraid this letter won't cheer you much. I am so out of sorts with myself for being here. But don't feel depressed about me. Ill come out of it & be happy again once I am out of N.Y.

on my way to you. I know you love me & are going to be faithful to me alone though I hate all those you share your genial intimacies which I may not share—

Lovingly
L—

[1] Jack's Restaurant, located on Sixth Avenue across from the Hippodrome Theater, was operated by owner John Dunston from 1891 to 1925 and catered to theater people and journalists and was famous for never closing its doors.

[2] The Palace Theater, on Broadway facing Times Square, opening in 1913 and was famed for its vaudeville acts.

[3] Olga Nethersole (1866–1951), English actress noted for her roles in modern plays, especially in Clyde Fitch's *Sapho* (1900), for which she was arrested during the New York performance on charges of indecency. An emotional actress, she was famed for "the Nethersole kiss," during which theatrical sports timed how long it took for her to come up for air.

[4] Raymond Lee Harriman (1882–1960), writer, was the editor of the *Designer* and worked for Dreiser when he was editor-in-chief of the Butterick magazines. He was married to the former Edna Gibson (1888–1967).

160. Dreiser to Markham

Saturday, Feb. 21—1914

Lyhon Sweet:

I started this telegram today I was so lonely: "Could you get five day leave and come on. Might be able to go back with you." However when I thought of the expense & that you might not be able to afford it I decided not but oh, oh, I was sore tempted. I can't tell you exactly the state I'm in but apparently it's preventing me from doing anything at all. I've got you on the brain & the nerves & I don't know of any solution save to get out of here & be with you and yet I can't just now. When I thought of wiring you it was with the thought of easing myself by being with you for a day or two here so that if I were compelled to stay on for a few days more after

you had to go back I could bear it with equanimity but I didn't see my way or your way financially to doing it just now so I let it go. But oh the ache of it. If I could just have you for an hour—it seems.

You know dearest it's the most interesting thing about the Travel book. Critical opinion seems to break about half & half. One day comes a long review as in this months Bookman roasting it, the next day, as in the Boston Herald or Baltimore Evening News praising it highly. Town & Country & the Indianapolis News sneer and the New Orleans Item & St. Paul Pioneer-Press sing its praises.[1] So it goes. Some people predict a heavy sale for it—others a failure. Still Doty says it is selling. And now this sudden back down on the part of Harpers. They say I'm too strong meat for them and that they are going in for the ultra conservative as this ado in todays Sun proves.[2] At the same time I never recieved more or better publicity than I am recieving now. From one point of veiw I am not sorry to leave Harpers for they never advertised my books to speak of. A more radical house—if they liked me—would do much better by me.

Honey I wrote you a bad letter yesterday but I have been feeling so bad and am all unstrung. The least breath of carelessness on your part hurts now because I need your fine love so much. If I were a drinking man I would be intoxicated all the time these days or if I used a drug I would be using it steadily. As it is I can only dog it out & swear under my breath or out loud—a horrible world—out of love.

I can't write anymore now for I feel so restless but if wanting you so much that it hurts & makes me almost unable to write is any sign you know how much I want you.

L—

The little item in today's Sun voices the trend of most of the general comment in the Travel book—all favorable.

[1] Stuart Henry, "Theodore Dreiser's *A Traveler at Forty*," *Bookman* 38 (Feb. 1914): 673–74 (rpt. in Salzman, *Critical Reception*, 160–62). "The World of Literature," *Boston Herald*, 29 Nov. 1913: 4. Dreiser

may be referring to H. L. Mencken, "Dreiser in Foreign Parts," *Baltimore Evening Sun*, 3 Jan. 1914: 4. Curtis Lublin, "Some Recent Books." *Town & Country* 68 (7 Feb. 1914): 19, 25 (rpt. in Salzman, *Critical Reception*, 164–65). "Theodore Dreiser, Hoosier, Sees Europe at Forty." *Indianapolis News*, 31 Jan. 1914: 11 (rpt. in Salzman, *Critical Reception*, 158–59). The reviews in the *New Orleans Item* and *St. Paul Pioneer-Press* have not been located.

[2] It's not clear what Dreiser refers to: neither the *New York Sun* nor the *Baltimore Sun* has any mention of him or *Traveler* on this date, so he may have enclosed an article on a related matter.

161. Dreiser to Markham

Sunday, Feb. 22nd—1914

Darling Kiddie:

I'm so lonely for you and this letter is written in the full swing of a lonely house. I have been trying to write a short story this P.M. so as to expedite matters for us both and have been getting along fairly well only I get so lonely in between moments of composition that I nearly die. It seems as though I just couldn't stand one day more. Are you casting a spell over me that I suffer so? I am prepared to drop everything—take your advice and come for a month anyhow, conducting negotiations from Chicago instead of here. It seems to me I would do quite as well.—or nearly so. I want to turn to plays & short stories anyhow for awhile. My books—these last ones—are so unprofitable. A play will put me over financially. I had a note from Norman Hapgood asking if I would consider doing an article.[1] I have answered in the affirmative but a reply has not come yet. I suppose I will hear soon.

I am wondering how it is with Lyhon today & whether she got my telegram (night letter) in the morning & what she thought and what she decided to do. After it was gone I deemed it inadvisable. The expense would be too much. You had better keep the money & let me come there for a few weeks. I am so obsessed with this idea of coming to you that as I said before I can't work—scarcely. I seem to be bewitched.

It's a mad world—isn't it Kiddie—when two people who love each other so should be compelled to be miserable away from each other. I was thinking only now what a strange delight you spell to me in so many ways and how much older and how very neglected I feel away from you. You used to think I didn't care at times and I myself at moments scarcely realized how happy I was—but there were other moments, when it seemed as though the utmost, fartherest reach of joy was at hand. Life could really do no better & it couldn't.

I'll tell you what I've about decided baby. I have to stay here for a day or two more—to answer possible phone calls in connection with this. But if after you get this—Tuesday night say—if you think we can get along for one month while I conclude matters here—wire me come and I'll get some little money—$60 or $70^{00} and do it. But I may have to return at the end of that time or a little before to attend to things here. Oh, how I love you. I know I can't be happy anymore away from you & I don't propose to try to be—or to be away at all if I can help.

Love, love love—to you
L—

[1] Norman Hapgood (1868–1937), writer, drama critic, editor. At the time of this letter, Hapgood was editor of *Harper's Weekly*. Dreiser did not publish anything in *Harper's Weekly* in 1914.

162. Dreiser to Markham

Monday—Feb. 23—1914

Honey:

Sometimes, you know, I think you treat me poorly to say the least. The last letter I had was on Friday—Feb. 20. Saturday I had a telegram. Yesterday nothing, today nothing. A letter written Friday, the day your telegram was sent should have reached me today, anyhow. A letter written Saturday—really—should have been here. I telegraphed you a night letter Saturday night to reach you Sunday and an answer to that ought to be here tomorrow. You

certainly have had a letter a day from me right along. However I propose to bear up until tomorrow & see what that brings. It may be due to delayed mails for I read of renewed storms in the middle west. I hope so.

A new snow storm has set in here tonight & it's cold & blowy. This A.M. I went over to see the Morgan Collection at the Metropolitan & found it very choice in spots—as finicky and rococo as the Wallace collection in London—absolutely the selection of a man of keen social understanding & experience.[1] The portraits are wonderful—one or two each of Raeburn, Romney, Gainsborough, Lawrence—and landscapes by Hobbema, Turner, and The furniture, marbles, biscuit ware, snuff boxes and vanity boxes are perfect. The room of glazed biscuit ware is the most perfect thing of its kind I ever saw.

Tonight I went down to the Café Boulevard[2] with the Hoffmanns—Philadelphians—whom you have never met. The café has moved up from 2nd Avenue to Broadway & 41st Street & I don't care for it very much—any more than I care for the Hoffmanns. But . . . I saw the usual N.Y. crowd & some dancing. I was wishing so hard to be out of N.Y. that I couldn't be very happy. I can't forget for one single moment apparently.

Ah, Lyhon, I wish you had never left me. It has taught me a lesson though & perhaps I will be the better for that. Still if you really care you ought to write me regularly. It is because you really care so much that I care so intensely. If you didn't I know it would make a great difference. But I won't say more tonight because I am disappointed & that makes me a little cross. I love you just the same.

L—

I may come in spite of everything Wednesday—if I hear from you.

[1] The American financier and banker John Pierpont Morgan (1837–1913) was one of the major benefactors and president (from 1904–1913) of the Metropolitan Museum of Art, gifting and bequeathing more than 7,000 works of art as well as a wing of the museum. Dreiser would later base the character Stanford Drake in *The Stoic* upon Morgan. The Wallace Collection is a national museum in London,

established in 1900 by the widow of Sir Richard Wallace (1918–1890), known for his immense wealth, art collection, and properties in France. The portraits Dreiser mentions are by the Scottish painter Henry Raeburn (1756–1823); the British painters George Romney (1734–1802), Thomas Gainsborough (1727–1788), and Thomas Lawrence (1769–1830); the Dutch landscape painter Meindert Hobbema (1638–1709); and the English romantic J. M. W. Turner (1775–1851).

[2] The Café Boulevard was a restaurant known for its $1.00 Hungarian specialties in the Hotel Continental at 41st Street and Broadway.

163. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 23, 1914

Sweetheart darling

I wanted to cry over the two letters this morning. They were so sweet and pathetic, and Lyhon wrote such a bad letter yesterday. First, to answer your questions with regard to time. I arrive at performances at two in the afternoon and eight in the evenings. As soon as my three ladies[1] have arrived I am free to depart. So you see how little of my time is really occupied. Today our room has been so cold that I could not stay in it. There has been a high northeast wind on, which smashed many plate glass windows along Michigan Ave. I scarcely slept at all last night, lying here bundled to my ears with my fur coat spread over my feet. The lighthouse far out casts the slightest red and white light on the wall at night, and I lay and watched it turn. Above the roaring of the wind was the clanging of bells in the switchyard just this side of the river, and into my blood came the fever for travel that train bells always bring. If you don't come soon I will tell you not to come at all, as tonight's house was so bad that all the croakers say it is the beginning of the end. Then we would come nearer home, I imagine—Philadelphia[2] or some such. But come, lover. If we only have one week here after you arrive, you have got to have a vacation and that can only be with me. I can't wait to get to sleep for your morning letter will be here when I wake. There is nothing that seems to bring you nearer than going to sleep. For while I sleep I forget you are not

here, and the sleep brings you anywhere from six to ten hours nearer without having raised a finger.

Oh, sweetheart, sweetheart, I have said the endearing things so over and over that I almost fear I will become monotonous. But "I love you!" never grows really monotonous, does it, baby boy? I can say "I love you, I love you" and because it is the most beautiful sentence in the world it cannot be repeated too often. I want you come home so, baby, but if you can come to me I think I had better not. Remember, money will not be forthcoming from Father this year, though there was little enough last. Anything I can refuse to accept will be a help to him. He is so dear and brave. He talks almost too much about how things can't help but come right, oh he knows it! And I know that it is mainly to reassure himself, that just voicing his earnest desire aloud seems to help.

[1] Markham was an understudy for three of the five female parts in the play, most probably for Nell, the wayward girl (Lola May), Carrie, the servant (Susanne Willis), and Sylvia Jones, the poor shop girl (Edith Browning).

[2] After *The Lure* closed at Chicago's Princess Theater, it traveled to St. Louis where it opened at the Shubert Theater on 22 March 1914 and then to Philadelphia's Adelphi Theater on 6 April, where it concluded its tour.

164. Dreiser to Markham

Tuesday, Feb. 24—1914

Lyhon Sweet
My Honey Girl:

After my complaining letter of last night I had two letters today one charging me with deliberately trying to evade coming to Chicago—(Oh, Kiddie! Kiddie! how we can decieve ourselves at times) not telling you who I am going with here, having money enough to come and the like—the other mentioning your difficulties with Lola and Vernie. Honey, let me explain about coming. The telegram I sent suggesting that you might come was not because I had the money but rather because I thought you might have it

accidentally & because I was so weary of waiting here to see you & not being able to get away. Afterwards I concluded it was a foolish suggestion & had you wired you were coming I would have wired back to save the money & let me come there instead. I had been counting all along as you know on getting this book done and securing at least $500 or $800 at once while I negotiated with some other publishers for something else. When Harpers turned the book down it threw me out completely for it meant as I saw that I must take it elsewhere & get a decision before I could ask for an advance. This decision is what I am waiting for now & my sole reason for waiting here now is not so much to get money enough to live on out there for I have thought recently that you might let me stay there a month with you until I got things adjusted but solely to be here in person in order to take up and discuss personally any defects or errors which may be involved in the volume. I could get no real satisfaction out of Duneka as to whether it was the atmosphere of the book as a whole or some structural defect, or dullness or what that made him decide so suddenly against it. He said the critics would speak of it as a catalogue of women (mistresses) which Harpers could not stand—and although he added that he did not consider the book immoral or dull—or liable to be attacked by the Comstocks[1] yet from his manner I could not gather whether he was lying to me or not & so I have been all at sea. It may be dull & he not willing to say so & so I have been waiting here in the hope that I could talk to some other intelligent publisher & find out exactly where I stand. That is the only reason I am here—in order to get the book over in some way—but as I told you the other day I am so crazy to leave that if word comes from you today to come on & I get no promise of a talk before Saturday I will drop things & come anyhow. I suppose I can conduct negotiations just as well by mail though I have the feeling that when a moral question of this kind is raised & a large house like Harpers backs down it is important somehow that I should be here to back the book by my personal presence & force if necessary. I may be wrong. It may be only an idea but that is the thing that has been holding me here the last few days. Previous to that it was to get the book done swiftly & cleanly & get some money. You certainly know that—and as for going anywhere or

wasting my time on others I am lonely & heartsick for only one & waiting hourly to get to her. That is the only truth.

But, Lyhon, you must really know that I want to come, with all my heart. I am almost sick with longing to get to you. I fairly hate N.Y. by now. As for going anywhere I have scarcely gone anywhere at all. Instead I have worked & worked & worked. I have been hard at work for over four days past on a short story which I hope to finish tomorrow. I may eventually get $300 out of that—who knows. If I get a message from you tomorrow—the right word—I will come anyhow.

And now as for Lola & Vernie. You know sometimes I think you waste a very splendid intelligence on little people. You see so much more in most than is really there. Of all the people I have ever seen you with you seemed to me much more important intellectually & artistically. And you always ascribe such genial emotions & tendencies to people. I don't because I can't. I don't want you to become pessimistic & sour because your attitude is so sweet & refreshing, but a little grain of salt in the first place, if it would not modify your delightful attitude would be of value to you. People are so inconsiderate, and they care so little for anybody outside themselves. Be generous but don't expect anyone to be generous in return for they won't be. Now & then, here & there is one. In the main everyone is seeking something—lovers & sweethearts most of all.

Yes, Kiddie, I am seeking you really to devour you with my hungry love. I want so much of you but the wonder of love is that you want in return what I have to offer. The exchange makes the bliss of unity—love. I can scarcely talk of that anymore though because I am so Lyhon-hungry that it makes me nervous & upset. But when you say I don't want to come—that I'm putting you off—that I may want to get loose—it is so wild that it is not worth discussing. I am crazy to come—I am sick staying away from—I will come soon in spite of everything. Any day may settle it now, even if you couldn't afford to let me stay with you a little while until I connect with some means here. When I get such a letter as this today I know just one thing—that you love me and so I can just nearly endure absence a few days more at the most.[2]

L—

Sweetie—if you knew how I live and think of you at night—hour after hour and how I go over in my mind all the delicious things we have done together you would never doubt.

Your description of Mr & Mrs. Buzzell doesn't indicate much of a gay life there, does it. Is Dell still here?

[1] A reference to the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice, founded in 1873 by Anthony Comstock (1844–1915), often referred to by those it targeted as "Comstocks" or "Comstockery." Comstock was responsible for the passage in 1906 by the U.S. Congress of the "Act of the Suppression of Trade in, and Circulation of, Obscene Literature and Articles of Immoral Use," popularly referred to as the Comstock Act, portions of which are still in force in 2025. The Act made it a criminal offense to distribute materials concerning abortion or literature deemed obscene, and Dreiser was to experience the effects of the Act when John Lane withdrew *The "Genius"* after its publication in 1916 rather than go to court over charges of obscenity.

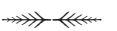
[2] The next day, 25 February, Dreiser sent a telegram that he would be arriving via the Lackawanna line on Thursday afternoon (26 Feb.).

Unable to bear separation from Markham any longer, Dreiser entrained to Chicago, staying with Markham at the Hotel Bradley until returning to New York on 23 March while Markham traveled with The Lure *to St. Louis and Philadelphia. While in Chicago he suffered an attack of carbuncles, a painful infection of the hair follicles that forms a cluster of connected boils under the skin. Markham later described the operation in a letter to Dreiser biographer William Swanberg:*

> *In the midst of the operation things grew serious. You may not know, but a carbuncle, unlike a boil, has roots, and in Theo's case they were wound around the jugular vein. Working with laughing gas Dr. Julia [Strawn] realized it was going to take longer than she had anticipated and ordered oxygen. A nurse went to the store room and found it locked and no one had a key. In the end it was*

> *brought from another building and by that time Theo was turning blue and we were all, doctor, nurses and I, chaffing his hands and feet to restore circulation. When a tank of oxygen was finally brought and administered he rose up on the operating table roaring with gargantuan laughter. "I've got it, I've got it on you all, the secret of the universe, the same thing over and over, God damned rep[et] ition!" (23 Aug. 1964; Swanberg Papers)*

The operation, and his brush with death, would form the inspiration for his play Laughing Gas, *completed by 29 July 1914. The theme of this philosophic play is that life is little more than senseless repetitions without meaning, with people struggling to make sense of the meaningless forces that direct life.*



165. Dreiser to Markham

Hotel Bradley
Chicago

March 22 1914

Lyhon Pet:

In about ½ hour now Ill be leaving but I want to send you a good morning. Did juice sleep well? It is gray here but promising to become sunny & lovely just as I am leaving. I can't find a thing left behind in our room—not even the collar button I lost which astonishes me greatly. Tell Lola not to let Vernie eat so much or spend her money. However I'll be in N.Y. tomorrow P.M. & know I will hear from you Tuesday. Luck. May you be Carrie every day in the play.[1] Take Lola & Vernie to see all the fine mansions in the West End—Westmoreland Place et cetera. Love, Love. I must run.

L—

[1] A reference to the servant Carrie in *The Lure*, a role performed by Susanne Willis.

166. Markham to Dreiser

Mar. 22, 14

Sweetheart-Baby-Boy-Mine

It is very hard to come to a mental attitude that will permit one to be alone after the exquisite peace of companionship such as ours. I have sat in my little new room two hours, and finally in desperation called up old friends who moved here from Chicago, and am going out there to dinner.

It was hard to go back into the car last night. It was so dreadfully hard to see you swinging along back into the station. You have no idea how long I was hanging on the step watching you. When I finally went to sleep, though, it was to stay, and I never woke until nearly time to get off.

167. Markham to Dreiser

Mar. 22, 1914

Dearest heart

We opened to a wonderful house tonight in a huge theatre.[1] Of course they were rather bored at the end of the first act, all audiences are, but they fell for the fight. Everything went wrong. The rockingchair broke down with little Miss Moore in it in the first act, and neither Miss Browning nor the poor old fool doctor had sense enough to help her hawl it back and bring another down—she the invalid![2] Madame Nazimova[3] came back to tell her how well she did.

Sweetheart, before I forget it, I want to tell you that I am at the American Hotel Annex, which is merely under the same management as the American and differently located. Also I want to know whether the other spot on the neck developed into a carbunkle or not. I am so weary I am not going to write any more. I miss you so dreadfully, sweet, precious child at my heart. Lyhon is very lonely.

[1] Markham is with *The Lure* at the Shubert Theatre in St. Louis. The play would close on 25 March after the theater's manager and play's company were threatened with arrest for "conspiracy against morals."

At issue was the second act—originally set in a brothel but after revision set in an employment office—which depicts "Methods employed to induce young women astray" ("Sidener Sits as Critic of The Lure," *St. Louis Globe-Democrat*, 26 March 1914: 4).

[2] Lucia Moore played Mrs. Jones, the invalid mother; Edith Browning played her daughter, Sylvia Jones; and E. A. Hohenwart played Doctor Goldberg.

[3] Alla Nazimova was playing in Robert Hitchens's *Bella Donna* at the Olympic Theater.

168. Dreiser to Markham

Frank & Lambert Inc.
Manufacturers & Importers of Dry Goods
New York

March 24—1914

Honey Sweet:

I arrived safely at 10 last night and came direct here—514 Richmond Terrace, Staten Island.[1] After I mailed my letter to you in Chicago I started for the depot but found I had miscalculated and missed my train. I couldn't get another till 5:45 so merely checked my bags etc and called up Darrow but he wasn't home. Then I tried to get Judge Landis[2] who once said he would talk to me of Altgeld[3] but he wasn't in. As a last resource I called up Edgar L[4]—largely to see what he had to say concerning you & Lola, if anything. He came down & we sat at the Illinois Club where he told me he had intended to call up Lola and take her to that place on the North Side which we failed to reach that night—I forgot the name! Also that he thought you were very charming and ladylike. He wanted to know your several addresses. Outside of that and books I ought to read we talked of little. At five I hurried away and thought of you as I read Trilby[5] and watched the scenery between here & Chicago. It was a nice ride. I like the B & O route best of all. It is so delightfully picturesque—better even than the D. L. & W.

When I reached Pittsburgh in the A.M. I had a fright for the last carbuncle wound seemed not to have healed & I was sore. I had that

bottle of carbolic acid solution & with clean handkerchief I bathed it and tied it up. By night it was better and this A.M. owing to Mames treatment it seems healed once again. A new carbuncle seemed to be developing above it but that has gone down some also.

I have just had a talk with Lengel. He seems to think that the Lane editors really like The Titan & that the deal will be closed at once. I am to take dinner with a Mr. Jones & a Mr. Somebody else tonight at The Players.[6] I also heard through him that Kennerley who was once an attendant upon Emily Grigsby was horrified to find her shadowed forth and had declared under no circumstances could he think of publishing it.[7] Also the Century Co had rejected it—which makes Harpers, Century, Doran & Kennerley. I suppose if Lane were to turn it down I might not find a publisher for a long time. So you see how small a thing is a supposed rep.

I have been wondering all the time how you are making out. I never quite realize until you are gone what a difference absence makes. You fill my life so with moods and ideas and pretty poses & ways when you are near that when you are gone I feel quite done for. Yet I know I ought to settle down to long serious hours of work and that playing with you isn't anything more than a lucky reward which makes life indurable but won't further me any unless I manage to crowd real hard work in between also. When I am with you I want to lie back & take my ease & watch you & walk and jest and think how delightful it all is. Alone I feel as though I must do or go under & while it's hard I know it's necessary. I wish we were all alone somewhere in a small town in a little cottage & that you would make me work hard, without a moments play from 9 to 4 every day except Sunday say.

What do you hear of Phila, Balto & the East? If you come & this deal goes through I think we ought to get a simple room on the island here near the ferry with a view. As soon as this thing is settled I am going to calculate & see what can be done. I think of you all the time Lyhon—how sweet you are & how statuesque. Be a good girl & don't let The Lure attitude & shortness of mind vitiate your Greek-English point of view. Love, love to you & write me.

Success when you come here. I am determined my next book shall be worth while.

L—

It is a clear, warm spring day here—beautiful.

Address
c/o A. D. Brennan
514 Richmond Terrace
New Brighton
Staten Island

[1] Dreiser is staying at his sister Mame's house.

[2] Kenesaw Mountain Landis (1866–1944) was a U.S. District Court judge from 1905–1922 and presided over the Standard Oil anti-trust case (1906–07) before becoming the first Commissioner of Baseball in 1920.

[3] John P. Altgeld (1847–1902), former governor of Illinois, on whom Dreiser based the character of Governor Swanson in *The Titan*.

[4] That is, Edgar Lee Masters. Although Masters was married, he pursued a relationship with Lola May, as Markham indicated in a letter to W. A. Swanberg, 15 April 1964 (Swanberg Papers).

[5] *Trilby* (1894), a best-selling novel by George du Maurier (1834–1896), is about an artist's model in Paris that also features the character Svengali, who seduces and dominates Trilby and hypnotizes her into becoming a singer.

[6] J. Jefferson Jones (1880–1941) was the head of the American branch of the John Lane publishing company. At this time Willam Lengel was the editor of *Real Estate Magazine* and actively sought out publishers for Dreiser. The Players Club, located at Gramercy Park, was founded in 1888 by Edwin Booth as a meeting place for actors, writers, and other artists.

[7] Roark Mulligan suggests that Harper's was responding to potential lawsuits over libel because Dreiser had based the character of Berenice Fleming upon Emilie Grigsby, still a prominent figure in British society who counted publishers and royal figures among her friends. The publisher Mitchell Kennerley (1878–1950), one of Grigsby's friends, in particular warned other publishers against the book (see "Composition of *The Titan*," *The Titan*, ed. Roark Mulligan [Winchester: Winchester University Press, 2016], 530–32).

169. Dreiser to Markham

March 25—1914

Honey Pet:

My room here now has four pictures of Lyhon-Cryhon—three photos & 1 copy of Nordfelts study. I wish I had a copy of Blums.[1] I was delighted to learn you might get the Carrie part & hope you do.[2] A week or two at $50 or $75 wouldn't hurt you. George how I wish you had a trunk full of pretty spring clothes so I might love you in them. It's spring here for fair—just as in St. Louis—painters paper hangers, plumbers, gardners, moving vans—all the tender & delicate signs. I feel as though I could go off in the fields & watch the clouds for weeks.

Lane finally closed on the book today. I got my check $1000—and my contract. The plan now is to issue it April 20—or May 1. Instead of the gray and gold of Harpers they want to use the red & gold of "A Traveler at Forty" with my signature as used there.[3] They are going to send out notices at once and advertise it. Under separate cover I am going to send you a copy of the letter sent by Frederic Chapman, Lanes personal representative now in this country to Lane in London.[4] I doubt if the book would have been taken but for him. You will like it. There may be a hitch even yet—via Lane personally—but I doubt it. I am now going to work on Dawn[5] & see if I can't get something done before my money gives out.

So glad you had a spring day in La Clede Park. You ought to go to Forrest.[6] That is so large & woodsey. I always preferred it. I think of you all the time & wish you were here & wish you never had a thought for anyone but me. I wish we had a little cottage for summer or holiday use & that you had trunks & trunks of lovely clothes. If wishes were horses then beggars might ride—etc. But wishes may be horses yet. Love to you, Peaches Pet. Be my nice girl & I'll be as good as gold.

L—

Here is a word for word copy of a letter just recieved from Mencken: I have to send it to Lane—otherwise I would mail the original.[7]

[1] Jerome Blum (1884–1956), Chicago-born artist who early adopted the techniques in form and color of such European painters as

Matisse, Cezanne, and Van Gogh and was known for his landscapes, seascapes, figure studies, and still-lifes.

[2] Dreiser refers to the role of Carrie, the servant, in *The Lure*. Susanne Willis continued in the role when the play opened in Philadelphia.

[3] *The Titan* was published on 22 May 1914, with its cover uniform with *The Financier*—that is, gray and gold. See also Dreiser to Markham, 24 April 1914, letter 179.

[4] Frederic Chapman (d. 1918) was a translator of Anatole France and an advisor to John Lane. His three-page report called Dreiser "the leading American novelist" and recommended that John Lane publish the novel because "this is the most important chance that has ever come its way since the establishment of the New York business."

[5] Dreiser refers to the manuscript of *Dawn*, the first volume of his planned four-volume autobiography, begun in 1912, completed in 1916, but not published until 1931.

[6] Laclede Park is small 3-acre park near the banks of the Mississippi River in St. Louis; Forest Park is 1,300-acre park about 5 miles from Laclede near the center of the city.

[7] Mencken's 23 March 1914 letter praised *The Titan* "as the best thing you have ever done, with the possible exception of 'Jennie Gerhardt,'" and he particularly noted the novel's succinctness, grace, and "charm of style" (Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 135–36).

170. Dreiser to Markham

March 26—1914

Lyhon Pet:

Will write more today. Just to say good morning. My longing for the feel of you is intense. Sweetie Kid—never was there such a nicey girl as Lyhon Cryhon. It's hazy today but warm & I am catching up on letters & trying to finish The Father.[1] Hope to get a letter soon now from you. Wud you my honey-peaches? Will you love me much when you come?

L—

[1] *The Father* (1887), a play by Swedish playwright (Johan) August Strindberg (1848–1912), depicts the struggle between the parents over the future of their daughter, with the mother manipulating the father through what Strindberg would later call "psychic murder."

171. Dreiser to Markham

Richmond Apartments—New Brighton Staten Island

Friday March 27—1914

Honey Sweet:

I began this letter once with pen & when I got out on the ferry boat thought I had the first page with me. Just as I was getting ready to fold the pages up I found it missing. In which I said I had to go to the dentist worse luck & that I wished I could find one out on Staten Island. In regard to your letters (or mine to you) I don't understand.[1] I wrote one Sunday in Chicago—another Tuesday, Wed. & yesterday. I would have sent a telegram Monday except that I had so little money & I was from[2] John Lane Co might change their minds. When I arrived I wrote at once addressing all to American-Annex Hotel. You will surely get them all. This A.M. I have been writing & also getting out some of my spring things for Mame to press. I want to get all my stuff in shape & settle down. I will be so glad when you find out what you are going to be able to due this summer. If your todays letter should say that you haven't heard from me I will wire c/o Shubert Theatre and explain. The mails are slower between St. Louis & N.Y. than between Chicago & N.Y. I am sure.

There is no news except that I had a letter from the Evening Sun yesterday asking me to make a statement about The Titan and Harpers but I can't do that. It would only anger Harpers & after all they have a right to refuse to publish a book. Now that Lane has taken it, it's alright. Also I was skimming through a magazine called Vanity for March—you can find it on the stands in St Louis—& found a page devoted to an imitation of the styles of Hardy, Oppenheim, Bennett & myself—a silly thing.[3] There are some dancing pictures however—groups which you ought to see.[4]

Lyhon Honey, you don't think of me any more than I do of you. I love you because you are so loving and forgiving and artistic. I only think all the time of what nice times we have together—how lovely life seems. Note the change from pen to pencil. I am standing down stairs outside the Richmont after waiting for a car. I am on my way

to the dentist—I hate to go because it is such a long trip. I propose to connect at once with a Staten Island doctor & a ditto dentist.

Such a day Lyhon—perfect. If you were [word omitted] we would go rollicking off somewhere together—out in the country. . . . Now I am on the ferry boat, sitting outside watching the boats & enjoying the fresh morning air. It is delightful. All in all I think Staten Island is as charming a place to loaf as one would want. If I could find a little place down near Huguenot (remember the hotel & beach there?) or Grimes Hill, or Tottenville[5] I would be content to stay for months if you were with me. Lets hope we may. Mame was saying this A.M. apropos of one of your pictures—"Yes, shes very charming, but wait until she is famous as you think she will be and you are ten years older. When men race after her as they will and offer her all sorts of things she may leave you."

"My dear," I said, "I always anticipate the worst. It is a rule. When that happens, if it does, I shall be quite ready to do something else" and I suggested my favorite response in old age.

"Well I never," she declared.

"But not until then," I added—so there you have it.

But let us not worry over the future. Sufficient unto the day etc. Just now I want to write books & demonstrate some things which I see so clearly. Meantime let us not make love seem trivial by trifling with others. I cannot see the Mormon-Mohamedan code as anything save material—true, but devoid of the sting of the ideal. The Jarmuth-Blum-Aisen combination is a little greasy.[6] Love is better than that. While it endures it deserves the artistic courtesy of singleness. When one is done with it it would be best to say so and go away.

We are just in front of the Statue of Liberty—all bronze green and gray. The air is as light as a feather & such delicious sunlight. When I die I wish I might come back as a gull for a little while.[7]

L—

[1] Dreiser's letters of 25 to 28 March had been forwarded to Philadelphia, where The Lure Co. was now performing. On 28 March, after

he figured out Markham had left St. Louis for Philadelphia, he sent her a telegram while she was enroute on the train stating that he would meet her at the Philadelphia train station.

[2] Presumably Dreiser meant to write "afraid."

[3] See Louis Untermeyer, "In the Manner of:—Thomas Hardy, James Oppenheim, Arnold Bennett, and Theodore Dreiser: A Lesson in Beginning a Novel," *Vanity Fair* 2 (April 1914): 33. The four parodies are each entitled "Life," and the section devoted to Dreiser describes, in painstaking detail, a description of schoolhouses in St. Louis, the numbers of pupils and employees, and the move of the Henkel family into a new house.

[4] See Alys E. Bentley, "Some Higher Aspects of the Modern Dance Movement," *Vanity Fair* 2 (April 1914): 28–31. Bentley was one of the leaders of the modern dance movement and illustrated her article with six photographs.

[5] All three places are neighborhoods on Staten Island.

[6] A reference to the painter Jerome Blum, the chemist and poet Maurice Aisen, and Edith DeLong Jarmuth.

[7] Dreiser also sent a brief note this day on The Waldorf Astoria stationary:

> Hey, Kid:
> How is this for high. In passing I drop you these kind words . . .
> . . . . before they put me out.
> Lovingly
> L—

172. Dreiser to Markham

514 Richmond Terrace, New Brighton

April 1—1914

Honey Lyhon:

The New Lodger!! Back to Brighton. And just this word. I know you will want to hear. Write me sweetie now & be a nice honey girl—not hard & cold & cynical like all the other nasty celebrities. The truck pushers laughed as they watched you looking after me as your train rolled out.

The Lover Boy

173. Dreiser to Markham

Friday, April 3rd [1914]

Honey Sweet

I wondered yesterday why you didn't write and was going to telegraph this A.M. if I didn't hear from you. I went up to the P.O. at 145th yesterday and found three letters for you which I am mailing in a separate envelope. One is from your father & probably contains what you wanted.

So you found a room. Man like (T.D.-like) I am wondering what sort of a room it is & how much it costs. You are the most inconsequential lass I ever knew. "I have a room, four windows, overlooking the park." I wondered where etc—but there is no other reference anywhere.

Did you get the note I sent to the Adelphi? I meant to write yesterday but put it off when Mame invited me to see The Magic Flute at the Metropolitan[1] & then I only had time to dress. The performance began at 8. It was fine—the apotheosis of conventional love & marriage.

Do you remember the interview I gave Margery Curry. A clipping came of one phase of it in The Inter Ocean—another in The Journal. The one in the Journal must have been by that young man who came to breakfast with us. The one in the Inter Ocean appeared March 18th the one in the Journal March 20th.[2]

So you are lonely. Well, I'll come over. I'll talk to Lane & Harpers today over the phone & decide. If I come Saturday, as I think I will, I'll wire. Otherwise I'll come Sunday night. There isn't a thing new. I think & talk about you & am sorry you are lonely. You ought to sew as you said. I forgot my silk shirt at the Holley & you never got the book at the Grand—

L.

[1] *The Magic Flute* (1791), with music by Wolfgang Adameus Mozart and libretto by Emanuel Schikaneder, was playing at the Metropolitan Opera House.

[2] See "Spirit of '90s Made Chicago, Says T. Dreiser, Novelist," Chicago *Inter-Ocean*, 18 March 1914: 7. In this brief interview, Dreiser expresses his disappointment in the current state of the city and his optimism that "Some one will wake up and lead in a new era of gigantic progress." See also "Civic Torpidity Retards City, Says Dreiser," *Chicago Daily Journal*, 20 March 1914, sec. 2: 1.

174. Dreiser to Markham

514 Richmond Terrace

April 3rd 1914
(Evening)

Honey Sweetchus:

This is just a note to the theatre to say I wrote you care the Hotel Vendig and sent you under separate cover there the three letters I found lying in P.O. Box 39. My present intention is to run over tomorrow (Saturday) evening.[1] I hate to think of you lonely & with no one to exchange news with. It has been raw & chilly all A.M. but tonight it is clear but cool. The wind may die down though & it may get warmer. I hope it is nice & bright Sunday in which case we will take a walk. It will be fine to hold my cutey kid tight in my arms again from midnight till morning. Be a nice girl & don't tear your dresses.

L—

[1] On Saturday, Dreiser sent a telegram explaining he had missed his train and would arrive at 9 p.m.

After The Lure *concluded in Philadelphia, Markham returned to New York while Dreiser remained in Philadelphia at the Brentwood Apartments overlooking Fairmount Park to work on the manuscript of* Dawn*, the autobiography of his early years. As he wrote to Mencken, "I am over here for a few days quiet work. Dont give this address to anyone" (5 April 1914; Riggio*, D-M Letters*, 140). Despite Dreiser's assertions in the letters from Philadelphia about*

how hard he was working and how much he missed Markham, his diary reveals that on 22 April he took a train to Atlantic City, where he had a tryst in the Hotel Belmont with one Mabel Cheyney (1876–1926), a schoolteacher, on the evening of 23 April, before returning to Philadelphia on 24 April (Riggio, American Diaries, *447–48). In March Cheyney had written Dreiser to praise* A Traveler at Forty *and in subsequent correspondence arranged a meeting for a single night; in his letter to her upon returning to Philadelphia, Dreiser had written, "The circumstances were unpropitious to say the least. . . . Rule one—have no regrets" (Dreiser to Cheyney [24 April 1924], DPUP).*

175. Dreiser to Markham

4142 Parkside Ave

Sunday—[April 19, 1914]

Honey Sweet:

I thought this might reach you so you see I tried. Have been working since you left. Breakfast at the Reading Restaurant. Hence home and found 1 stocking & 9 hairpins. Turned on the cold water in the bath & let it run all over the place. When I finally discovered it it was 1 inch deep—on the floor. No news. The park is full of people. I am working on chapter 11. It is 4:20 and I am hungry. What shall I do? Isn't little mother the squeaky moan-y thing. She ought to study me & be always nice and bright. Hah! Well heres luck. I hope it rains engagements so hard that you have to put up an umbrella. Be a goods girl and don't let any nasty rivals smile on you. If they do, frighten them tersal.[1]

L—

[1] Dreiser may mean "tercel," the British spelling for "tiercel," a male falcon, and he may not have been aware of the gendered name distinction.

176. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

4142 Parkside Ave.
Philadelphia, Pa.

Monday, April 20—1914
And it's raining.

Honey Cryhon:

I had your letter bright and early this A.M. But not my breakfast. When I finally kicked they announced that they didn't know whether I was in! No Knife—coffee for two, milk for two, but only two rolls. Then I had four or five letters—one from George Sylvester Viereck offering to publish my "suppressed" novel in The International—for nothing.[1] How unconsciously humorous people become at times. Also a nice letter from young Hecht,[2] wanting me to read somebodys poems and a letter from Clarence Darrow. I wish that by all means if you can, you would get me the copies of the Evening Sun,[3] only make it 25 instead of 10 if you can get so many.

I can sympathize with your feeling walking around N.Y. alone on Sunday. It's a despicable place from that point of view. When your absence began to soak in I grew restless and at 6 oclock struck out to find Mrs McCord.[4] I found her—a typical Jennie Gerhardt living with her old mother & father at 2219 W. Huntingden Street—a meagre little neighborhood—Mulo St—only worse. The two children are the image of Peter & as smart as mice. Mrs. McCords mother (I forget the family name—probably Rousgrogge or something like that) had just fallen down stairs and wrenched her shoulder. She was unconscious from administered dope. Old Rousgrogge—aged 70—was flittering about like a moth—quite useless. I didn't stay long—but Jennie Gerhardt is so brilliantly true.

Well Cryhon—be a nice girl and get a good job. If you get too lonesome find a place & I'll move over though it's charming here. This A.M. I woke & not finding you got up early.

There was no use staying in bed with no one to torture—excuse me—I mean play with. If any bad men look at you make them a snoot—but don't bite them—tis not lady like. And write me every day.

Lovingly
L.D. = Lover Darling
L.H. = "Heart
G = Guffo
S.B. (!!!!) = Sweetie Baby
Etc
Etc
Etc
Etc
Etc
Etc
Etc
Etc
(To be continued in our next)

[1] George Sylvester Viereck (1884–1962), poet, editor, and Germanophile. When Viereck offered to publish *The Titan* (and in 1917, *The "Genius"*) serially in his journal the *International*, Dreiser refused.

[2] Ben Hecht (1894–1964), journalist, novelist, and Academy Award-winning screenwriter. Hecht had written to ask Dreiser to read and comment on the unpublished poems of Tom Kennedy, which Dreiser did and recommended that Kennedy wait to publish until he had improved his poems.

[3] In "What Happened to 'The Titan" (New York *Evening Sun*, 11 April 1914: 9), the anonymous author explored the decision by Harper's not to publish Dreiser's novel and announced that it would now be published by John Lane.

[4] Dreiser's friend Peter McCord married Anna Witt in 1905 but died in 1908, leaving Anna with two small children. See Dreiser to Markham, 19 Feb. 1914, n. 1, letter 157.

177. Dreiser to Markham

4142

Tuesday—April 21—[1914]

Lyhon Cryhon:

Why no letter? I expected one with my breakfast this A.M. but nothing doing. Who's eating up my time? I had a letter from Knopf (Kennerley) offering to publish "A Girl in The Coffin" at 60 cents—10%—after 1000 & up to 5000—15% on all above that. I do not think I will do it because I do not want Kennerley for a publisher—I would rather have Brentano.[1] Also a letter from Lane—nothing important.

The rain is gone & it is cool but clearing. Last night I went to a movie—the drug habit[2] & then came home. Tonight I am going out to Jenkintown. Mr. S—phoned yesterday saying Mrs. S was in NY.[3] I wonder did you see her. She might bring you back with her! Mordell has called up also Coates[4] whom I met last night outside the Broad St Station. I shall have lunch with him one day this week.

Sweetness this room is mighty bare without you. Our maid—who invariably fails to bring a knife—and today forgot the sauces also remarked "it's kinda lonely, haint it? without the missis." "Very lonely" I replied. She is surely a quaint old soul. I still find pins, hairpins & little mementoes of one kind & another. Mostly I miss your coming in & going out. The car stopping outside always makes me think of your getting off. Are you very lonely—or is New York beginning to entertain you?

I haven't a thing more to say except that I loves juice and that I wish you were here. The spring is going to be so fine here it would be worth while staying. If you don't connect soon though I think I had best come back but you shall decide. I wish at least that we could find a countrified spot near N.Y. Be a nicey girl—not like Edith J[5]—and all the other mussy creatures who don't know what they want.[6]

L—

[1] Brentano's was a New York bookstore founded 1853 that then established branches in a number of cities. In addition to being a major

independent bookseller, the firm also published plays and books with theatrical themes. *The Girl in the Coffin* received its first book publication in 1916 as part of *Plays of the Natural and Supernatural*.

[2] Dreiser means *The Drug Traffic*, a film short by the Éclair American film company, that opened on 8 April 1914, with a plot concerning the trafficking in cocaine and morphine by a villainous drug store owner.

[3] Perhaps a reference to William Neil and Florence Smith. See Dreiser to Hyman, 20 May 1913, n. 2, letter 82.

[4] Albert Mordell (1885–1965), Philadelphia journalist and critic, whose best-known works are *The Erotic Motive in Literature* (1919) and *The Literature of Ecstasy* (1921). Dreiser corresponded with Mordell in 1913 and sat for an interview: "Theo. Dreiser—Radical Author of 'Sister Carrie' and His Views of Life," *Philadelphia Record*, 7 Dec. 1913, pt. 3: 8, rpt. Rusch and Pizer, *Interviews*, 41–44. Joseph Hornor Coates (1849–1930), Philadelphia editor and publisher. Dreiser lived with Coates from July 1902 to February 1903 while he was recovering from a nervous breakdown. Dreiser published two articles in the *Era*, which Coates edited: "A Mayor and His People," *Era* 11 (June 1903): 578–84; "The Problem of the Soil," *Era* 12 (Sept. 1903): 239–49. Later, Coates helped Dreiser with details of Philadelphia and Yerkes's life for *The Financier*.

[5] Edith DeLong Jarmuth.

[6] At the bottom of the letter Dreiser drew a sketch of himself with arrows pointing to a "New Hat," "Tum Tum," and "Umbrella," with the caption, "This is me in my new hat on Parkside Ave."

178. Dreiser to Markham

4142

Wed—April 22nd 1914

Sweetie Kiddie:

So juice got an engagement.[1] I wonder whether it's real or one of your glittering illusions? You always throw up both hands and emit loud yells of delight some moments before you are actually sure so that I hesitate at times to believe my earsight. But I rejoice just the same in advance, with & for you.

Last night I went to the Snellenbergs—sweet & happy family.[2] And, you know, I've concluded that they are a right decent stripe—the two of them. She is a sort of genial, mentally flittering damned fool—but so are all really charming people. And while, save in everything relating to business, he is as inane as a baked potatoe, still he is charming too—pleasant, cheerful, a kind of punching bag for her—and he don't mind her punches. They had Mme Bell-Gausky or Bell rausky—a talkative, self lauding old wind-bag. I think she is a stuffy, money chaser—a pseudo intellectual—or nearly so—who sees a living in pseudo-intellectual society women. Oh, the shabby job. And I would have given anything to have been able to play up to her & get the real ins & outs of her ideas. She is probably not a bad sort at that made shifty by the exigencis of her position.

Then there were a doctor & Mrs. Justice—a charming character pair—exceedingly Wells-esque. Really I ought to get out into circles of this more. I was highly amused. This old rag-bag of a physician—a perfect fuss button was in his way as smart as he could be but drifting into his dotage. He told me the same story four times even forgetting each time he had told it. The last time he sprung it I said, "say doctor—you just told me that." "So I did! So I did! Well it's good story. A second time wouldn't have hurt you." "But this is the third time", I said. "Well, in that case, I must tell it", he laughed.

But there were six or eight good stories told.

Mrs S. had had a letter from you.[3] It was raining & you were blue & you talked of me. She was really very sorry for you. It's plain she is fond of you. I told her it was more the weather & your temperament. You get that way with me only I manage as a rule to rout you out of them in some way. If your letter of this A.M. hadn't been cheery I was going to write you that I would be over Sunday or Monday to stay.

As a matter of fact I have half a notion to return Monday anyhow. It's charming here & I am working excellently well but after all your presence is worth more to me than Phila. The thing that troubles me is that Mame talks so much & disturbs me. Too many people drift down there to see her. If I do come I will go out to

Coates house at Berwyn over Saturday night. I forgot to tell you—an aunt of his died and left him nearly $200,000 & now with what he had he is independently rich. He is going to buy a car.

There is no other news—much. Mordell, in phoning the other day—said there was a kind of back handed compliment to me in this months Bookman—citing Sinclair, London & the author of Queed as our leading novelists but saying I had a following.[4] Poor old Mordell was greatly grieved. He resents this bitterly. I told him not to despair—that I would worry along as of yore. He wants to bring out his Ledger friend Friday.

Spring has come back again warm & bright. I lay in my bed this A.M. wishing you were here—that your clothes were scattered about & that I could tease you. I know that separations are worth while though for they clarify our desires & give us a chance to know that we are better off than we are inclined to think at our fussiest moments. I want to Pet you now & do much more but that can wait a little—can't it.

I think of you all the time.

T.D.

Lane has sent for a picture. Am using a copy of the one you have.[5]

[1] The engagement is unknown.

[2] Probably a reference to one of the Snellenburgs, a prominent Philadelphia family that operated a department store, N. Snellenburg & Co, founded in 1869 by father Nathan (1844–1929); the reference could also be to either of the sons Joseph (1872–1941) or Henry (1879–1952), who also worked in the store.

[3] Probably Florence Smith.

[4] In "Where is the Man?" (*Bookman* 39 [March 1914]: 148–52), Elizabeth Redfield Kendall asks whether America has "a single writer under forty who can be taken seriously as the American novelist of the future" (148). She points out limitations of Jack London, Upton Sinclair, and Henry Sydor Harrison (author of *Queed*) as "prophets" for the future of the novel. About Dreiser, her "backhanded compliment" is that while Dreiser has a following and he "can scarcely be ignored," "he has so recently passed the age when he can be called a

'younger' novelist that to fail to mention him as a factor in the power of the 'incubus' would be inexcusable neglect" (150).

[5] The John Lane company had asked for a Dreiser photo for use in advertising *The Titan*.

179. Dreiser to Markham

4142

Friday April 24—1914

Lyhon Cryhon:

I have been trying ever since 10:30 this A.M. to get 4148 Bryant and I am told now that by 1:30 you will be in & we can talk. R. T. Hale[1] is in town & I stayed down with him. We went over to Camden to see Walt Whitman House and out to Chester to see W. L. Taylor the artist.[2] I merely went along in the last case to ride & be amused for Hale always does that. When you phoned yesterday why didn't you leave some word. Curiously I had a keen desire from 3 to 5 to call up the house here and ask for I half expected a message or your presence. I didn't have the number with me though and later when the feeling passed I concluded it must be a notion. I wish now I had.

Do you know that this week I have had just three letters this week & this is the 5th day out. I expected one a day though I didn't write you yesterday worse luck. The day before you told me you were going to send me news of the engagement but none came—unless the phone message concerned it. Today I expected some word but found only a letter dated the 20th which I fancy must have been written the 22nd. It concerned you & Donna. What a woman that is. Hale wants to publish The Genius which I won't. Lane has decided to put the same grey & gold cover on The Titan that was on The Financier to keep them uniform. Young Lengel writes that he is married[3] and so it goes. But I am getting tired of being alone in Phila. Only your promise to come over tomorrow cheers me for then we can talk things over. If you don't come I shall wire you. I know I don't need to say that I love you. You know it. You are never out of my mind—nor the feel of your body out of

my arms. I want to be where we can be together all the time. I am going to mail this letter & then wait patiently for the phone.

ThD

[1] Ralph T. Hale (1880–1951) was an editor at the Boston publishing firm Small, Maynard, the publishers of Walt Whitman.
[2] William Ladd Taylor (1854–1926), painter and lead illustrator for the *Ladies' Home Journal*.
[3] Lengel married Nelle McNeff (1886–1954) on 15 April 1914.

180. Dreiser to Markham

[April 24, 1914][1]

Lyhon Cryhon:

Did you hear anymore of the clippings. Please bring me an Astor Trust blank check book containing check blanks of the size enclosed. If you don't come send it. I am afraid now that your phone message was to warn me you couldn't come.

ThD

I liked the poem. Please write more.[2]

[1] This letter is a separate page enclosed with letter 179.
[2] The poem is not with the letter.

Dreiser returned to join Markham in New York until 11 November, when he traveled to spend a few days at the home of his friend Poultney Bigelow (1855–1954), a retired journalist and author Dreiser had met, as editor of the Delineator *from 1907 to 1910, when Bigelow contributed articles. A bit of an eccentric, Bigelow provided a place for those who wanted to combine exercise with discussion of books and contemporary events in a rural setting. Dreiser would return in December and again in 1915. Markham remained behind at the apartment they had rented in July at 165 West 10th Street.*

181. Dreiser to Markham

Bigelow Homestead
Malden on Hudson
New York

Nov. 11th 1914

Cryhon Kiddie:

Arrived OK and find a nice old house here on the river stuffed with books. Mrs Bigelow[1] (?) is say 45 or more, German & only fairly attractive but very intelligent. English grey hounds, several cows, horses, etc. Bigelow farms by laying out say $3,000 a year. I don't know how he make out but expect to enjoy myself. Books, books books are discussed here. You'll like it I think. We'll both come up sometime.

Love & luck—Miss Fatness
Lover

What happened about the red mole.

[1] Bigelow married Lillian Pritchard (1866–1932), from England (not Germany as Dreiser thinks), on 7 April 1911 after divorcing his first wife, Edith Evelyn (Jaffray) Bigelow, in 1902.

182. Dreiser to Markham

Bigelow Homestead,
Malden on Hudson, New York.

Nov. 12—14

Good morning, Kiddie:

It's fine here—bright & comparatively warm. This isn't a farm or a bungalow or a mountain home. It's a sort of old farm house on the river turned into a country residence. Bigelow bluffs at farming. It is now 10 A.M. & we are just about to start out to cut some wood somewhere. The Catskills (Hotel Kaaterskill visible from here) are about 10 miles west.

Did you sleep well? I had a good nights rest. These people are hospitable & we will probably be invited up together if I don't talk too loud about the war. Instead of German, as I thought, shes English. So much for 1st impressions.

Sweetie I wish you were here. Better still I wish we had a place in the country to which we could run on occasion. I love juice—down Sunday.

L—

183. Markham to Dreiser

Nov. 12, 1914

Dearest Heart

It was wonderful to get your precious note this morning. I have been awake practically all night, mainly because I became so excited merely through loneliness when I went to bed. The workmen have not come in today and I am anxious and annoyed.

184. Dreiser to Markham

Bigelow Homestead
Malden on Hudson
New York

Nov. 13th 1914

Honey Sweet:

I shouldn't want you playing one night stands—you know that. So resign. If by any chance they were playing Washington within two weeks I should like to have you hang on but beyond that no. It is grey here today and not quite as interesting as yesterday when we went 4 miles west and cut wood with a cross cut saw. The Catskills were lovely to look at only six miles west.

Am glad Helen Todd is interested.[1] Wish she would take the 3rd & 2nd floors. It would save us from tramping neighbors no doubt. Did Crist[2] decide to repaint the red wall.

This A.M. I arose at 5:45 A.M. and walked until 8:15—about eight miles. We have French coffee—coffee in hot milk and marmalade for breakfast day after day. All sorts of Academic radicals seem to blow up here.

But when I walk the fields and look at ever youthful nature I long to have you walk with me and be done with age & heavy thoughts.

Sweetie Kid—Do you love me.

Lover

[1] This may be Helen Todd (1870–1953), an American suffragist and labor activist who was, according to newspapers, in New York during November 1914 to speak at a number of venues.

[2] George W. Crist (1863–1948), partner with Charles E. Herrick of the Crist & Herrick real estate management firm.

185. Markham to Dreiser

Friday, November 13, 1914

Dearest Heart

I don't know whether this will reach you or not, but I couldn't get to it any sooner. I was up at 8.15 this morning and never stopped working to eat a bite except an orange until half-past six. I am running dreadfully short of money and don't know what I shall do, but trust I will manage somehow. I had to give the carpenter five, he was so pathetic and his work was so nicely done, and I had to get the linoleum for the kitchen before I could put it in order.

For the Christmas holiday, Markham returned alone to Chicago to be with her family, since her parents continued to disapprove of their daughter's relationship, while Dreiser remained in New York before traveling to Malden-on-Hudson to spend the holidays with Poultney Bigelow. Her parents' marriage had deteriorated to the point that they separated, with her father downsizing to a new address while her mother stayed at a hotel when she was in town. Dreiser's letters show him becoming increasingly distraught as he received no replies to his daily letters, unsure of whether he had misaddressed them.

186. Markham to Dreiser

Dec. 19, 1914

Dearest Heart

Time has been crowded full since our train arrived this morning. It was bedlam on the train too, and Dorothy called me down on various occasions. One of her old habits is to blame me for talking too loud. Today I was blamed for not talking loud enough. Using the exclamation "Oh darn!" I was told that the true gentlewoman avoided slang. Ever since then she has referred to people as poor boobs or mutts. It has been lovely being with Daddy, though.

Today when Father showed us our room with our little white beds I suddenly beat a hasty retreat to the bathroom to hide the usual outburst that followed the thought of no beloved form to snuggle close to at night, and no dear laughing voice to say into my dreams: "Get up, Cryhon—come on—beat it!" Oh, baby, it's dreadful, just dreadful! I never never never shall leave you again—unless you want me to—but I mean to go anywhere without you while we do care so much. I hope you are happy.

187. Dreiser to Markham

Sunday night
Dec 20—1914

Honey Sweet:

Hows my girl? I've been slaving since Friday and that's no joke, for I'm almost sick to my tummy again this evening from the sweet fumes of turpentine or lead paint or both. Yesterday after giving the front room its first coat of varnish and the back room (bed room) its second coat of paint I was nearly all in, but not down to putty the back room floor. My head was splitting but I paid no attention until all at once it culminated in a violent nausea which brought up all my breakfast and more. Feeling much relieved I returned to work thinking I could stick it out and get the floor done—but no such luck. In ten minutes I had another attack. Then I thought that would end it and went to work but in five minutes

I was beginning to retch again so I dressed quickly & got out of the house. I walked all the way to 65th street on 5th and across the Park in the rain before I began to feel that I was not permanently poisoned. That was at 5:30. From then on I rode the bus and back to Shanleys,[1] by which time I was feeling well enough to eat something. I had some roast ham & then beat it to a Turkish bath to clean up, feeling as dirty as a pig. This morning at 6:30 A.M. I left there, came home gave the front room its final coat of varnish, the back room (bedroom & bath) their finishing touches (varnish) & then went down to Mames for breakfast. Since 2:30 when I got back I have [been] putty-ing that blooming back room floor & just now got it done. It still has to be coated twice with black paint & twice with varnish & I'm feeling sicky about it all. Mame had a fine breakfast—fried rabbit and buck wheat cakes & when I finish this I am going out to find something more somewhere. Didn't go to Krogs,[2] as you see, and tonight I think the Nordy's[3] rang our bell but I didn't open the door.

Well how did you make out en-route. A Christmas package come from your mother right after you left—1 pr. Flesh colored silk stockings, two small hand embroidered towels, very useful for pleasure purposes I should say, and some knitted thing which permits you to keep warm while taking breakfast in bed. Isn't mother the sybaritic soul. You would fancy she was encouraging you to gay ways.

Today has been a beautiful day here—brilliantly clear and not cold. Austin, when I got down there was feeling much better, due, according to M—to Christian Science.[4] Still she wants time and expects to find a house & move right after the 1st. Wants me to take a floor. Being in a Turkish bath last night & being disturbed much prevented me from missing you truly, but the night before & tonight! Tis a dull world without Cryhon. I think of a hundred things to say to you when I'm sitting before the fire alone as I was Friday night but when I take pen in hand it's a different matter. And I'm so half sicky again tonight that I cannot think of all the things I want to. I miss you though, Sweetness, & wish you were here truly. When I get in bed and have no one to hang on to I feel particularly lonesome. Mame, I notice, had now swung around again & thinks you the most perfect creature ever—until Gertie[5] gets bad.

By the way did your trunk come with you. Yesterday a man called with a traces slip, saying there was some mistake as to its whereabouts. I do hope it isn't lost.

Well, sweetest I haven't another word to say save I love you, which I do, and Merry Christmas & Happy New Year, and to all the Fine Arts people, and write me often. Shall go to the Bigelows Saturday. But in the meantime write me here—much love.

L—

[1] Shanley's Restaurant, located at Sixth Avenue and 23rd Street, one of four Manhattan restaurants of that name operated by the Shanley brothers, catered to the theatrical crowd.
[2] Fritz Krog.
[3] Bror Nordfeldt and his wife Margaret Doolittle.
[4] Austin Brennan and Dreiser's sister Mame.
[5] Gertrude Hopkins Nelson (1894–1973), the daughter of Dreiser's sister Emma.

188. Markham to Dreiser

Dec. 20, 1914

Dearest

I am miserably unhappy and lonely and sick. My voice is gone completely and I can barely whisper. There has been no escape to write you all day with friends and relations coming in to see Dorothy, incidentally me.

189. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Dec. 22nd 1914
8:30 A.M.

Honey Sweet:

I had such a nice first letter from you yesterday and it cheered me up greatly. You would be surprised how dumpy I get at odd moments when I realize that you are really not here. So far I have

been so busy trying to get these floors painted, my book done,[1] Emma instructed etc that I find the days too short. And I work all the time. Last night I worked from six thirty until 11, if you please, painting the back room, varnishing the bath room for the second time etc. When you think that every room is recieving four coats you can see how it works out. And our rear room floor is so rotten and porous it's a wonder the piano does [not] fall through onto the Whites.[2]

Say, our new servant girl Emma is a peach. Emma Heinsberg is her name. She can cook, after a fashion, and shes clean and is industrious and willing and good natured into the bargain, if she is as homely as sin. I got to talking to her about her home life yesterday—she comes from near Munich, Germany—and her experiences here appear to have been very rough. She nearly bowled me over by saying—"Jesus Christ, wat a experience I haf had here. Damed talk. I haf had a hellafa time." I could scarcely keep from laughing at the top of my voice.

It appears she has been kicked around a good deal. The people she spoke to you about as working ½ day for have already pitched her out after using her to do a lot of dirty cleaning. She expects her meals wherever she goes and they gave her a cup of coffee! For lunch. I am treating her better. She gets my breakfast and does it fairly well,—only when we get away from chops shes gone. She can't cook anything fancy. Yesterday I stopped at Wanamakers and bought her 3 flat irons (detachable handle) 1 wash basin, 1 wash board, 1 ironing board, bluing, soap, beeswax etc. & today she is starting in on the wash. She does the marketing & general cleaning & doesn't seem to forget much of anything. I think we'd better pay her for the week we're away, in order to keep her.

By the way I leave Saturday at 11—you know—for Malden & will stay as long as it interests me. Mail should reach me here up to Saturday morning. Then Malden until further notice. Had a long letter from Mordell of Philly. He had been to the Wood Street Opera House to hear Powys[3] lecture on me and was evidently much excited thereby. The mere fact that I am getting along by degrees seems to disturb some people greatly. I want to send the

letter to Lane for commercial reasons, but if I can work out a copy on the typewriter I will enclose it.[4] He says 1500 people were present and congratulates me "upon the honor thrust upon me." Isn't that funny.

I'm glad your family is getting along so well. It's nice to think that the normal readjustments of life can take place in at least one family without all the customary ensuing rancor and bitterness. You know the more I think of your father the more remarkable I think he is. He is no silly American moralistic ass apparently but a man who sees through to how things really are. If for one minute the world could be persuaded to drop theory and look at plain everyday life with seeing eyes—the cats, birds, dogs and common men around us, there would be an end of all this fol-de-rol about immutable social laws and we would see how time and chance shot through with inherent geniality and love of balance as well as of sentiment or rather beauty governs everything and makes all the theories and religions that there are. Life is better than religion and fact better than theory and the man who is a kindly opourtunist, saving his soul as best he may, or throwing it away if necessary to his feelings is best of all.

Tons of love. I hope you have a fine time. Do rest and get those blue rings from under your eyes.

L—

You know I think Powys may lecture on me in Chicago since the Philly affair was so successful.[5]

[1] Dreiser is editing the manuscript of *The "Genius."*

[2] In addition to being neighbors, Mrs. White later acted as housekeeper for Dreiser and Markham.

[3] John Cowper Powys (1872–1963), British novelist, lecturer, and critic from Wales who lived in the U.S. from 1905–1934. Dreiser met and befriended Powys when he was in Chicago in 1913. Their friendship deepened when they became neighbors in Greenwich Village. Among other things, they shared a belief in supernatural forces at work in the universe as well as a deep aversion to organized religion. Powys would publish a number of reviews and articles about Dreiser's work as well as the introduction to the posthumously

published *Notes on Life* (1974), while Dreiser contributed a preface to Powys's *Ebony and Ivory* (1923).

[4] Dreiser enclosed a copy of the letter, dated 20 Dec. 1914 (DPUP), in which Mordell summarized the lecture: "He mentioned your name in the same breath with Lincoln and Michaelangelo" while attacking Frank Harris, Edith Wharton "and the New England school in order to praise you," but Mordell disliked Powys's "mannerisms, his epileptic enthusiasm, his unrestrained exaggeration."

[5] Chicago newspapers notices of Powys's lectures at the Fine Arts Building in January 1915 are about English and European writers.

190. Dreiser to Markham

Wednesday, Dec. 23rd 1914

Honey Sweet:

I have been addressing all my other letters to 4911 Park Ave instead of Lake Park Avenue. I wonder whether you got them? In one corner I put "or 31 N. State" so I suppose they must have reached you. I gave an expressman who came here to inquire after your trunk the same address. . . .

Your letter today was certainly not full of the Christmas spirit in so far as your own home is concerned. Such differences! I explain it on the ground that you are going one way and they another. Your tendencies are all artward and having nothing to do with static conventional notions of order, sobriety, clock like, almost mechanical routine, whereas theirs has. I fear for your coming contact with your mother. In another letter I told you she sent you a Christmas package containing a pair of flesh colored silk stockings, two hand embroidered hand towels and a crocheted shoulder peice for reading in bed mornings. Her note was most affectionate. I hope you are nice to her—at least until she begins to be not nice to you.

The floors are progressing. The back & front rooms (back bed room (I mean) are done. The large dining or piano room is nearly so—two more coats of varnish. I had a talk with Crist this A.M. He says he will fix the bath & put in a sink. Emma is doing quite well I think. She is willing and industrious but a little slow. If one

could keep her all day I believe she would leave us quite free of housework cares.

Monday it rained. Yesterday it was fair & cold. Today it is fair and pleasant. Last night I had dinner with Everett Wood at the Players. He is an old magazine man I know and I looked him up purely as a lark. I first called up Mrs. Drey[1] but she was out of town. Then Lengel called up but I did not want to go with him. I was thinking of hunting up John Warren[2] but decided not. Mrs. Jarmuth called up here the other day wanting me to attend something or other and I had a letter from Powis[3] telling me that he could not be of any assistance to Mrs. Jarmuth so it goes. Have not heard from either Lengel or Mencken as to The Genius. Lengel says he has not heard. And they have moved from 97th Street, but I forget where, just now.

There is no other news. I am working & missing you much but shall get along well enough I presume seeing that I haven't time to do most of the things I want to. I do wish The Genius were sold & I had the money. I shall be in hot water soon I fear if I don't sell it.

Endless love to you. I'll write again tonight or tomorrow. Have a good time—

L

[1] Anne Estelle Rice: at this time, she was married to Raymond Drey. See Dreiser to Markham, 25 Jan. 1914, n. 6, letter 111.

[2] In 1909 Dreiser had solicited John Warren regarding investing in the *Bohemian* magazine; in 1911 he was the music editor of the *New York Herald*. Correspondence in 1931 indicates he was then president of the General Service Corp, providing statistical services and publications.

[3] John Cowper Powys.

191. Dreiser to Markham

Dec. 24—1914

Honey Sweet:

Am rushed to death today, strange as it may seem. The Cosmopolitan[1] is dickering over The "Genius", and it is a question of letting them see the book as a whole. Have to go to Lanes to get it, thence to Lengels office, etc. Will write later in the day. This makes

the fourth letter sent to you. Did you get the one with Mordells letter about the lecture.[2] If not I'll send you a copy.

Utmost love—
Wish you were here
L—

[1] At this time, Lengel was cutting manuscript of *The "Genius"* to prepare a version for serialization in *Cosmopolitan*, but a few weeks later the magazine rejected the serial.

[2] See Dreiser to Markham, 22 Dec. 1914, n. 4, letter 189.

192. Dreiser to Markham

Dec. 24—1914

Sweetie Kid:

This is Christmas Eve and I wish I were with you or you were with me. Am going to see "Experience"[1] with the Wm Neil Smiths in a few minutes. A letter has come from Mencken, enclosing a large clipping of the Powys lecture from the Phila Record of Monday.[2] Will mail it tomorrow. Also tell you about Cosmopolitan deal, which may go through. They want more sex & less business than Lengel provided. Tomorrow I dine with the Lengels in order to go over this matter in detail. Saturday up the Hudson. A box of sox came from Mame this P.M. & a book from Jones—otherwise nothing. But I do wish you a happy New Year & success on the stage. Shall wire you greetings yet tonight.[3] Hope you got my letters. I miss you all the time—my crazy kid. Wish I had a thousand dollars to send you.

Lovingly
L—

[1] *Experience*, by George V. Hobart (1867–1926), is an episodic morality play that traces the lessons Youth must learn as he navigates various temptations and disillusionments.

[2] See Mencken to Dreiser, 24 Dec. 1914 (Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 170–71). A microfilmed copy of the *Philadelphia Record* does not show a

report of this lecture, but a clipping at DPUP summarizes the lecture. See item 1914.86 "Praises Writer, Hits Censors," *Philadelphia Press*, 22 Dec. 1914: John Cowper Powys "praises the courage and vision of Dreiser, 'the American novelist,' and assails publishers who shy away from literature that ends tragically, making American readers culturally impoverished" (*Theodore Dreiser: A Primary Bibliography and Reference Guide*, 2nd edition, ed. Donald Pizer, Richard W. Dowell, and Frederic E. Rusch [New York: G.K. Hall, 1991], 111).

[3] Dreiser's telegram, on a Western Union holiday greeting form, read: "MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY NEW YEAR THAN ANY OF THE HAPPY OLD ONES TO MY KIDDIE AND SUCCESS IN A PLAY THIS NEXT YEAR AND IN EVERYTHING ELSE HAVE MAILED YOU FIVE LETTERS SO FAR ADDRESSED FIRST TWO WRONG WAIT YOUR RETURN AND WILL BE GLAD WHEN YOU'VE HAD ENOUGH OF HOME WRITE."

193. Dreiser to Markham

[December 25, 1914]

Honey Kid:

Enclosed is the clipping from the Phila Record which may interest you. This is Christmas day in 'the mornin'. It's after 10 and I'm just turning out. I have to pack my bag now & then get some fruit to take to the Lengels as my share of that dinner experience is a punk show—to me—but the dancing afterward at Bustanobys[1] was interesting. They say places close at one—but all they do is lock the doors & the crowd stays on & goes when it pleases. I hope you are having a good time. When this reaches you the Christmas thrills will be over, but there are some thrills coming to me when I get you back and can tousle you again. It's a fine day here—fresh, rimy and with a sense of healthy winter in the air. How are all your parents? Don't get too contentious or they'll put you out—bag and baggage—you know what a rough house fighter you are anyway. I wonder you don't row them all in some furious onslaught. Kisses and I wish I could go over your nice rounded form with my hands and do what we love to do.

L—

[1] Bustanoby's Restaurant, at 39th Street and Broadway, had turned over a floor for patron dancing and also employed professional dancers.

194. Markham to Dreiser

Christmas Day, 1914

Sweetheart

Good morning. Oh, the bright hue of this Christmas Day with at last word from you! Mother and I were sitting up in bed here at her hotel knitting when Father called up to say a message had come for me and should he open it and read it over the phone. My heart sang as he read it. All the loneliness vanished in a moment. Christmas was come indeed.

Last evening when dinner was over at home I walked through the streets to this hotel. Somehow I was quite indifferent to the delay in the letters. Ever since I wrote you yesterday afternoon such a complete confidence had come over me. I knew word would come soon. Lonely I was, but not unhappily so. My arms were full of holly and in the windows of the houses I passed were candles everywhere, and somehow all I could do was just be happy that you were at all, and that we had been so, so happy. Dearest heart, I count the days until I come to you again. Eight they are, and tomorrow seven shall they be, and soon, oh soon, I shall hold you close and be petted and loved and hear your dear voice calling me "your kiddie."

Mother and I have had such a sweet time together. We spent last evening knitting, playing cards, reading and talking. Mother had to read to me on account of my voice, but I am almost well. I stayed all night with Mother and slept most of the night on her shoulder and she played that I was the little Elaine that was born in Allen Flats. Dearest, have a nice time. I wish I were with you, even though I am glad of this chance of reconciliation with Mother. Don't work too hard, dearest.

195. Dreiser to Markham

Bigelow Homestead
Malden on Hudson
New York

Dec. 26th 1914—Saturday

Honey Kid:

I don't understand about my letters. Three of them at least were properly addressed to 4911 Lake Park Ave. & the other two although wrongly addressed in the first instance carried in the corner "or 31 North State" so that it should have reached you. They should have reached you. As for leaving you or going to some one else I've been spending most of my time fixing up the floors of 165 so it would be nice for you when you got home. I love my Kiddie and miss her loving arms. I'm not going to pass you up—never fear—not yet at least anyhow. It might more readily be the other way about. And it grieves and irritates me to think that not a single one of all my letters reached you by so late as the 24th or even 25th apparently. I presume, now that Christmas is past they will come trailing along. By the way how would you like to come via the West Shore and get a stop over ticket—that is providing I don't get tired of this and want to run back to New York before New Years. Let me know if all is well here. I'll wire you to do so.

Well here I am at Malden with Bigelow prancing around and the two dogs sleeping in the same position in front of the fire. There is at least four or five inches of hard snow and the temperature is seven below zero. It is bright and clear. There is just one thing I crave for tonight and can't get and that is my Kiddie to snuggle up to and hold tight—my cutey, comfy girl. Then I'd be happy.

There isn't really a thing to tell you though outside of my loving you so much. Franklin Booth phoned Christmas day & want me to join a group of artists at dinner in his studio—wanted us both I should say. Powys dropped a note in the box Sunday night asking me to come round between 8 & 9 if I was home, which I wasn't. Mrs. Herbermann sent me a loving postal card & Elenora wired that she was to be at the Murry Hotel[1] this next week, which lets me out nicely since I am so safely out of N.Y. Mrs. Lengel cooked

a dandy turkey & I ate until I nearly collapsed. Today I am feeling fine & fit & this ride up here has been splendid. Do write at once & let me know whether any of my letters reach you. I could swear 89 million yellow and green curses of Egyptian texture.

But don't think I don't love you Sweetness. I think of you all the time—all the time. I do hope you are having a good time & that you come back refreshed. I want my Kiddie to be healthy & plump. You look so splendid when your feeling trim.

Lots & lots of kisses. I'll
tousle you up when you get back.
L—

[1] Eleanora R. O'Neill (b. 1878) [pseud. Barbara Langford in Swanberg, *Dreiser*] had been an Essex, MA, public school teacher before reviewing books for the Boston *Evening Transcript*. Her friendship with Dreiser began in 1911 when she wrote to praise *Jennie Gerhardt*. He trusted her literary judgment enough that he asked her to comment on the manuscript of *The "Genius."* Dreiser probably refers to the Murray Hill Hotel, a seven-story building of 600 rooms which stood at 112 Park Avenue.

196. Dreiser to Markham

Bigelow Homestead,
Malden on Hudson, New York.
[December 28, 1914]

Cryhon Kiddie:

I'm so glad you've made up with your mother and I hope it endures or can endure. I know you will do your part because you are so tolerant and nerves don't get the better of her. It is nice that there can be a reconciliation at all—even for a little while.

It is still cold here but not so cold. Up to five oclock yesterday it was still 14 below zero but then a warm wind blew from the South and the temperature rose to 10 degrees above. Today it is turning grey & may snow, but the air is fresh & bracing. It is now 10 A.M. and at 10:30 we are all going up to a mountain shack which belongs to a man by the name of Alleyne Irland,[1] one of the late

Joseph Pulitzers secretaries and a man who has written a most delightful account of his service in that capacity. As a character sketch it is one of the best things I have ever read. He is an Englishman and does some newspaper work for The World still.

But it's so funny that you do not seem to get any of my letters. This makes the 7th or 8th all addressed to 4911 Lake Park Ave—you have not recieved one as yet. They can't all go wrong, thats one sure thing—unless you get some of them soon I shall suspect that they are being sequestered by someone. A fine christmas atmosphere that would make—wouldn't it. Either 4911 is wrong & the letters will come back or they are being taken.[2]

No news here. I eat and sleep—the latter in a large cold room, but the bed is excellent and so is the food. Bigelow has the place lined with books and insists on my reading one thing and another—always something really fine when he says it is. His literary judgement is splendid. Last night we went out to dinner to a Mrs. Wolfs here, a serene, stately New Englander who reads & talks all the radical thoughts of the day but lives a strictly conventional (outwardly at least) existence. You know the type. We read & read & read wherever we go—Shaw, France, Chesterton and so on.[3] Talk about your purely intellectual atmosphere this is it.

But just the same I like it for a change & I fill in with thoughts of Cryhon & of what fine times we have when we are together. The warm animality of our contact, shot through with real affection makes up for so much of roughness & disappointment in the world at large. I'll be so glad when your starting back and so glad to get you alone again and take off your clothes and enjoy the richness of your fine body. You have such a lovely soft form, Kiddie to carress it is better than anything else that life provides. Write soon & tell me if you want to stop here 1 day. I'm not tired of things yet.

L—

Have you been taking your medicine regularly?

[1] Alleyne Ireland (1871–1951), British author of colonial histories. His memoir, *Joseph Pulitzer: Reminiscences of a Secretary*, was published in April 1914.

[2] The envelopes do not show that the letters, addressed either to 4911 Lake Park Avenue or 31 North State Street, were forwarded or returned.

[3] George Bernard Shaw (1856–1950), Irish playwright, critic, and political activist, whose plays *Arms and the Man* (1894) and *Pygmalion* (1913) were much discussed; Anatole France (1844–1924), French novelist and poet, whose novel *Thaïs* Dreiser read earlier in the year (see Dreiser to Markham, 24 Jan. 1914, letter 109); and G. K. Chesterton (1874–1936), journalist, literary and art critic, and Christian apologist.

197. Dreiser to Markham

Bigelow Homestead
Malden on Hudson
New York
Tuesday—[December] 29th 1914

Honey Sweet:

Why don't you tell me whether any single one of my letters have been recieved. Here I go on, day after day, writing and so far as I can judge by your letter, including those of yesterday and today you have recieved no one of mine. I am going to quit addressing you at 4911 Lake Park Ave & shall hereafter send them care 31 N. State. Perhaps that will get them to you. It makes me angry to think that such a persistent series of errors or something else should occur. In one letter I sent you a letter from Mordell telling of the Powys lecture in Phila. In another I sent a clipping from the Phila North American, announcing the lecture. In a third cards from Miss Perkins[1] & her lover and so on. I told of notes from Powys, Mrs. Herbermann, Eleanor ONiell & a long report of the Powys lecture which appeared in the Phila Record. Apparently nothing of this has reached you. Yet only the first two letters were sent wrong and they carried the correct secondary address: i.e.—31 N State. Can you wonder I am getting disgruntled? In one letter I wanted to know whether you wanted to come here this week end for a day—say Sunday & asked you to wire me. You evidently have not recieved that either.

Well & good but is rather rum. Everything is going pleasantly here. Yesterday we had a long sleigh ride up to Alleyne Irlands

bungalow above Catskill—a sleigh ride of about 26 miles. It was splendid. Today Bigelow and I are going up to his wood lot in the sleigh to saw wood. Tomorrow there is a sleigh ride on for somewhere—a Mr. & Mrs. Somebody. Bigelow is busy all the while writing letters to friends & the newspapers. I never saw such a voluminous private correspondence.

Mencken writes that he wants to come and bring the mss of The "Genius" Jan 10th (Sunday eve). He says he has a "few ideas and suggestions."[2] I hope they are intelligent. Alleyne Irland who appears to be a right decent chap wanted me to come to lunch or dinner with him in N.Y. but when you get back I'll invite him to our place instead. Bigelow says there is a rear-admiral, retired, of the U.S.N. living at Wilmington Del. who wants us to come & visit him there & stay a long while. We'll see what happens.

But I do wish you were here. It's so nicey & snowy & wintery. The ice on the Hudson is over twelve inches thick & people are skating on it here. There is a splendid hill just outside the door here—great for coasting. Their sleigh is excellent—four seats, with plenty of furs & they are glad to use it.

And now that you've been away a few days I'm as hungry for you as a wolf. It seems as if I could scarcely wait to turn you over & get at you. I feel your thighs in my hands and your tongue in my mouth and your delicious undulations drawing me to ejaculation. I'll be ready to chew your flesh the first night & for many nights & mornings no doubt. I wish you would rest & get plump & luscious just to feed me up. I'm so hungry.

Well here's more kisses & hurry home. And if you do get this please report on all the other letters.

L—

[1] Probably a reference to Frances Perkins (1880–1965), who became the fourth U.S. Secretary of Labor from 1933–1945. At the time of this letter, she was living in Greenwich Village and was active in worker and women's rights. She married economist Paul Wilson in 1913 but kept her maiden name, which may be why Dreiser refers to "her lover." Earlier she had submitted an essay to the *Delineator* when Dreiser was editor, but he rejected it.

[2] See Mencken to Dreiser, 27 Dec. 1914 (Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 172).

198. Dreiser to Markham

Dec. 29—1914

Honey Sweet:

When you get this please answer by next mail on what train you propose leaving Chicago and when the train reaches here—you can find out there. If it stops at Saugerties or Catskill you will be near enough—if they refuse to stop here. Also whether you want to stay here a day or two. If so please remember that when you went to Chicago this time it wasn't to see your family alone—since they wonder why I didn't go along or you didn't come here, but also to transact some business with The Fine Arts Theatre—anything you please—since that is the excuse I gave. They are anxious to meet you and I think you may like them well enough to be amused.

We have been sawing wood—I have just got warmed up & had my tea. It is beginning to sleet and if it keeps up all night everything will be ice tomorrow. I have also had a shave and am feeling much better. Wish you were coming tonight. Do write & tell me whether you have recieved any or all of my letters. Don't elope with Michael Carmichael Carr[1] & go to live in Mo. That would set me adrift & I don't want to be set adrift. Give my greetings to your father & relatives if they will recieve them & tell them I wish them well. Ask your father about that Wisconsin cottage.[2]

Love & kisses—
L—

[1] Michael Carmichel Carr (1881–1929), American painter and scene designer who had worked with Edward Gordon Criag, a pioneer of the new stagecraft, focusing on symbolism and abstraction rather than realism, before traveling to Chicago, where he designed sets for the Chicago Little Theatre. At the time of this letter, he was also teaching at the University of Missouri.

[2] The Hyman family cottage. See Hyman to Dreiser, 13 May 1913, letter 77.

199. Dreiser to Markham

Bigelow Homestead,
Malden on Hudson, New York.

Wed. Dec 30—1914

Honey Kid:

We are still reading Gibbon and Plutarch here,[1] eating three square & looking at the scenery. Yesterday it thawed some & today it is nearly fifty degrees above zero, but the barometer promises change & tomorrow, no doubt, it will be colder. . . . No letter from you today but I am looking for one in the morning. I get so used to a daily word from you that unless it comes I feel disappointed. Still I do not expect you to write every day—merely pleased when you are moved to do it.

I am now wondering whether I will be willing to stick it out here until Sunday or not. It is comfortable and amusing in part but I feel so very idle and lethargic, as though I were wasting my life, which annoys me. As a matter of fact I have been doing some very valuable and essential readings—Gibbon, Plutarch the Encyclopedia Brittanica and so forth but even so. If I change my mind I will wire you Friday or tomorrow so that you can come on down without bothering about Malden. If I don't wire—and unless I recieve contrary instructions from you by mail you will find me at Malden—ready to join you on going on to New York or staying here for a day.

Later:

This is now Thursday AM & a lovely day. Last night I learned that I was too late for the mail man who had come & gone a little earlier than usual so I quit. This mornings mail brought your letter telling me of your intention to leave Saturday and a few minutes later I recieved your telegram saying that you would arrive here Sunday afternoon at 3:58. I will be there to meet you & I presume we might as well stay here one night and go down Monday afternoon. If I change my mind for any reason I'll wire you & go down on the same train. So glad you have been having a good time &

that you are coming back. Though I've been lonely without you it will be all the nicer now to pick my Kiddie up and rumple her up. Come along—and much love until you do.

Lovingly
L—

Did you ask your father about that Wisconsin cottage.

[1] Dreiser is reading the histories by Edward Gibbon (1737–1794), *The History of the Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire*, in six volumes (1776–1789); and Plutarch (46–119), whose *Parallel Lives*, a series of paired biographies of illustrious Greeks and Romans, was standard reading.

Conscience
1915

"I feel physically disembowelled away from you,
mentally adrift, alone, exiled"
—Markham to Dreiser, letter 207

February 1915 found Markham back in Chicago, where she was slated to star in the three-character one-act play *Conscience*, by Chicagoan Oren Taft Jr., who had written plays for the Chicago Little Theatre in 1913. *Conscience* appeared at the Fine Arts Theater on 3 March 1915 in a bill of three one-act plays—the other two being *Criminals* by George Middleton and *By Ourselves* by Ludwig Fulta—the second offering of the Players Producing Company, cofounded by oil heiress Aline Barnsdall. Despite having a sprained ankle, Markham was understandably excited, for she would be in her first leading role, a streetwalker who rebuffs the interest of two reporters in search of a story. A script for the play no longer exists but the play did receive two extensive, and enthusiastic, reviews. Amy Leslie, the eminent theater critic for the Chicago *Daily News*, summarized the plot:

How to cite this book chapter:
Newlin, K. (ed.) (2026). *The Dreiser–Markham Letters: The Correspondence of Theodore Dreiser and Kyra Markham, 1913–1944*. Pp. 353–466. Winchester: Winchester University Press. DOI: https://doi.org/10.21039/book5.c.
License: CC BY-NC-ND

> The girl makes overtures to each of the reporters out looking for stories. One of them, a writer of stories of the streets and of the town . . . employs protean talents never before regarded as an asset of the cub or the scoop hunter. He pretends to be down and out and excites the deeper sentiments of the cynical child of sin. They go together to her squalid tenement, where she dispenses hospitality in an innocent, fervently charitable way, which disarms the story teller and he confesses to his deception and its reason and gives her a roll of money. The girl's revolt is sensational and natural. In wounded fury she tells him there will be a story in his paper, but he won't write it, and she tries to kill him with a bread knife. He eludes her by strangling her and there are dramatic lightnings for a minute or two after she revives and hurls her curses and his money violently after his fleeing reportorial footsteps down the rickety stairs.

The review was subheaded "Kirah Markham a Promise Fulfilled" and was accompanied by a studio photograph of Markham. Leslie went on to praise Markham as "a brilliant young actress in full blossom," who is "a stately, graceful, vibrant creature, with an effulgent voice, superb poise."[1] Percy Hammond, of the *Chicago Tribune*, echoed the "brilliantly played" comment, reproduced the studio photo, and praised Markham's acting: she "showed the other side of the Magdalen, and did it squarely and honestly, with none of the maudlin bunk of the usual stage prostitute."[2]

"I wonder what you will think of the Amy Leslie notice," she asked Dreiser on 8 March. "It is a whopper" (letter 241). Dreiser, on "It was splendid but no more than you deserve in my judgement. Still those clippings ought to do you a lot of good" (13 March, letter 247). He then asked her to send 50 clippings to him for promotional purposes.

Their separation was painful for both. "Aren't you interested at all in being here for my opening?" Markham had asked in an undated letter, before the production (before 2 Feb. 1915, letter 200). In his reply, Dreiser pleaded his poverty: "I wrote you about my finances. If I wanted to come tonight I couldn't because I haven't the money." He then went on to itemize his expenses, the

most significant of which was rent, at $25 per month (2 Feb. 1915, letter 201).

Then Markham learned that production would be delayed a week, and that delay, coupled with the discomfort of having to share tight quarters with her father and brother after the greater freedom in New York, served only to magnify her sense of loss.[3] "Oh, baby, baby, if work doesn't start soon I think I shall be ill with longing for you," she wrote to Dreiser on 10 February. "I feel physically disembowelled away from you, mentally adrift, alone, exiled" (letter 207). Dreiser, too, felt adrift at the absence and revived the idea of starting a family: "Honey Kid, since I've had you I realize that there is nothing to the single state. Two people can make a world for themselves but one never, & to make the thing fit and proper there ought to be three or four children" (18 Feb. 1915, letter 214).

While Markham was away, Dreiser resolved to take steps to end his penury. Aware that he just wasn't making it financially in his chosen profession, he embarked on an extensive and ambitious survey of contemporary realistic novels to figure out why his books weren't selling. Because he had been so focused on his own writing—cranking out five long books in five years[4]—he felt he had lost touch with his audience. "It's all a dull grind, this reading," he wrote to Markham on 22 March, "but I'm determined to catch up on this American stuff, just to see whats been done and to see if I can sharpen up my own methods a little. Thus far I have gained a few points but not many. Mostly I see better ways of doing the thing I am reading" (letter 240). To Mencken he wrote for advice: "Barring Howells, James, Norris, Phillips, Mrs. Wharton, Garland, Herrick and London, are there any fugitive realistic works of import. I want a list. I should exclude Whitlock, H. B. Fuller & Stephen Crane."[5] His letters to Markham record his evaluation of his reading. Most novels did not meet his approval: Robert W. Chambers's *The Younger Set* (1907): "trivial soufflé, psychologically speaking" ([3] March 1915, letter 233); Joseph Louis Vance's *Joan Thursday* (1911): "so far is nothing much" (7 March 1915, letter 239). But he admired Stephen French Whitman's *Predestined*

(1911), a naturalist novel of decline: "'Predestined' is far and away the best of the three [*Joan Thursday* and Frank Norris's *Vandover and the Brute*]—one of the best American books I know anything about" (11 March 1915, letter 245).

The year 1914 had ended with Dreiser in dire financial straits. *The Titan*, the novel he had counted on to resurrect his career, had failed to find an audience: it sold only 8,016 copies by the year's end, not earning enough in royalties to repay John Lane for its advance and leaving him still owing the company money.[6] He had signed a contract with John Lane for *The "Genius"* but publication wouldn't occur until the fall. Mindful of his continuing support payments for Sara Dreiser, he tried to convince her to allow him to divorce her, but she declined, offering instead a temporary respite from financial obligation in which Sara Dreiser agreed to forgo support payments for 18 months.[7] When the agreement expired in August 1916, after his relationship with Markham had ended, Dreiser decided he was going to go to Reno for seven months for a divorce and thereby bypass New York's divorce laws: "She'll go into court on this but since I haven't anything & can prove it she can't get much. The comic part of it is is that she is well off whereas I have a bare living" (Dreiser to Markham, 23 Sept. 1916, letter 332). But Dreiser never followed up on his plan.

With the manuscript for *The "Genius"* delivered to John Lane and not making much progress on *The Bulwark*, Dreiser was ripe for a diversion, which presented itself on 5 August, when an old companion from his newspaper days, the illustrator Franklin Booth, suggested that Dreiser accompany him on a road trip back to his family home in Carmel, Indiana, and along the way gather material for a travelogue that he, Franklin, would illustrate. Earlier, in February, Bror Nordfeldt had suggested a similar trip in April, though a walking excursion in West Virginia, with the same end of producing a travelogue with Nordfeldt providing illustrations (Dreiser to Markham, 16 Feb. 1915, letter 212). Dreiser didn't go along on that expedition but was more interested in Booth's proposal, in part because traveling by automobile would be far more comfortable but more because the nostalgia of revisiting the scene

of his childhood was appealing. During the trip, which began on 11 August, Dreiser sent Markham six letters in which he conveyed both exhaustion and enthusiasm, as well as 32 postcards, dropped into mailboxes at any town large enough to feature a postcard. (Because the postcards contain little specific information, they have been excluded from this edition—see Appendix 1: Omitted Correspondence.) When he returned on 27 August, he found the galleys of *The "Genius"* waiting for him.

While Dreiser was drafting the manuscript of what would become *A Hoosier Holiday*, both he and Markham doubled down on their interests in drama and the theater. In a burst of enthusiasm after meeting Markham in 1913, Dreiser had written *The Girl in the Coffin* and in July 1914 had followed with three more one-act plays: *The Blue Sphere, In the Dark*, and *Laughing Gas*. In February 1915, he had completed two more, *The Spring Recital* and *The Light in the Window*, and he planned to collect them, together with another called *"Old Ragpicker,"* completed on 27 November 1915, in a volume to be entitled *Plays of the Natural and Supernatural*, which would be published in 1916. While drafting these plays, he had also been attending amateur productions by Floyd Dell at the Liberal Club. As the social gathering point of Greenwich Village, the Liberal Club—with the motto "A Meeting Place for Those Interested in New Ideas"—offered a stimulating atmosphere for discussion of the latest ideas.

Dell's plays are topical satires directed at the members of the Liberal Club. Most mock the Villagers' bohemian sexual idealism—their earnest belief in love and sex free from the conventional proprieties. Their plots typically involve "an amiable 'civilized' triangle situation in which husband, wife and lover are all 'good friends,'" as Dell wrote of *The Perfect Husband*, whose plot he repeated in many.[8] Despite their apparent advocacy of free love, the plays suggest that jealousy inevitably prevents any satisfactory relationship. Their form consists of dialogue between allegorical figures, often between characters denoted only as "He" and "She"; staging is simple, consisting of a few props and bare sets, which suggests the influence of Dell's experience at the Chicago Little

Theatre. Markham acted in several of them, and Dell dedicated *My Lady's Mirror*, published as *Legend: A Romance*, to her and *Enigma: A Domestic Conversation* to Dreiser.[9]

Though Dreiser had contemplated writing a play for Markham, he never did so. After completing *The Girl in the Coffin* he had written, "I'll think of a one act play for you one of these hours—something that will suit you to a T—really present *you*—and then I will do it and should love to" (2 May 1913, letter 58). Dell's plays were perfectly suited to Markham's talents. Dreiser's, with the exception of the realistic *The Girl in the Coffin*, were not, for they are philosophic musings among abstract or symbolic characters. The single play that focuses on a female character is *The Voice*, which remained unpublished during Dreiser's life (see Dreiser to Markham, 9 Feb. 1915, n. 1, letter 204).[10]

In February Dreiser had seen *Elga*, by the playwright Gerhardt Hauptmann, in the inaugural production by the newly formed the Modern Stage company. He was enthralled by the production and promptly met the director, Emanuel Reicher, who soon scheduled *The Girl in the Coffin* for a fall production. Reicher was a founding member, stage director, and leading actor of Berlin's Freie Bühne. When World War I broke out Reicher came to America, and shortly after his arrival he attempted to found in January 1915 an American version of the Freie Bühne, called simply the Modern Stage. Reicher's plan was noble but economically unsound. The theater would be supported entirely by subscribers and, with the exception of 100 seats reserved for "guests of honor" and impoverished "art-loving young people," only subscribers would be admitted to performances. The purpose of this scheme, as Reicher told a reporter for the *New York Times*, was to ensure that the theater would be "'wholly independent of the favor or displeasure of the public and the press.'" Reicher apparently intended to duplicate his experiences in Berlin. The theater would present mostly European dramas that had seldom or never been staged in America. Like so many other theater reformers, he planned to set an example for other theaters by selecting the finest "modern" realistic dramas available; he hoped "'to train players into a

higher form of realistic presentation'"; and he wished to encourage "'young American playwrights to write plays that depart somewhat from the beaten highroad of general popular taste.'"[11]

Reicher's original program was ambitious but betrayed his naivete about what American audiences were ready to support. The first season would be comprised of Hauptmann's *Elga*, Ibsen's *John Gabriel Borkman*, Björnson's *When the Young Vine Blooms*, then a bill of three one-act plays—Hoffmannsthal's *Madonna di Anora*, David Pinski's *The Dollar*, and Dreiser's *The Girl in the Coffin*—and finally Chekov's *Uncle Vanya*.[12] Dreiser must have headed the list of "young American playwrights" that Reicher wished to cultivate, for the New York *Evening Globe* identified Dreiser as a Reicher playwright on 11 February 1915—only one month after the organization was formed.[13] He also received an invitation to attend the dress rehearsal of *Elga*—apparently, he was one of Reicher's "guests of honor."[14] And by the end of the month Reicher was prompting Dreiser to finish alterations on the script of *Coffin*.[15]

Despite Reicher's good intentions, the Modern Stage was doomed from the start. He had formed his plans under the impression that prominent actors and theaters were readily available. However, he soon found that the actors he wanted were suddenly in demand and the theaters were leased. He was therefore compelled to suspend his program after the third performance of *John Gabriel Borkman* when he was unable to find a theater.[16] By August he had revised his plans. He wrote to Dreiser to say that *Coffin* "will be again on the program for the coming season" and asked for Dreiser's conditions.[17] On 8 September 1915 he announced that the Modern Stage was forming an auxiliary branch to be known as the American People's Theater. Rather than appeal to the artistic and intellectual elite, as the Modern Stage did, the People's Theater would offer performances exclusively to the working class.[18] Basing his plans on his experience in founding the Freie Volksbühne (comprised of 120,000 members and organized after the Freie Bühne collapsed), Reicher would offer workers free membership cards, distributed throughout the city, to which they would

affix a 25-cent stamp that would gain them admittance. Reicher leased the Garden Theater for 30 weeks and planned to offer a season of seven productions, beginning with *When the Young Vine Blooms* in November, which included Markham among its cast in an uncredited role (later replacing the actress Hedwig Reicher in the role of Marna). Markham would next appear in an uncredited role in Hauptmann's *The Weavers* in December, almost immediately replacing the actress Katherine Herbert in the role of Mother Hilse. *The Girl in the Coffin* was now scheduled for January.[19]

But in early January 1916 Reicher's plans once again collapsed. According to news reports, Reicher had failed to enlist subscribers for the People's Theater and had consequently fired his associate, Julius Hopp, who had formerly organized the Progressive Stage Society and the Wage Earners' Theater, and who was responsible for managing the People's Theater. Hopp claimed Reicher owed him $400 and promptly sued.[20] On 3 February Reicher announced he had "turned over the production [of *The Weavers*] and its management to the members of the company and given up his role in order that he may make other productions for his organization"—a response to actor unrest over unpaid salaries.[21] Thereafter, the Modern Stage would limp along under a cooperative management, with the company receiving a pro rata share of the box office receipts, until the company officially folded on 26 February 1916.

Notes

[1] Amy Leslie, "'Bundle Day' Comes to the Fine Arts Theater," Chicago *Daily News*, 6 March 1915: 16.

[2] Percy Hammond, "Four Little Plays at the Fine Arts," *Chicago Tribune*, 4 March 1915: 9.

[3] Her father had downsized because his firm, Hyman & Co, was failing, going into bankruptcy in May, with the debt discharged in June. See *Chicago Tribune*, 9 Mary 1915: 10; 18 June 1915: 18.

[4] *Jennie Gerhardt* (1911); *The Financier* (1912), *A Traveler at Forty* (1913), *The Titan* (1914), *The "Genius"* (awaiting publication, 1915).

[5] Dreiser to Mencken, 22 March 1915 (Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 190).

[6] Swanberg, *Dreiser*, 177.
[7] Qtd. in Swanberg, *Dreiser*, 186.
[8] Dell, *Homecoming* (New York: Farrar and Rinehart, 1933), 262.
[9] See Dreiser to Markham, 11 March 1915, letter 245; and Dell, *King Arthur's Socks and Other Village Plays* (New York: Knopf, 1922), 61, 129,
[10] For discussion of Dreiser's playwriting as an effort to woo Markham away from Dell, see Thomas P. Riggio, "Dreiser and Kirah Markham: The Play's the Thing," *Studies in American Naturalism* 1 (2006): 109–27, esp. 116 ff.
[11] "Coming—A 'Freie Bühne' to be Made in America," *New York Times*, 17 Jan. 1915: vii, 7.
[12] "Herr Reicher's Plans," *New York Times*, 7 March 1915: vii, 5.
[13] Lewis Sherwin, "The Theatres: Emmanuel Reicher Has an Interesting Program," New York *Evening Globe*, 11 Feb. 1915 (clipping, DPUP).
[14] Reicher to Dreiser, 19 Feb. 1915 (DPUP).
[15] See Dreiser to Markham, 1 March 1915, n. 5, letter 231. The typescript of *The Girl in the Coffin* prepared for the Modern Stage is extant in the University of Pennsylvania Dreiser Collection (folders 13104–13109, DPUP).
[16] "Herr Reicher's Year," *New York Times*, 19 Sept. 1915: vi, 4.
[17] Reicher to Dreiser, 9 Aug. 1915 (DPUP).
[18] "People's Theatre Will Dim the Stars," New York *Evening Post*, 6 Nov. 1915 (clipping, DPUP).
[19] "High-Class Plays for Workers at Low Prices," *New York Times*, 24 Oct. 1915: iv, 5–6.
[20] "Hopp to Sue Reicher," *New York Times*, 12 Jan. 1916: 13.
[21] "Reicher Out of 'Weavers,'" *New York Times*, 3 Feb. 1916: 7.

200. Markham to Dreiser

[before February 2, 1915]

Dearest Beloved

Beyond my reconciliation with Don[1] you never noticed evidently any of the things I said. Here I am waiting for you to give me some word about whether you are coming or not, and you just going

on with your life there and never heeding. If you have a hundred from Lane why can't you come? I'm lonely. I've been waiting some word from day to day before definitely moving downtown. And none ever comes. We could, if put to it, stop at the Bradley. Don't you want to come? I get so many impressions from your letters, things you are doing, people you are seeing that I've never heard of before. You say you are invited to lunch with Mrs. Roberts,[2] but you never say who she is. You tell of your engagement to entertain Amick's friends,[3] but you don't tell me anything about it with it's over. You don't even tell me who went with you to "Elga"[4] though you said you wanted to take Mrs. Drey. And then the thought rises that there are endless people in New York that you know who do not know that I exist, and who are not even names for me, for you don't even mention them. And I wonder how much you see of these spirits and whether you really miss me. Oh, baby, I want you to be happy, but I want you here so very much too. Aren't you interested at all in being here for my opening?[5] It's the biggest thing artistically that has ever come into my life. Aren't you at all anxious to see it? Oh, but enough! I know you would come to me if you could—or at least I think I know, and that is the same thing, isn't it? I am worn out but infinitely enjoying myself tonight, for I have spent a quarter and climbed in solitary state to the gallery of the orchestra. I spent all day getting Mother settled in her apartment.

Precious, don't mind my raving. I am just lonely. I am having a bite of supper with Frank and Miriam.[6] Frank says that you say if I will find an inexpensive place you will come. Why haven't you told me that, dear? Of, I don't know what to think! Perhaps we had better leave things as they are. I love you, darling. Don't forget that. It is only loving you too much that makes me fearful you would rather be elsewhere. I love you.

[1] Maurice Browne.

[2] Mary Fanton Roberts (1864–1956). Dreiser had met Fanton in 1898 when she was the editor of *Demorest's Family Magazine* and bought some of his writing. He had relied on her editorial judgment since then. She married William Carman Roberts in 1910, and at the time of this letter, she was managing editor of *The Craftsman*.

[3] The painter and illustrator Robert Amick.

[4] *Elga* (1905), by Nobel Prize dramatist Gerhardt Hauptman (1862–1946), is a dream play, in shifting scenes, about a weary knight who has a dream vision about the faithless Elga who encounters the body of her dead lover, killed on the orders of her husband. The play was the inaugural production of the Modern Stage, formed by German actor and director Emanuel Reicher (1849–1924) to introduce elements of German naturalism to the American stage. Dreiser apparently attended a rehearsal, for the play opened on 23 February at the Garrick Theater. Markham would act in two of Reicher's productions, and Reicher also planned to stage Dreiser's *The Girl in the Coffin*, but the Modern Stage folded before it could do so.

[5] That is, the opening of *Conscience*, a one-act play by Oren Taft, the Fine Arts Theatre on 3 March 1915. Markham had the lead, her first.

[6] Miriam Kiper and Francis Buzzell. See Dreiser to Markham, 26 Jan. 1914, n. 3, letter 114.

201. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Feb. 2nd 1915—Tuesday

Honey Girl:

What's the matter with my kid, anyway? Such a mail as I have just finished reading!! So you think I [am] leading a free, gay, forgetful life! Crygorn, your too funny. If I am going about it at all it is solely to escape the lonliness of being here at night without you. When you were on the stage and coming home from the theatre at twelve it was different. It didn't matter at all. I was sure of your coming and could sit and write with the greatest comfort, sure to be cheered and made happy at midnight, but now if I sit and work it is only to feel that soon I must go to bed alone and forget in sleep. That isn't very encouraging. To break the spell I feel that I must go out and look people up—and that,—and nothing more than that I have been doing. The Mrs. Roberts I referred to and whom you don't know is the Mrs. W. Carman Roberts, Editor of The Craftsman to whom I introduced you at Isadora Duncans dance,[1] and who, as I then explained wanted me to come

and lunch with her. The Amick party consisted of Amick, young Cowen,[2] a lawyer (young) by the name of Chislett and a silent doll by the name of Muth. Cowen, by the way, read a long sea story which was very bad. The evening was only fairly amusing—not bad but not brilliant.

And as for not wanting to come—I would be happier with you now in your hotel room than anywhere else on earth—just we two. I wrote you about my finances. If I wanted to come tonight I couldn't because I haven't the money. Just paid the rent today—25^{00} and 6^{00} on a water heater since the plumbers are at last at work installing the sink & tank in the kitchen. Also a bill of $4.43 for telephones & those two messages you sent, also 12^{00} to Lyke who wrote me personally. That took as you see, $45.43 and leaves me less than $50 on which to go. I couldn't risk coming on $47.35 my exact cash. Thirty at least would be required for fare, berth and incidentals—and then what? And if your show doesn't last we would have all that expense for nothing. And you need spring & summer clothes so much.

As for Elga Hale[3] went with me to see that—I couldn't connect with Mrs. Drey. The Martins you will meet when you get back. As for the thousends I know they are as you suggest "spirits"—thin air. I don't know them. In the course of time you will know everybody that I know that we really want to know.

Sweetheart your letter, grieving as it is, makes me want to be with you much more than your short cheerful inconsequential notes which merely show me that you are busy. Somehow, just before your letter came I was thinking of the night we went out to Plainfield & bought the steak & cooked it in the woods. Somehow I get more from you, in vibratory exchange than from any living being. I seem, when we are together, as though I were doubled in feeling & sensory capacity. We seem to make a <u>one</u> which responds better—richer more fully. Alone I feel say like a thin toned violin. When with you I feel like the half of a cello. Do you see? Everything means more. I feel richer in my blood & spirit.

So that night under the trees I got more out of it than out of almost anything of that kind I have ever known. I felt the mark

of the earth, and the black of the night and the stars & the fire so much more wonderfully. It was like music. As we lay on the ground, or walked afterward, or crowded close together in the car I felt saved from failure & lonliness and a thousend things. The content of the two of us, united, seemed enough to hold our [word omitted] in happiness & peace in the great, illimitable mystery of life. I was supremely content as I am so often with you hanging on my arm or lying close to me,—and you worry about my going to see others. You needn't. My nerves hurt straining to be still until you get back. How can you think I'm forgetting you.

But enough of that. I know you know better. If I could get $200 tonight I would come anyway because I might as well read books out there as here & we could have such a jolly time. But I lack the two hundred! So I'll just wait as best I can & see what the weeks bring forth.

It's clear & warmer today. I'm reading "My Mamie Rose"[4] & I find it thin—but suggestive. As I said the plumbers are at work. Next come some rugs when we get money—and then . . . But oh I wish I could strip my pretty kid just now and hold her tight. Wouldn't you get a good, strong — — you know—don't you.

Much Love

And I'm not pre-occupied—and not content. I got this letter from Lyke, but he'll have to wait for your bill.

[1] Isadora Duncan (1877–1927), known for her innovations in modern dance. After her breakup with Dreiser in 1916, Markham would take refuge in the apartment of her brother, the actor Augustin Duncan, and his wife, the actress Margherita Sargent. See also Dreiser to Markham, 24 Sept. 1915, n. 2, letter 256.

[2] Percy Cowan (d. 1923) was an illustrator who shared a Washington Square studio with Robert Amick. Among his commissions were illustrations for *Century* magazine and Harper & Brothers.

[3] Ralph Tracy Hale (1880–1951), publisher, at the time with Small, Maynard before founding his own firm in 1927, Hale, Cushman & Flint.

[4] *My Mamie Rose: The Story of My Regeneration, An Autobiography* (1903), by Owen Kildare (1864–1911), about the author's rise out of the tenements via the influence of a school teacher.

202. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Thursday, Feb 4—1915

Sweetie Girl:

I was so glad to get your telegram this A.M. even if they did rout me out at 5:30 to recieve it. Isn't that a shame in a way. You might just as well have sent a night letter for all the quick service they rendered you & I would have had the advantage of 50 words & sleep until 8:30. You probably filed it about midnight or a little later. They had it here at once & should have delivered it in 1 hour which would have made it 2 A.M. at the latest. But they waited until 5! Why 5, I wonder? Why not six or seven, if so late as that? And why call it night delivery when it was morning?

But enough of that. According to your letter today you seem to be having the best of care for your sprained ankle which I do hope is nothing serious. Isn't it tough to have a thing like that interfere at so critical a moment. I wondered for a moment whether you were telling me all, even now but must trust to luck to feel it is no worse. I have been waiting eagerly ever since your telegram came to hear or see what your first letter thereafter would disclose.

The day opened biting cold but this evening it began to warm up and by morning I think we will have a real spring day—warm and bright. The plumbing job here has been annoying me, for although I bought and paid for the gas stove—$6.80—the wretched plumber or Crist & Herrick have fallen to squabbling with the gas company as to who is to connect it. The plumber says it's the gas co's business and the gas co. says it will connect the stove with the gas but not with the water. Meanwhile I wait—the sink & tank in—but no water connections.

And another thing—for lack of cash on the owners part—so Crist reports—no new tub will be put in for a month! Possibly not even then, I presume. Again the ceiling in the front room—the worst of the two,—remains unchanged. It has been badly marred

but I suppose it will take a year to get that fixed. Sometimes I get so irritated by their picayune policy that I wish we might move at once. At other times, looking at the rooms & the price it seems foolish to think of it.

So Middleton[1] is out there and seeing you act. That ought to do you some good in the future—as well as the presence of the author & others. I wish I might have seen you. After your making up here that night I have been curious to see how you would do the whole thing. I haven't the slightest doubt that your father is right & that you gave a fine interpretation. I would really never believe otherwise unless I say it.

My honey, I've rather the blues tonight and just why I can't say. At times I get tired of myself & the seeming triviality of the days here & wish I could cut out and go into new places. If it weren't for you I think I'd drop everything & tramp for awhile making my way as best I could. But the thought of your coming back here soon rather hold me in check—and my dreary conscientiousness about work. But I have cut loose in times past & I suppose I could do so again. When I feel as I do tonight, lonely and of no particular import—I want to shut up shop & take to the high road when I can make breif friends as I go. Ho, for a month in the Arizona desert—this very month. If the blues hold me too long you may here of a radical change.

But I love you just the same & wish I could be with you.

L—

Krog has been held for appearance Monday A.M. when his case will be disposed of. I talked to the probation officer & he is opposed to his release. Some enemy or garrulous friend has told him of the attempt to persuade Mrs. Brown to elope & he is now sure Krog is either criminal or insane. So much for the low brow moralists.

[1] George Middleton (1880–1967), playwright known for his advocacy of the one-act play form, and president of the Dramatists Guild of America from 1927 to 1929. His play *Criminals* was playing with *Conscience*.

203. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 8, 1915

Dearest Heart

The last half hour has been so wonderfully beautiful.[1] The water gap is astonishing, isn't it? It looked so cold and felt as though the sun never got in there. Right at the foot of the mountain stood five empty houses in a row and the windows were just black openings without glaze.

At sunset a beautiful thing happened that I have never seen before. First, there was that rift in a great dark cloud of the sort that we love so, that has soft rays of light radiating from a spot hidden behind the cloud higher up. It was all gold and grey-blue, and as it passed from the sun there came across it in its place a long boat-like creation delicate and almost chiseled. Then of a sudden there leapt on the tip of the hill a sort of flameless bonfire, a round glow that threw a path of fiery light straight up in the air across the gondola cloud. It never wavered, never changed, excepting to die down slowly, dwindling in height to an almost imperceptible red rim to a bit of the hip top, and melting into the general pinkness. Almost immediately and while the whole west was still pink from the north, came hurrying gusts of snow.

The yokel devoted himself assiduously to the window until the country began to be very beautiful, when he turned his full attention to the time table.

The German family were so cute and funny at dinner. The children made known their tastes in a definite, quiet way. Evidently they have just enough money, and no more. They almost all ate poached eggs on toast for dinner, and papa divided his mince pie with mama, and all was just as devoted as it should be. When we left Scranton mama said: "See how lovely it is. Doesn't it make you think of Dresden?" She then followed the example the entire family had set and placed a quill toothpick between her teeth. Dinner over, she grabbed a bundle (probably dog-biscuit) and she and sister went forward to the baggage car.

I have just finished Madame Bovary.[2] What a wonderful and terrible thing it is! It came to me with tremendous force that my

mother's story could be done in much the same way, with variations, into something very wonderful.

[1] Markham is on a train, heading from New York to Chicago, passing by the Delaware Water Gap and Scranton—which suggests she has made a quick trip from Chicago to New York and spent some time with Dreiser, before returning to Chicago.

[2] In *Madame Bovary* (1857), by Gustave Flaubert (1821–1880), Emma Bovary reads sentimental novels to escape the dullness of married life and, with the romantic expectations of her reading to guide her, takes several lovers, goes into debt, and eventually commits suicide.

204. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Feb. 9—1915

Hey Sweetie Kid:

Well, now begins a long series of faithful letters with very few informative notes from Lyhon Cryhon. I don't think the river ever looked grayer and more disconsolate than when I came out after your train left. To help matters I thought I had lost my keys and had to climb in through the front window. Inside on the mantle were the keys I had layed out to take, but didn't. Tried to work & couldn't very well, but hunted for "The Caress" & found it. Then sat down & doped out a scheme for that which will eventually change its name to "The Voice" if I ever do it.[1] Then edited "In the Dark"[2] preparatory to turning it over to Jones & so on until Mordell came—no dinner because I did not want to eat.

The fair Mordell is as dull as usual—none duller—a dusty, fumbling, halting soul, who sees visions of something better than he can ever do. He finally went at 11:30 but only after I took him over to a restaurant & bought him a few beers. This A.M. I called on Mrs. D-[3] who will not say what she will do yet. Delivered "The Spring Recital" & "The Light in the Window" to Harpers Weekly,[4] had my glasses fixed & new lenses put in & breakfasted at 11:30 at Grand Central Station. Have a scheme to see Veireck

and make a deal with him for The International which I presume he will refuse.[5]

And in between I've thought about you most of the time—how you slept, felt and what you were planning to do. I certainly hope everything for you for I believe you have a future. As far as I am concerned I am going to work to consolidate my reputation in some way that it will yield me a real revenue. How that is to be I don't know.

It's fair here today, Kiddie, but cold. Last night I missed you much & the bed was not warm enough without you. I never noticed that before in my life. Am already looking forward to the time when I will come out there or you will come back here. The house is as clean & still as an empty studio.

So much love
Your Lover

Enclosed are all the letters you wanted.

[1] Dreiser refers to his play *The Voice*. In this brief drama, a woman, grieving for a dead lover, marries another man but cannot forget her dead love, who appears as an objectification of her conscience to force her to choose which lover to remain faithful to. The play remained in manuscript until it was collected in Newlin, Rusch, and Davies, *Plays*.

[2] Dreiser's play *In the Dark* depicts the melodrama of guilt and vengeance as a murderer is pursued by spirits and demons. It had just been published in *Smart Set* 45 (Jan. 1915): 412–25, and Dreiser was preparing copy for J. Jefferson Jones (1880–1941), vice president of the New York branch of the John Lane Co., which would include it in *Plays of the Natural and Supernatural* (1916).

[3] Sara White Dreiser. At this time, the two were negotiating about whether to divorce. The issue was complicated: according to New York laws at the time, adultery while living together was the only grounds for divorce, and if Sara Dreiser refused to grant a divorce, there was little Dreiser could do about it.

[4] Neither play was published in *Harper's Weekly*. *The Spring Recital*, which portrays an organist playing for various human and spectral entities, was published in the *Little Review* 2 (Dec. 1915): 28–35; *The*

Light in The Window, which depicts the poor's images of the wealthy through a kaleidoscopic montage, was published in the *International* 10 (Jan. 1916): 6–8, 32. Both were then collected in *Plays of the Natural and Supernatural*.

[5] George Sylvester Viereck, the editor of the *International*. See also Dreiser to Markham, 20 April 1914, letter 176.

205. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 9, 1915

Dearest Beloved

I wonder how you are and what you are doing. I wonder how I am going to live away from you, and living away from you, how I am going to stand this deadly domestic atmosphere.

The feeling that I had at Christmas time of giving all possible time to Father is not going to run me this time. I shall give him all the time I possibly can without submitting myself to the atmosphere that invades this house—not Father's atmosphere, but that of a rather sweet, stupid aunt for whom I care a little, an uncle who is cracked, and a darned fool besides, for whom I care nothing at all, and a cousin who is only a fair example of the average Jewish business man, and a fop. These make the house at which Father and Bob are boarding, at the same time that they pay the rent and the table.

When I reached town Father met me and we rushed over to the Illinois Central to see Mother off for Rockford, she having been in town two or three days. Then we collected Bob, and so home. Dinner was, to say the least, deadly, and after dinner Bob went skating, Sigmund[1] went to the fashion show, and Father, the aunt and uncle, and I sat around drawing pictures on the tablecloth with our fingernails and trying to be interesting to each other. Father must then have music, and having no songs here I must needs do that serenade Mrs. B sang the night Justus Sheffield[2] brought her down.

Sweetheart, I wish I never had to play in Chicago. This is infinitely more offensive than a hotel, for I am never free. Aunt Fannie[3] thought Bob ought to take me to and from the theatre all

the time, but I quelled that. I love you, baby. When I get to working and other people know I am in town I won't be whiny. Though I will be lonesome. I love you, dear. Be my goody heart and write me nicey letters. My adorable one!

[1] Probably Frank Sigmund Hyman (1865–1936), the brother of Markham's father.
[2] Justus Sheffield (1868–1968) was a lawyer who was active with the Liberal Club dramatic group and, later, with the Provincetown Players.
[3] Fannie (b. 1855), the sister of Markham's father.

206. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Feb. 10—1915

Honey Sweet:

This is just a note before going out to breakfast to say that the contract has not arrived yet.[1] Mame called up on phone just now & wants me help her hunt a house, which I won't. Mabel Herbert Urner[2] writes to invite me to dinner but I won't go. She is a sort of 3rd rate Ella Wheeler Wilcox.[3] This letter came from Medical Review of Reviews.[4] Please return it. I hope you find everything pleasing to you. I love you very much. Write soon.

L—

It is cold & bright here now,—very.

[1] The contract for *The "Genius,"* which John Lane would publish 1 October 1915.
[2] Mabel Herbert Urner (1881–1957) lived at Gramercy Park with her husband Lathrop C. Harper and, beginning in 1914, wrote a syndicated column, "The Married Life of Helen and Warren," based on her life with her husband.
[3] Ella Wheeler Wilcox (1850–1919), known for her sentimental and optimistic poetry, whose best-known work today is probably "Solitude" (1883), the opening lines of which read: "Laugh, and the world laughs with you; / Weep, and you weep alone."

[4] The letter, dated 9 February, by William Darrach, a noted New York orthopedic surgeon, reads:

"Miss Kirah Markham—

What would your attitude have been had it proved to be syphilis & I had neglected to take the precautions I did? Your symptoms suggested it strongly & your story did not make it impossible.

Had I considered the charge unfair I should hardly have sent you the bill."

207. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 10, 1915

Sweetheart Precious Angel Child

How I did long to hear from you today! Late this afternoon, already late for dinner, I rushed to the theatre to see if there was any word from you, but none had come. I think perhaps it would be better to send my mail to me here at the house instead of to the theatre. It has been a very uneventful day. I spent the morning loafing around here, and about noon arrived at Bissell's office.[1] On the train going down were Bess and her husband,[2] and we had a good little visit. They are going out of town for a few days but will be back soon. Bissell was not in when I arrived, so, as the Little Theatre is on the same floor, I went there. There was a rehearsal of the puppet show going on,[3] and I was admitted. Sitting ears-under in a great fur coat was Jack,[4] and he all but fell on my neck for word from you. I delivered my message as well as I could, and he beamed. It seems he has talked nothing but Theodore Dreiser since he arrived. Don is hoping that he will give his lecture on you next year, when he comes again. When I finally found Mr. Bissell I was informed that Alice in Wonderland had been so delayed in going on that I would not be called to rehearse until Monday. And all this precious week that I might have had with my lover gone! Wasted! I went to luncheon with Dad and then spent the afternoon at the hairdresser's getting my head scrubbed. Home in time for dinner and a nice little family dinner without all the rest—just I and Father and Bob at the table. After dinner Dad and I went to see some very bad movies, and so home, to sing a little, eat a little more, and so to bed.

Last night, having nothing more recent to enjoy, I got out your letters to me at Christmas time. Oh, baby, baby, if work doesn't start soon I think I shall be ill with longing for you. I feel physically disembowelled away from you, mentally adrift, alone, exiled. Do you love me, sweetheart? Are you already missing me a little bit? I adore you. This is all going to be so empty without you here. I wish you could come. I would give the world and all to have you here before the opening. Precious child, my darling! I am sitting up in bed as I write you. Already the misery of lying down and turning out the light, above all of trying to go to sleep without any warm, protecting, loving arm creeping about me whenever I don't clamor for it, and sometimes when I do. Oh, sleep well, my precious. Dream of me. I love you, love you.

[1] Arthur Bissell (1870–1934), of the Bissell-Weisert Piano Company, was a supporter of the art theater movement and a member of the Executive Committee of the Chicago Theatre Society from 1911 until it dissolved in 1913. At the time of this letter, he and heiress Aline Barnsdall (1882–1946), as the Players Producing Company, were staging *Alice in Wonderland*, by Alice Gerstenberg, which would open at the Fine arts Theatre on 11 February 1915.

[2] Elizabeth Goodrich and Charles Colby Reckitt.

[3] During the summer of 1914, Maurice Browne and Ellen Van Volkenberg had visited a puppet theater in Germany and were inspired to put on a series of puppet shows for children, beginning 20 February 1915 with *The Deluded Dragon*, an adaptation of Japanese legend in Lafcadio Hearn's *Glimpses of Unfamiliar Japan*.

[4] John Cowper Powys, who was now lecturing in the Fine Arts Building.

208. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 10, 1915

Dearest Heart of Hearts

My first letter came today, and whereas most all my loneliness had been an ache now it is a pain. Somehow I find it is more or less detached when I am first away from you, but the first word congeals it into a part of me. Tonight it is not my lover but a part

of myself that is missing and afar. I love myself—that part of myself—beyond all description. The very suggestion of your being able to come out here thrills me so that I want it to happen right away. Only I wish you could come right here to Father's house. It would be so nice. So truly nice. We would be under no obligations to spend any time here at all. I wish you were going to be here at the opening of my play.

Today has been a crazy, full day. I sewed all morning and rushed downtown to lunch with Uncle Maxie,[1] arriving five minutes late and finding them gone without even leaving word about where they were going. I then went to the Cornish plays of Mrs. Havelock Ellis at the Little Theatre.[2] They were well acted but amounted to very little, I would say. Father is going out to dinner tomorrow night, and so I called up Mr. Bogardus and told him when he asked if he was going to see me soon, that I was devoting all my time to Papa while I was still free of rehearsals, but that Papa was busy on Friday night. So I am going to dinner with him and I suppose he will suggest the theatre afterwards.

[1] Max Holzheimer. See Hyman to Dreiser, 9 May 1913, n. 2, letter 71.

[2] Edith Havelock Ellis (1861–1916) was married to Havelock Ellis (1859–1939), a noted eugenicist and sex researcher whose seven-volume series *Studies in the Psychology of Sex* (1897–1928) became quite influential. Mrs. Havelock Ellis (the name she preferred) was the author of *The Mothers, The Pixy*, and *The Subjection of Kezia* (collected as *Love in Danger: Three Plays*, 1915), which opened at the Chicago Little Theatre on 2 February 1915.

209. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Feb 11—1915

Honey Sweet:

Your first letter mailed at Ft. Wayne came today & I was might glad to get it. The first great depression over your absence is partly gone but your letters are not going to be any the less welcome.

Mame called yesterday afternoon & sat & talked. She seems to be feeling fine & is bent on taking a house up at 104th & West End Ave which she has just found & wants me to go see it. She was so enthused over your new engagement & took two pictures of you away with her—two of those just returned by Miss La Vergue—hell to her soul. Also yesterday I breakfasted at Gallups[1] & encountered nearly half the village it seemed to me. I recognized six & sat at the table with young Booth.[2] Gallup has begun to nod these days, which is quite a concession. Yesterday I went down to Harpers to see about that alleged sale of 15000 copies of The Financier which Major Leigh[3] wrote me about last summer. They now say it is only 12,000 & not due until Aug 1—next. I am wondering if they doctor their books. Lastly I met Jig Cooke[4] last night who asked after you.

Am working very hard these days, writing quite all day long. The silence here is so great that the clock sounds like a drum at times. Last night it began to get warmer & today it is being pleasant. I got some turpentine this A.M. & one of these days am going to revarnish the back room in part.

What news, I wonder, with you. Isadora Duncan is out with a statement that America is a wretched place for artists and that she is going to Italy soon.[5] No word from Mrs. Drey nor anyone else. I am trying to work out an article on Illusion which I hope to sell quickly. Meantime I am wishing you were here or I out there. Do let me know all that happens and write me every day.

Lovingly
L

[1] Patrick Henry Gallup (1861–1917) operated a restaurant at 70 Greenwich Avenue, which was a popular gathering place for the artistic folk of Greenwich Village.

[2] Franklin Booth.

[3] Frederick T. Leigh of Harper's. Leigh had been a major in the Signal Corps of the New York National Guard and saw service in Cuba in 1898.

[4] George Cram Cook (1873–1924), which Dreiser would habitually misspell as "Cooke," known as "Jig," theater director, writer, actor.

Cook had left Chicago to become the New York correspondent for the *Friday Literary Review* and in 1913 married Susan Glaspell (1876–1948), journalist, novelist, and playwright, whose play *Alison's House* won the Pulitzer Prize in 1931. During the summer of 1915 the two would form the Provincetown Players.

[5] In an interview with the *New York Evening World*, Duncan averred, "No art will be possible in America . . . until the Government wakes up to the fact that beauty is not an accident, but the revelation of Divine Truth" and that music and poetry should be for the masses and not reserved for the privileged (Marguerite Moore Marshall, "Poor Are Hungry, Says Isadora Duncan, But Rich Clique Bars Home-Made Genius," *New York Evening World*, 9 Feb. 1915: 3.

210. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 13, 1915

Sweetheart Baby

Valentine's greetings! I Love you, love you, love you, and you know it. I wish it were I that was coming to you tomorrow. Francis Buzzell is coming, but I cannot send him as a Valentine, though in his eager pathetic way he did so want to be the bearer of one from me to you. Yesterday we sat in Miriam's studio and he picked out an envelope about twelve by eighteen inches in which he wanted me to put a scrap of poems or a sketch on a piece of paper big as a calling card. I tried desperately, but finally gave up in despair. You have my whole heart and this letter coming on Valentine's day will be a sufficient reminder.

You know, I am most distressed and annoyed at Jack, not because he has fallen in love but because he has fallen in love with so trivial a person as this Winifred Taylor.[1] Jack told Miriam he likes corpses and he thinks she is a corpse. She is almost as tall as I and weighs 108 pounds. We have fun together, but she is nothing. She is dreadfully conscious of her body and continually is making eyes or looking around quickly to try and catch you looking at her. She is a cold little thing, and not thinking Jack ultimately big, and also not sufficiently in love with him, she holds him off. But Miriam says he is wild about her and sends her elaborate and wonderful gifts all the time. Last night she sat here in Miriam's

room and demonstrated that the reason she wore cotton under her dress was not Miriam's reason that her breasts were too small but because her nipples stuck out like warts. It was too funny. I never saw anything funnier.

Well, Valentine baby, do you love me? I love juice. I do, I do. I wish you could come to me. I am lonely, lonely, lonely. Write me nice long letters. All I got yesterday was that wee bit of a dear note written before going to breakfast on Wednesday. You should have had a letter from me by then. Write to me, baby-heart. And love your loving

Cryhon

[1] Winifred Taylor (1893–1942), an actress at the Chicago Little Theatre. Despite the wooing of the married Powys, Taylor married Knowles Entriken, a fellow cast member, on 12 April 1916. In contrast to Markham's bleak assessment of Taylor's attraction, Maurice Browne remembered that "The theatre was famous for its beautiful girls. Winifred was the most beautiful of them all, an ash-blonde with cameo-chiselled features" (*Too Late to Lament* [Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1956], 150).

211. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 14, 1915

Dearie Minie

I want my Theodore, I do. I'm a lonesome chile, I are! I want to be kissed and petted and to kiss and to pet in return, even to the point of being begged to let you alone. Precious-angel-child-heart's-treasure. Oh, honey, I'm so miserably lonely. I have been studying hard here in Miriam's room all afternoon. Once I got very tired of work and going to knock at Winifred's door was answered by Jack. She was lying on the couch robed in white, and they had been collaborating on his book, he said. It was funny, but he seemed to be quite unimportant in the light of a suitor at the feet of so trivial a person. She is so obvious, so artfully seductive. Miriam says she never entertains a man but what she lies on the

couch as alluringly as possible—and never goes near the couch on any other occasion. Jack, in an affectionate way, said: "Oh, you would appreciate Theodore," and I felt like saying "The devil she would!" He takes the most elaborate poses in sitting beside her, and Winifred Cutting[1] says that she went in one day (being possessed of her own key) to find him on his knees in front of her as she sat in her chair. But enough of them. I can tell you nothing of Jack for he is too absorbed.

Yesterday, after an elaborate and lovely luncheon with Father and Uncle Maxi, I stopped at the Little Theatre to greet a few people. Among them were Mrs. Havelock Ellis, a funny little thing with short hair, fat, who wanted to know how I liked the second play, and I lied like a Trojan woman. I spent all afternoon studying here in Miriam's quiet studio, and went home in time to have a bath before dinner. At dinner Uncle Mose monopolized the conversation, and Miriam phoned me shortly that she was at her mother's and I should come there and we would go home together.

Write me, baby mine. I love you so and miss you. Think of me when you are falling asleep, and I should so love to be snuggling into the curve of your body or feel you in the curve of mine. I would not wait tonight if you turned your back, if only I could have you at all.

[1] Winifred Cutting (1890–1939), an actress at the Chicago Little Theatre.

212. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Feb. 16—1915

Honey Kid:

Last night I went around to Paula Holladays[1] because it was raining pitchforks & encountered the Nordfelts, Lawrence Langner[2] & others. Langner had just read "Laughing Gas" and wanted to produce it (!) at the Band Box. He has some scheme for its staging which he wanted to talk about but I told him to submit in

writing so that we could go over it together. He wanted me to say then that I would permit its production but I refused until I had seen his outline.

Again the Nordis hadn't forgotten that talk about the New River in West Va & wanted us to do a months walking there, in April. He wants me to write a book for which he will make charcoal sketches as he goes.[3] He wanted me to see if I could place some papers from it serially with his sketches & divide with him so as to cover expenses, though he was anxious to go, expenses or no. I don't know whether it can be done but will look into it.

Buzzell called on them early Sunday morning so they said and enraged them even more than customarily he does me. They insist he intrudes himself on them against their wishes & that he & Mrs. B-[4] did the same thing in Chicago. Dell loaned them one of Nordis pictures which action he resented greatly & demanded it back. Then it came C.O.D. & that enraged him more. Altogether Francis got a frosty reception but non-abashed insisted that he would call again. He even offered to buy a picture which offer Nordi rejected.

Among others who were there at the next table were Jig Cooke, Helen Westley,[5] Tobey,[6] Young Booth & others—the same old crowd. Arthur Cotton joined me and argued with me for an hour over plays when I really didn't want to argue at all. He strikes me as a very strange character. Buzzell had been to the restaurant & club & told everyone he had seen you apparently for they all knew.

Well, how are things by now? I am feeling strangely groggy these last few days—almost malarial. My muscles are stiff & my brain heavy. I'm going to dose up on quinine. I am glad you are being amused, as you appear to be by one thing & another. Your accounts of Powys & his love tickle me. I can see him playing the adorer & probably being underestimated. No doubt the ladys conscious or unconscious artificiality is the very thing that charms him. I confess that [I] like to see a woman pose a little—if she has any charms wherewith to pose. When it gets too obvious however, I weaken. I say here, & you know I mean it, that you are the most graceful & artistic thing I ever saw. I never mind your posing.

I even wish at times that you would do more of it & be more self conscious. Bad advice no doubt but it is my inner mood.

Last night I got home at 11 & read until 12—when I fell asleep in my chair only to wake & find the fire low. Old Ceaser Borgia[7] was my book but Mr. Sabbatini makes him pure and refined that I can scarcely endure him. There isn't a thing that has been said about the Borgias that he doesn't either deny or modify or apologize for. Where there was so much smoke there must have been some fire, I am sure.

But enough of him. I keep wondering when I shall see my kiddie again—my romping, harum-scarum actress girl. I yelled yesterday over your saying that you felt disembowelled. What a condition of feeling. Lots of love sweetie & when I get you again—oh me, oh my. I can only go a few days before I began to think of all the lovely physical things we have done & will do.

L—

[1] Paula Holladay (1890–1967) operated Polly's Restaurant, located in the basement of the Liberal Club at 137 MacDougal Street. It was a popular gathering spot for residents of Greenwich Village and is mentioned in nearly all memoirs of the time, often with alternative spellings of her name: Polly, Holiday, Holliday

[2] Lawrence Langner (1890–1962), Welsh-born patent lawyer, playwright, and producer. At the time of this letter, he (with bookstore owner Albert Boni and feminist Ida Rauh) was in the process of founding the Washington Square Players, modeled upon the Chicago Little Theatre, and would stage its first bill of three one-act plays at the Bandbox Theater on 19 February 1915. Although the Players would stage *The Girl in the Coffin* on 3 December 1917, it did not produce *Laughing Gas*—which would receive its only production on 7 December 1916 by the Little Theater Society of Indiana. Langner later would become one of the founders of the Theatre Guild, one of the most influential American theater organizations.

[3] Although Dreiser did not take up Nordfeldt's idea, he did respond to a similar scheme, with Franklin Booth from 11 to 27 August 1915—by automobile, not walking—publishing the result as *A Hoosier Holiday* (1916).

[4] That is, Francis Buzzell's wife, Miriam Kiper.

[5] Helen Westley (1875–1942), then at the beginning of her distinguished career on stage and screen, was one of the founders of the Washington Square Players and would perform in its first bill of plays as the Oyster in the farce *Another Interior*. See Dreiser to Markham, 21 Feb. 1915, letter 217.

[6] Berkeley Tobey (1881–1962), at this time managing editor of the *Masses*, was also known for his serial marriages (eight of them), most in an effort to gain U.S. residency for his spouses; his last wife was Esther McCoy (m. 1941), who met Dreiser in 1924 and became his research assistant.

[7] *The Life of Cesare Borgia* (1912), by Rafael Sabatini (1875–1950).

213. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Feb 17th—1915

Honey Girl:

The irrepressible Buzzell showed up today with such news as he had—all old because of your letters. He has been dusting about the village visiting all and sundry and complained that there life was shabby. I entertained him as best I could, which wasn't very well, for he bores me terribly, but by so doing let myself in for a second visit, for he wants to bring his magazine story to me, in order that I may read it! Was there ever such an irrepressible dunce.

No particular news as yet save that the editor of the Red Book[1] is in town and considering The "Genius". Have an invitation to go to the Greans (friends of the Samuels family[2]) to dinner and will go. Have been working all day long for a decent start on The Bulwark & think I have it but never can be sure until I am a number of chapters deep. Your letter today told of Masters having pneumonia which surprises me much. I wish you would go & look him up & tell him I hope he gets better.

Finished Ceaser Borgia last night. It's only a fair book. I thought Sabatini would do better. He has written of St. Francis & Torquemada,[3] as you know. I would like [to] look into his Torquemada.

It's nice and bright here today & spring like which I hope keeps up. Our plumbers after taking all measurements Monday have departed & not returned. I suppose they will soon. Mame has about fixed on an apartment in 104th Street & Mrs D- continues her silence.[4] So there you are. As for me I think of you all the time & wish you were here. Expect if I get any money at all from any source to come out & join you. Are you being a good girl & do you really love me. I always wonder who you are with now & what you are doing. With so much love—

L—

How was your lunch with Risen.

[1] Ray Long.

[2] Mitchell Samuels (1880–1959) in 1907 co-founded French & Company, one of the largest art dealerships in the world. According to Dreiser's correspondence files and his diaries, Mitchell's wife, Clara (1890–1977), initiated most of the social activities. Dreiser probably met the Samuels family through his friends the Rosenthals—Clara Samuels was the niece of Emma Rosenthal, the wife of Elias, who provided Dreiser with a place to live in 1910. See Dreiser to Hyman, 5 May 1913, n. 1, letter 61.

[3] *Torquemada and the Spanish Inquisition: A History* (1912).

[4] That is, Sara Dreiser. Of immediate concern for Dreiser was how to manage his finances. With little money coming in and support for Sara on-going, the need for a divorce was pressing, though Dreiser obtained some relief by ceasing support payments. In an undated memorandum, effective 1 February 1915, Sara had agreed on financial terms for their separation, freeing Dreiser from further monetary compensation for a term of eighteen months (for the terms, see Swanberg, *Dreiser*, 186).

214. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Thursday—Feb. 18—1915

Sweetie mine:

I don't need to tell you that I'm missing you very much tonight. You know it. Buzzell has just departed after leaving

his story and he didn't amuse me much though his story isn't half bad—quite a trifle. Young Lyas called this P.M. to sit & talk awhile but no one else & tonight I am going over to Paula Holladays and then right back & to bed for I've had a hard writing day. Wish you were here to go to bed with me. Just now your Tuesdays letter telling of your first rehearsal came. You don't say whether it went well or not but I trust well. I really know you couldn't do a strong part poorly. I do hope it turns out a success. Buzzell said tonight that he was anxious to be there when it goes on.

When a person is writing as I am trying to do now there isn't much news to tell. I am having the tussle of my life to get a suitable opening for this yarn but when I do I think it is going to be a good one.[1] Haven't arranged any deal with Lane yet but expect to get $50 a month anyhow which would carry me personally for a little while. Other things are pending but not completed.

Honey Kid, since I've had you I realize that there is nothing to the single state. Two people can make a world for themselves but one never, & to make the thing fit and proper there ought to be three or four children. I see it all now & if luck favors us we'll come out all ok—yet.

I varnished the back room floor this A.M. early with a very thin coat of varnish which dried very quickly & it looks fine. The front room comes next—sometime. No place ever looked more charming for the money.

Lovingly
T—

[1] Dreiser is at work on a draft of his uncompleted novel *The Rake*, which he began on 14 January 1915. After writing a Prologue and drafts of five chapters, he abandoned the project. See Donald Pizer, *The Novels of Theodore Dreiser: A Critical Study* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1976), 205–07; 364 n. 10. See also Dreiser to Hyman, 7 May 1913, n. 2, letter 64.

215. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Feb 19—1915

Honey One:

Whats become of my kids letter. The bell rang just now and brought more clippings and a renewal by The Authors League of America[1] of its request to join—this time signed by four members—but no letter from you. And really the only thing I care about is the mail. I've had you with me in spirit all day for I've been up to the old book stores in 59th Street—those about our old studio in 59th near Madison first and later that one near 9th Ave and then one in 42nd near 9th & then that one in West 23rd Street. I was looking for Pere Goriot, Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker (since the Bulwark is a quaker) and Vandover & the Brute.[2] As I rummaged around I thought of our various expeditions & Crygorns delight in books. I would have given anything to have had you hanging on my arm. (Didn't I tell you the moment you got away I'd begin to appreciate you at your full value. Won't you forgive me all my bad hours when you were here?)

A funny thing. As I was coming down 8th Ave from 59th on the car, thinking where I might find Pere Goriot cheap—wondering if I should have to go down to Cortlandt Street, I passed a moving picture place, just below 42nd (I had only ridden a block from 42nd) when I saw a moving sign "Pere Goriot Today." I jumped off and went in and in two minutes a two reel film started which refreshed my memory greatly. It was badly done (in America-Biograph) & the man who played the father overplayed it, but the general idea was well enough.[3] (How is it we cannot do a classic in any form?) I came out, met a cross-eyed kid & soon found Hugh Wynne & Pere Goriot—price 35 cents each. I've been going over them ever since.

Mrs. White cleaned today & gave the floor a good polishing so that the rooms look as bright & fresh as we could wish. She asked after you & wanted to know if you weren't coming home soon to

which I replied "no, worse luck in so far as I knew." She offered to do some mending but I know of nothing to mend just now.

It's still bright & fair outside. I get a mild desire to go out into the country every few hours with you. I saw a steamship add today which read "Bermuda & back, 25^{00}. 48 hours on the water each way" and having read & known before that one can get simple accommodations for $12 a week per person I wished immediately that we could go there. A week or so ambling about in that sunny world would be such fun.

Well I'm wondering now how your stage work is turning out. I'd like you to work at the stage but I do wish I could be close by all the while. This separation business doesn't please me at all. I'm not uncomfortable at all—physically—nor neglected in so far as people are concerned but just unhappy—like I was in Europe—surrounded by friends all the time but still unhappy.

There is no news. The bell rang twice today & I didn't even answer. Saw the Village Christ at Pa Gallups[4] the A.M. and some girl from the Liberal Club standing inside Cushmans bakery[5] as I passed this P.M. but nothing more. Am invited to an Authors League dinner next week which I think I will attend.

Do you love me much? And how are you behaving? If you act up when I am so pathetically faithful I'll sure have grounds for a divorce.

So much love
L—

Did you wash your teeth this A.M.?[6]

[1] The Authors League of America (now the Authors Guild) was founded in December 1912 with four goals: to attain adequate domestic and international copyright legislation, to protect the rights of authors, to advise authors about how best to sell their work with adequate compensation, and to inform authors about their legal rights. In 1916 the League would organize the protest against the suppression of Dreiser's *The "Genius."*

[2] *Père Goriot* (1835) by Honore De Balzac (1799–1850), an important literary influence, which Dreiser had first read in 1894; *Hugh Wynne,*

Free Quaker (1897), historical novel in two volumes set in Philadelphia during the American Revolution, written by S. Weir Mitchell (1829–1914); *Vandover and the Brute* (published posthumously in 1914), by Frank Norris (1870–1902), about an artist's decline and dissolution as the brute within comes to dominate his aspirations.

[3] The Biograph Company was founded in 1895 and was the oldest and most prolific film studio, based in the Bronx, until it closed in 1916. *Père Goriot* was a short, directed by Travers Vale, and starred Edward Cecil (1878–1940) as Goriot in his first film role.

[4] Joe Gould (1869–1957) was a Greenwich Village eccentric nicknamed the "Village Christ" because of his appearance and tendency to issue prophecies. "Pa Gallups": Gallup's Restaurant. See Dreiser to Markham, 11 Feb. 1915, n. 1, letter 209.

[5] Cushman's Bakery, founded in 1854 by Arthur Cushman, stood at the corner of 10th Street and Greenwich Avenue.

[6] Dreiser sketched a running man with the caption, "This is me running to escap & looking back as I go."

216. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Feb. 20—1915

Hey Bill:

No letter this A.M. either. Wots d'matter wit youse? Aintcha got no heart? I certainly expected one this here bright Saturday A.M.—an' me makin' plans to put a speshual delivery stamp on this here so you'd get it Sunday. Your a bird, you are! Say, your a peach! Your a peice a cheese—thats wot you are. Fer a cent—etc etc etc. until you wind up with a nice grape colored black eye.

It's so fine here this morning that if you were here we would surely go for a walk out Dover way or beyond. Now that spring is nearing I am getting restless & want to get out all the time. But I'm so busy doing some reading for my book just now that at the last moment I'd groan a little. But truly today is so fine I think I'd go.

Do you know—the west box of flowers in our front window has never bloomed. They headed up as if certain to & then just quit.

This A.M. came two tickets for the dress rehearsal of Elga at the Garrick and also two tickets for a lecture by Cecil Chesterton[1]—the brother of G. K. at the National Arts. Also a case of beer from V. Loewers (at my request); also a bill from The Corona typewriter people for three months past due it appears—15^{00}—which cheers me a lot. And after that there is ten more. But there is one good thing—it & the stove will soon be done & the piano goes back even though I have to take one from somewhere else. There is a certainty now, too that telephone rates are to be lowered—that is Brooklyn will only be 5 cents—possibly Staten Island—so that we can phone to those places as much as we please. The charge to Jersey will probably be reduced to 10 where it is now 15. The State legislature is often there.

Beyond this no news. Am wishing all the time you could be here to see how nice & bright the rooms look these sunny A.Ms.—think how fine it will be when the window & doors can once more be left open and the flower boxes are out. Wish I knew how well you are doing & how the coming season will treat you. Tonight I go up to the Bandbox to see the Washington Square Players. Good luck to you. I love you much. You would see if you were here. And don't miss anymore days—

L—

[1] Cecil Edward Chesterton (1879–1918), British journalist and editor of the *Witness*, a journal of literature and social comment. Like John Cowper Powys, Chesterton traveled the U.S. on a tour, offering lectures on suffrage, contemporary literature, and the Great War, among other topics. The lecture Chesterton offered on 25 February (see Dreiser's letter of that date) was "The Return to Mediaevalism" at the Catholic Center for the Blind.

217. Dreiser to Markham

Sunday, Feb 21—1915

Honey Kid:

If you ever wished trouble on the fair Ida[1] for her smarty remarks about you, you should have been at the Band Box last night and

seen her try to do Janet Ransom in Licensed.[2] It was pathetic—truly—disturbingly so to me. She can't act at all and everyone within voice carrying distance about me seem to reach the same conclusion. She has no temperament—not a grain. I never really believed that before. Her work was stupid and ungraceful and she spoiled what was otherwise a very good play—Dell to the contrary notwithstanding.

In this Langner surprises me. Really his Licensed is a fine peice of work—fine in idea & fine in treatment, better in my humble judgement than Maeterlincks interior which appeared later on the programme. The stomach play was so trivial that it was scarcely worth listing & only fairly well done. The whole import is in the idea of showing the interior of the human stomach which was slightly interesting because new. "Eugenically Speaking" was Shaw-esque, indeed a frank imitation of Shaw, clever, and only fairly well acted. The Players don't amount to much and the stage coaching is for the most part vile. The settings in the main were good.

All Greenwich Village was on the job. The fair Lucy Huffaker,[3] Sally White, Max Eastman[4] & a half dozen others walking up & down the ailse talking between the acts—greeting old friends. This was equally true of the Strunskeys[5]—that delicate, cleanly company. These many you have seen at Paula Holladays and enough strangers to constitute a full house. Langner, the Boni brothers[6] and Jig Cooke, when not behind the stage were to be found in front of the house hallway. All was joy & mutual congratulation. Some frou-frou poet whose name I have forgotten sat by me & others came & went.

Nevertheless aside from the fair Ida it was a creditable show—much better than I expected. The general tendency was to belittle Langners play which was much better than the others. I think Ida Rauh inflicted herself on him because he is good natured. In your hands that little play would have been a sensation & you would have been lovely, though a lay figure (as they all were) in "Interior". A howling farce was made of the opening of Licensed by reason of the fact that the curtains parted on the corpse still arranged [in] his cerements & the fair Ida just sinking to her knees. They you could hear her lying there calling "I won't go on, Bob" (or some such name) I won't go on. Finally after waiting say 40 seconds

she looked up and in a nasty temper kept calling "close the curtains please". After 30 seconds this was done, the house tittering & twisting and then after ten minutes more the curtains opened again. It was wretched management. Saw quite a number after the show all of whom thought it was all very good—save Ida.

This is Sunday & it's glorious out. I want to walk but your not here, so I'll read. Finished Hugh Wynne & am reading "Vandover & the Brute." Going out with Jones tonight to dinner but will write again today maybe, or first thing A.M. Love you so much. Thanks for the book cover. I'll give that to Jones. It's fine.

L—

Buzzell was here yesterday, got his century & departed. He had seen Ida Rauh the night before & had reached the same conclusion—that she can't act.

[1] Ida Rauh (1877–1970), feminist, actress, sculptor, and poet, was married to the editor Max Eastman and helped found the Provincetown Players later in 1915. At the time of this letter she was acting with the Washington Square Players in their first season of plays. Despite Dreiser's negative assessment of her acting, Rauh became a prominent and influential actress, performing more than any other member of the Provincetown Players, with Jane Heap calling her "the Duse of Macdougal Street" and *Current Opinion* describing her as "'an experimental Bernhardt' who 'brings keen intelligence to the interpretation of her parts'" (qtd. in Cheryl Black, *The Women of Provincetown, 1915–1922* [Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2002], 88).

[2] *Licensed*, by Basil Lawrence (pseudonym for Lawrence Langner), played at the Bandbox Theatre from 19 February to 30 May 1915. Rauh was in the role of Janet Ransome, a pregnant woman whose fiancé died before the marriage ceremony, with the plot concerned with persuading the minister to sign the marriage certificate so the baby will be born legitimately and the mother not become the subject of gossip. Other plays on the bill were *Eugenically Speaking*, by Edward Goodman; *Interior*, by Maurice Maeterlinck; and *Another Interior*, by Murdock Pemberton, an allegory in pantomime taking place in a man's stomach.

[3] Lucy Huffaker (1876–1957), journalist and publicity manager for the Washington Square Players, would later act with the Provincetown

Players, beginning in the role of Mabel in *Suppressed Desires* in its debut in July 1915.

[4] Max Eastman (1883–1969), writer, socialist, and editor of the *Masses*.

[5] Simeon Strunsky (1879–1948), literary editor of the *New York Evening Post* until 1920, and then writer for the *New York Times*, from 1924 until his death. Anna Strunsky (1877–1964), social, writer, and co-author, with Jack London, of the *Kempton-Wace Letters* (1903), married socialist writer William English Walling (1877–1936) in 1906. The two Strunsky cousins and Walling were active in the Liberal Club at the time of this letter.

[6] Albert Boni (1892–1981) and Charles Boni (1894–1969) cofounded the Washington Square Bookshop in 1913, located next door to the Liberal Club at 135 MacDougal Street, and it became a popular gathering place for Greenwich Villagers. The Bonis sold the bookstore to Frank Shay in 1915, and in 1917 Albert Boni became a partner with Horace Liveright, and Boni & Liveright soon became an important publisher of modernist authors, including Dreiser, beginning with *Free and Other Stories* in 1918.

218. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Feb 22nd 1915.

Sweet Old Bill:

I had three letters from you this A.M. all in one full swoop—one a special delivery that should have come yesterday but I was out. The little photo that was in one is you at the age of 2—or thereabouts. If so you were one sweet kid. I don't see any traces of the present Lyhon Cryhon, unless it is that supreme alertness which marks you to this day. This child has a wide-eyed curiosity which suggests you. If we could have such a kid as you were I'd be delighted.

Along with your letters came one from Jack Powys say[ing] he was out of town but would be back Thursday A.M. & wanting me to come over there to dinner. I'll go or invite him over here instead. Also tonight is the first dress rehearsal of "Elga" at

the Garrick & since I have two seats I'll dig up somebody—Mrs. Drey I think—and go. I'd like to see how well Reicher does things. Again Wednesday night I'm going to have Amick & some of his fellow illustrators over here. It's the only way I know how to pass the time.

Honey Kid, I'm so glad the rehearsals are going to suit you. It's a comfort to find yourself a suitable working atmosphere, I'll bet. I only wish I were out there with you. I wouldn't mind Don or his wife.[1] Necessarily they resent your success or opinions. They can't help it. But you have more true art in your little finger than the two of them put together. I am positive of it. And time is going to justify you all around—so easily after but that the only task will be holding yourself up to your own standards. Your too big to care what they think in the last analysis—so why worry in passing. Think of all the slams I have—sneers & jibes.

But I'm glad your getting along & am doing my best to straighten things out here so we can get along better. Offered Mrs. D-[2] the furniture & piano at 3609—worth all of $1,500 as it stands and the two lots at Grand View—taxed at $600 and therefore conservatively worth $900—for some period of freedom from alimony and a divorce. Her reply is that she will free me from any payments to her for one year! I have to laugh. That would be paying her at the rate of $200 per month & at the end of that time I'd have to begin again & no divorce. My proposition now is 2 years freedom & a definite filing of action—or nothing. Now we'll see what comes of it. I'm going to look up some lawyer who will hand this for me. She already has the orchard—worth all of $5,000 as it stands!

Well we'll not worry about that just now. Things will come out alright eventually. What I want to do is to get my novel out & get another one well underway against which I can draw and then—without any alimony to pay her we can live—and if you strike it we can live very well & put a little aside for bad weather or our own theatre—which would be good weather—wouldn't it?

Am reading very hard just now to freshen up. Find I have been writing so long & so steadily that I am going stale & this reading

of current & neglected books is brightening me up. When you see me next I will have waded through twenty or twenty five above-the-average books.

But how I do miss my kid. Every night I wish I had you close—just to hang on to. Life seems easier to bear that way. I often think of that line of yours in "The Weavers" which runs "But we're holding hands together."[3] I so like you sweety kid—my art and heart girl. I'll have to stop now & get to work on other things but I love you all you want me to love you & wish you were here. Remember the evening in Phila we went in the country—that lovely spring evening & found the "blood root." Such weather will soon be here. Didn't we have a nice time in Philly?

L—

[1] That is, Maurice Browne and Ellen Van Volkenberg Bowne.

[2] Sara Dreiser. For the financial settlement terms dated 1 Feb. 1915, see Swanberg, *Dreiser*, 186; and Dreiser to Markham, 17 Feb. 1915, n. 4, letter 213.

[3] *The Weavers* (1892), a German play by Gerhart Hauptmann (1862–1946), is about Silesian weavers staging an uprising over the introduction of the power loom. Augustin Duncan and Emanuel Reicher would stage the play at the Garden Theatre on 14 December 1915. Later in December, Markham would take over the role of Mother Hilse. It's not clear what line Dreiser refers to: no character seems to express such a sentiment in the published play, so the line may have been added for the performance.

219. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 22d. [1915]

Dearest Love

I have not yet been to the theatre for mail, but I shall go soon. I practiced most of the morning and then met mother in order to select wall paper. I am now waiting for her to rejoin me here at a junky little restaurant where I imagine that we will get good food, but which is managed by two sharp-faced female who turn my stomach.

Father and I did stay to hear Don lecture last night, and I am so glad I did. He was awfully inspired, and made me feel that I am good for nothing idling my time away here simply because of Father's wanting me under the same roof. I told Don how miserable I felt, and he said come and talk to him today, which I did. We had a bully old talk for about an hour, at the end of which time we decided that it would really hurt Father's feelings if I went downtown and took a room unless you were my reason for so doing. So we thought that if you came on I would have a good excuse for leaving, and at the same time, since I am so unhappy out there, I ought to leave anyhow. That would mean paying for a room whether you are with me or not, so I figure that if you could get your railroad fare we would live just as cheaply together as apart. More so, I figure, baby, for we divide our food so that if I took meat and you took fish we could share and not each need both. How's that for a mathematical mind? I wish you would come. I should love to think that we could save up enough money to go to Bermuda. Wouldn't it be heaven? Dearest, all the beautiful spring weather is gone, and though it is warm it drizzles sickeningly. No more thought of a gorgeous walk now. Only a dream of having you, rain or shine, soon.

220. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Feb. 23rd 1915

Honey Kid:

I went last night to hear "Elga." It was beautiful. I have no words to describe it. You will have to see it for yourself. Hauptmann has done a stunning thing & Reicher has staged it and directed it in such a way that to me it was almost flawless. Of course the fair Hedwig[1] was Elga but she did very well. The man who had the best role & did the best work was John Blair,[2] a splendid actor. But all the others, the stage setting, the minute details, so perfectly looked after gave me a sense of mystic reality that haunted me for

hours. Lord I wish we had a theatre of our own. Such splendid things could be done.

Outside of that there is no news. I kept thinking and am thinking how splendid the role of Elga would be for you. If only the fair Hedwig were out of the way I believe Reicher would see you at once, but never mind, your turn is coming. The trick will be turned in some way. Just keep up your courage & do work hard. When the hour strikes you will be ready.

Hale is in town and coming here at 12:30 to get me to go to lunch. As you see by the enclosed programme Reicher has listed The Girl in the Coffin for April 27—and I still don't know whether I want it done.[3] Isn't it funny. Schemes for plays buzz through my head all the time but I don't do them—worse luck.

But how is my Kiddie—still enduring contentedly. The weather here continues fine—& could almost say that spring has come. Oh for long walks & happy foolish talks. Will write tomorrow. I always feel as though I am sure to write a second letter the same day but I never do—do I? Saw George Jean Nathan & Avery Hopwood & Arthur Hopkins & many others there.[4] The Messrs Shubert & Klaw & Erlanger,[5] if they were present must have realized the scummy things that they are. Ye Gods!—Reicher is one real director. Lets hope the Germans win. They'll make over the world.

Your L—

[1] Hedwig Reicher (1894–1971), also known as Hedwiga, German stage and film actress and daughter of Emanuel Reicher, the director of the play.

[2] Veteran Broadway actor John Blair played the roles of A Monk and Count Starschenski.

[3] Reicher had planned to include *The Girl in the Coffin* for production before Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson's *When the Young Vine Blooms*, which opened on 16 November 1915. Reicher later postponed production until January 1916, but the Modern Stage folded before the play could be staged. See Reicher to Dreiser, 27 Feb. 1915, 9 Aug. 1915 (DPUP).

[4] George Jean Nathan (1882–1958), drama critic and, with H. L. Mencken, co-editor of the *Smart Set* from July 1914 to 1924. Avery Hopwood (1882–1928), playwright known for his comedies, sometimes risqué. Arthur Hopkins (1878–1950), Broadway producer and director who staged notable plays by Eugene O'Neill, Elmer Rice, Philip Barry, and others. In 1917 Hopkins planned to stage Dreiser's *The Hand of the Potter* but negotiations broke down over script changes necessary for the production.

[5] The Shubert brothers (Lee [1871–1953] and Jacob [1879–1963]) made up the Shubert Organization, one of the two dominant theatrical management companies. The other was Klaw and Erlanger, headed by Marc Klaw (1858–1936) and Abraham Lincoln Erlanger (1860–1930), who joined with others in 1906 to form the Theatrical Syndicate.

221. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 23, 1915

Sweetheart Precious

I had a nice voluminous letter today concerning itself most interestingly with the Washington Square Players, but not saying much about loving me. Do you love me very much, and are you really lonesome? I get so dreadfully depressed these days. I act like a fool and inside there is a bottomless pit. What about money? You seem to be going ahead making dates without any idea of ever coming out here. Or do you think it not worth while for so short a time? Opening night will soon be here, but Mr. Gilmore[1] was so pleased after rehearsal today that he said if we had props he would be ready to see us go on tomorrow night. He is awfully nice. Mr. Bissell says undoubtedly this is the biggest thing on the bill and that I will probably (he said undoubtedly) establish myself for all time.

[1] William H. Gilmore was an actor, director, and producer, who worked with Arthur Hopkins and others. He had just produced *Alice in Wonderland* and was now producing *Conscience*.

222. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Wed. Feb. 24—1915

Hey Bill:

I'm very lonely. Isn't that new? Here I sit at 5:30 P.M.—these rooms sweetly lighted and wish you were here. It seems always as if you must be here for this place is redolent of you and the things that you like. And because you made it so nice & because it looks like you and because we've had such delicious hours here together I write or read or dress or go to bed always feeling as though you were lurking about in spirit and as though I might come upon you unawares at any moment. I'd be startled and then I'd be glad but somehow it wouldn't seem very unnatural.

I've been reading "The Turmoil" by Booth Tarkington[1] today—a light weight work but not unamusing. Also I had hours argument with Mrs. D- who flatly refuses to give me a divorce. Whatever will I do? One thing I am going to do,—stop paying (since I haven't any money to pay with) and see what happens. That may bring about a change of spirit although she can get alimony without my getting a divorce. I know that. Still I'm going to try it out. Supposing she does divorce me—then what. Sometimes, you know, I feel sorry for her. She is so almost futily cadgy.

It's raining heavily here today—a dark, gloomy rain. I've had to burn the gas most of the time. Between my reading my mind keeps running out to you as the only one I want to be with. I keep thinking how, if you were here, instead of pushing you away, I would take you now and hold you close. I was never cut out to be a bachelor nor even a promiscuous liver, strange as it may seem. I'd like to settle down somewhere with you and just live in a simple, homey way. It seems silly, but it's true—silly after all the rolling to and fro I've done.

How did you come out on your question of pay during rehearsal. The telegram distinctly promises payment and unless they match

the eastern magnates in their readiness to go back on agreements a mere showing of that ought to adjust everything. I think you ought to demand it & get it. You are working for so little that this additional $100 won't really make a decent salary all told, at that.

The papers here, in spite of my enthusiasm for Elga, have been unfriendly to the Reichers and to John Blair, the leading man. I am sending you the World clipping which is typical.[2] The tenor of the thing causes me to believe there is conspiracy to protect the old line people—or an instinctive resentment of the criticism which this movement and its fruit involves. John Blair does not mouth, and he gave a splendid interpretation of the leading role. Miss Reicher was adequate and the darkening of the theatre in order that the prayers for the dead might be heard between the scenes was an artistic thought far beyond the Shubert-Klaw and Erlanger theory of stage art. Beside Reichers work, the Washington Square Players & most of the better art work I have seen pale into nothing. The man is a poetic producer with an eye of[3] real actors and he ought to succeed and will. I wrote him my compliments today & I mean them.

Sweetness—think of me & work hard & be a fine actress. I want you to succeed so much for I see such a fine future for the two of us together—such dandy things to be done. If I get any money I'll come out to Chicago. If not I'll pine here.

L—

[1] Booth Tarkington (1869–1946), Indiana-born novelist and playwright, among the best-selling writers of his time. Having recently completed two volumes of his own Trilogy of Desire, Dreiser may have especially been interested in reading *The Turmoil* (1915), the first volume of Tarkington's "Growth" trilogy (which included *The Magnificent Ambersons* (1918] and *The Midlander* [1923], dealing with the rise of industrial tycoons in the years between the Civil War and World War I). In *The Turmoil*, Tarkington depicts the economic changes brought on by industrialization through the intertwined stories of two families.

[2] See Charles Darnton, "The New Plays," *New York Evening World*, 24 Feb. 1915: 7. In his review Darnton complained that John Blair, who

played the husband, "stalks through some of the scenes with that stiff restraint he loses only in convincing moments of violence, when his monotonous speech also gives way to human expression." About the lighting, Darton observed regarding Hedwig Reicher's portrayal of Elga: "Because of the dim lighting the play demands it is only at the curtain call after the performance, in the full glow of the footlights, that Miss Reicher's rich beauty is revealed to best advantage."

[3] Dreiser wrote "of" but probably meant "for."

223. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 24, 1915

Dearest Angel Child

Your letter was so wonderful to me. I love you, love you for it, precious boy. I am so glad you liked the picture of little me. It was a part of a group of three, but my dear Aunt Fannie without so much as by your leave took it from Father's closet shelf, cut the single heads apart, and mounted them in her picture book. Wouldn't it be nice to have a little Cryhon? What would we call her? I think Thedia would be lovely and would suggest her father, don't you? Or would you like something else?

224. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Thursday—Feb 25—1915

Honey Crygorn:

I've had all your letters so far, though some of them do get mixed up & come altogether as on last Monday morning when I recieved three—Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays all at one full swoop—and glad I was to get them to. To tell you the truth—your letters are all that I wait for these days—yours & no others. Others come. Today I had quite a rush—one from Pogany,[1] telling me that he had a studio at 69 East 59 & wanting us both to come up Saturday—and he was out in Chicago recently—one from Gertrude[2]

who has got as far west as Calgary!—one from the Martins, bidding me again to dinner, one from an insurance agency telling me that I'm 43—but they'll still take me and one from a Cincinnati admirer wanting my signature—to say nothing of clippings & the St Louis Mirror. So you see.

But your letter is all I really want because I miss you, and if I know your thinking of me I don't miss you quite so much and it makes the day seem shorter & the fact that I am alone much less conspicuous. I'm making good use of my time for I'm catching up on long delayed reading & getting ready to do the Bulwark right—or not at all which is fairly important. I have secured a hundred dollars from the John Lane Co, which straightens things out for the time, seeing that I'm not doing anything for you (or Mrs D-) but I have the hope & the feeling that things must come out right. Started in on "The Turn of the Balance" (Whitlock)[3] after finishing The Turmoil but I am anxious to soak up on general American atmosphere—not always true in most of these books—but still atmosphere of sorts. I feel constantly as though I were doing my mind a very good turn after all my pegging away at my own thoughts and so I feel rather pleased with myself.

I was so glad to see by todays note that you and Browne are on intellectual terms again—friendly & agreeable. I admire him in spite of his eccentricities because of his singleness of mind & he ought to admire you. I was glad to learn that he bears me no grudge. You & I must have given him a real shock there for a while, doing as we did. That he is over it pleases me & if I should get out to Chicago again no doubt we could all sit about & dine & have a fine time.

It pleases me so much to know that your rehearsals are going nicely. That director you spoke of—or stage manager—may do you some good with the Shuberts—though after seeing Elga I despise the whole boot & stove stage so much that I hate to think of your ever being in a trashy Shubert or K & E—or other fully trade stage play. The revolt is on & the big things are going to be done by the outsiders. Would we were in on them.

Tonight—now, as soon as I finish this—I'm going over to the Powys's & after to a Chesterton lecture I think—for which I have seats.[4] I'll hear all the news I can & report. I never called on Mae[5] after you left—or anyone else really. Never do, unless I have hold of your arm I never feel at home in these places. I had a note yesterday inviting me to lunch with Mrs Roberts[6] Saturday but I don't think I'll go. I'm so crazy to go on reading & get done with it that I begrudge most of these interruptions.

But back to you Kiddie is where my thoughts stray & really stay. We have such nice times together that I wish you were here all the time. I think breif separations are good too, for they let us catch the separate outside angle just for a moment and that does good I think. Hale phoned today—3 P.M. wanting me to go over to Jig Cookes & Susan Glaspells to tea but wouldn't go. He was invited & thought I ought to come along just as his friend. He asked after you & sent you his good wishes—said if he got out to Chicago he would look you up.

Well, Kiddie—thats about all for now. No news till tomorrow. But I love you & wish I had you here to take to bed with me. I'd hug a certain kid pretty close before I went to sleep—I know that.

So much love

L—

[1] William Andrew Pogany (known professionally as Willy Pogany, born Vilmos András Feichtmann, 1882–1955), Hungarian book illustrator, best-known for his illustrations of myths and fables.

[2] Gertrude Hopkins Nelson, the daughter of his sister Emma.

[3] Brand Whitlock (1869–1934), attorney, journalist, novelist, Mayor of Toledo from 1906–1914, and U.S. Ambassador to Belgium from 1919–1921. His novel *The Turn of the Balance* (1907) created controversy over its realistic depiction of crime and the inequities of the legal system.

[4] Cecil Chesterton. For Dreiser's response to the lecture, see Dreiser to Markham, 5 March 1915, letter 236.

[5] Emily Marian Powys (1882–1927), the sister of John Cowper Powys, usually referred to as May or Mae in Dreiser's spelling.

[6] Mary Fanton Roberts.

225. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 25, 1915

Sweet one

I made a beautiful fizzle of "War Brides,"[1] I think. The whole programme was a fizzle. First Old Prof. Meade[2] of Boston spoke for peace and though he spoke interestingly he wore the audience out. He promised, for they feared he would take too long, to do it in 30 minutes, and he talked over an hour. The hall was so cold every one was sneezing and freezing. I had a chill, and so did Father. When I finally got up on the platform there was no reading light and the darned old speakers sat behind me. Father says, all things considered, I did as well as I could expect to do, though he realized how artistically I must have hurt myself. But what small consolation! Never again will I do anything in the way of a reading when I feel I am limited to time. How much easier it would have been for Prof. Meade to control his own flow of speech than for me to control some one else's. Finally Mr. Kuhn[3] read "The Five Voices," with piano accompaniment, and then part of "The Wine Press."[4] He did them at his best but it was a highly artificial and stupidly conventional reading, though I am in no position to criticize. When I found what I was doing, saw my audience and my hall, I said never again.

Goodnight and good luck. Laugh with me at my evening's rotten work. Another time I will not waste any time on so unimportant a thing. Sleep, sweetly, blessedest treasure. I wish my arms were about you and yours about me. I should love to lie close, close tonight, and be comforted for my own stupidity.

[1] Suffragist and playwright Marion Craig Wentworth (1872–1942) wrote the one-act play *War Brides* (1915), an anti-war play in which the pregnant protagonist commits suicide rather than be forced to bear a child to fight future wars. The play was published in the February 1915 *Century* and was the subject of dramatic readings across the country, as Markham relates in this letter. The play was a popular success on the stage, with Alla Nazimova as the lead. In 1916 it became a film, with Nazimova starring in her first film

role. Markham's reading was probably at the Fine Arts Building in anticipation of a national peace rally to be held on Saturday, 27 February, at the Hotel La Salle. See "Notables Due at Peace Rally," *Chicago Tribune*, 22 Feb. 1915: 3.

[2] Edwin Doak Mead (1849–1937), author and pacifist, founded and edited *New England Magazine* from 1889–1901 and was the Director of the World Peace Foundation. Mead spoke at a number of venues in the days before the rally on 27 February.

[3] Arthur K. Kuhn (1876–1954), an attorney and Columbia University professor who advocated for international law as a means toward world peace. He attended the Paris Peace conference in 1919 and worked at establishing the League of Nations.

[4] "The Five Voices" is not identified. *The Wine Press: A Tale of War* (1913), is a long anti-war poem by Alfred Noyes (1880–1958), an English poet who was a professor at Princeton from 1914 to 1923.

226. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Friday, Feb. [26][1] 1915

Peaches Girl:

How are juice? I've been thinking over what you said in your letter this A.M. about my letters seeming cold. I don't see how that can be for I never sat down to write you yet that I haven't been eager to do it and never once but what I felt somehow as though I were talking to you close at hand and as though we were in the most affectionate mood—as we almost invariably are—anyhow. I miss you all the time and if I haven't spoken of loving you physically as well as mentally—or spiritually—it's because I've rather avoided it for some reason. Many a time I've felt as though I'd like to get you close and cuddle & bite you and tell you the so-called naughty things that I think, but I just haven't. Your mine so much that I sometimes feel that you know that I know that you know all that I am thinking of saying before I say it. But that doesn't help you out there, does it—if you want to hear me say it. Eh, Sweetie, Honey, the only reason I don't close this place up & come to Chicago is money. You say

I go on making engagements & not thinking of coming. You know how much money I had when you left. Immediately I find a gas bill, a stove bill (4^{00}) a coal bill—7^{00}, a typewriter bill—15^{00} and a telephone bill—3^{00}. Ahead of me is the rent—Mch 1—25^{00}, two months piano dues $14—my old dental bill 12^{00} and the various bills for next month—telephone, piano, rent etc. In addition I have to live & if I hadn't got the hundred from Lane I would now be ten or fifteen dollars shy of being able to pay the bills I have already paid, to say nothing of those coming—and all that my eating expenses are little or nothing. You just don't stop to calculate. Of the hundred I got today I have $90—but Mch. 1—$25 must go for the rent. To come to Chicago would take at least 24^{00}—more likely thirty. That would leave me 45^{00} in hand. But I have to send back—phone 3^{50} typewriter 5^{00}, gas (to time of leaving say) $1 and for a hot water heater which I'll have to put in this coming week $5 or $6. Theres just above 15^{00}—leaving me $30 in Chicago. And meantime food & incidentals. You know how irritatingly these things mount up when you only have a little. So I don't feel I can risk it. I can live very cheaply here—and in so far as I am concerned you needn't send me a penny. I'll get along. But I wish you would fit yourself up with nice clothes for the summer & fall for I like to see you look nice and when you do I feel as though everything were alright with us even when it isn't. But I can't come—not right now. I wish I could. And I'm not complaining in the least—I hope you don't think I am. I'm merely trying to make it perfectly clear how things are running. And this spring I feel as though I must get myself one light suit someway or other.

But lets not talk of that. Last night I went to the Powy's and Mae set a rather good dinner. Powys was in good humor, told about [word omitted] & Don & his arguments about me & how various people seemed to resent & even hate me? Why? Also that he was having a debate here next Friday (See card enclosed).[2] He also told about his wife & how often he felt that he could murder her & how various plans would grow up in his mind when he was angry.[3] They had a picture of the family and it looks like a talented family. One brother is running some stuff in "The New Age" (Londen)[4]

which seems to me very brilliant—exceedingly so. The fair Mae told my fortune (differently this time) no death & no new bed & show me how she weaves lace—which is positively astonishing.[5] I wish you'd get her to show you sometime. She calls it pillow weavings. Powys wants me to come hear his debate, and I will. I staid until 11:15 and didn't know it was so late, so you can imagine it went very well.

This A.M. I went up to Hallet & Davis about the piano. I think they will take it away next week which is just as well. The plumbers came Monday to put in the tub, etc. Passed an old book shop & found "Loves Pilgrimage" Sinclair, "The Four Million" O. Henry & "The Thirteenth District" Whitlock[6] going for 35—30 & 29 cents respectively & so I took them. Wished you were with me. Then came back here & resumed my reading. Mrs. White cleaned up & so has gone the day. Am going to shave when I am done with this, because I have to, & then I'm going to read until midnight unless something interferes. I'm boning—from a literary point of view.

Kiddie I'm so glad they like your work—I can't tell you. I do hope you make a real strike & have fine engagements from now on. Not that I want to share in it in any way, but just because I feel so keenly that your entitled to make a real strike. I can always manage to live—in many ways as you know—so that outside of any material consideration I want you to rise & soar. And I know you will.

Give my regards to anyone who deserves them & beleive that I love you—which I do—my nice, graceful actor girl—

L—

[1] Dreiser left a blank space for the date.

[2] On 5 March Chesterton and Powys debated each other at the Hudson Theatre over Nietzschean philosophy, with Powys arguing for the evolution of the Superman and Chesterton arguing that the Superman was merely man's current estimation of himself. See "Metaphysics on the Stage," *New York Sun*, 6 March 1915: 7. Dreiser describes his reaction to the debate in a letter to Markham, 5 March 1915, letter 236.

[3] Powys was married to Margaret Lyon Powys (1874–1947), who remained in the UK with their son, Littleton Alfred (1902–1954), while Powys was on his American lecture tours.

[4] Dreiser refers to Llewelyn Powys (1884–1939), whose "Rubbish" appeared in the *New Age*, 8 April 1915: 615–16. The sketch is about an eight-year-old Kikuyu boy in what was then British East Africa who, after enduring mistreatment sufficient to kill him, is cremated when his hut is burned. The wife of the settler observes about the "funny, smoky smell," "it's like burning rubbish" (616).

[5] A leading authority on hand-made lace, Marian Powys opened the Devonshire Lace Shop in 1916 in New York and published *Lace and Lace-Making* in 1953.

[6] *Love's Pilgrimage* (1911), an autobiographical novel about a struggling writer by Upton Sinclair (1879–1968), a muckraker and political activist most known for *The Jungle* (1906); *The Four Million* (1906), second collection of short stories by O. Henry, the pen name of William Sydney Porter (1862–1910); *The Thirteenth District: The Story of a Candidate* (1902), the first novel by Brand Whitlock, about a Congressional candidate's campaign amid political corruption.

227. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 26, 1915

Sweetheart boy

My lover husband—how long is it since I have called you that? It came to me all in a moment and seemed so sweet and so long neglected. My lover husband! We don't need anything more telling than that, do we, precious? Don't worry about the madame.[1] I know it is impossible not to feel sorry for her, but for ourselves—we can get along very well. Don't worry, baby mine. It doesn't matter whether we ever marry or not, so long as this heavenly happiness lasts. You know that as well as I. I am sorry to think that you were ever so young as to be interested in any one so narrow, but only because it has brought so much sorrow since, perhaps not as much to you as to her. And if you are happy with me now nothing else matters. No George Broadhurst drama could be more objectionable that this "Bought and Paid For" attitude of Mrs. D's—but

we need have no more to do with it in her than in Broadhurst.[2] I only wish she could know how pitiful she is trying to fight for you. Maybe her pride would come to her rescue.

Rehearsal is over. I did very badly, but the comfort lies in the fact that it is near enough time for opening to be quite proper to do badly. They seem to think I have a grasp of things as they want them. That helps. There is much that I don't like in Geoffrey Stein's work,[3] but he probably has much he does not like in mine.

Dearest, I want so much to move, but don't want to till I hear from you. Goodbye for now, sweet one. Love me much, as I love you.

Superlative of Utmost Adoringly, C . . . . .

[1] That is, Sara Dreiser.

[2] *Bought and Paid For* (1911) is a Broadway melodrama by George Broadhurst (1866–1952), who opened the Shubert-owned Broadhurst Theater in 1917 as a venue for his own productions. Made into film versions in 1916 and 1922, the play is about a telephone girl who doesn't love a millionaire but marries him nonetheless only to find he is a drunken abuser. She fends off his drunken advances and his claim that "I bought and paid for you—and anything I've bought and paid for belongs to me." She refuses a diamond bracelet he offers as recompense and leaves him until he promises to quit drinking.

[3] Geoffrey Stein (1869–1930) was the actor who played the role of the Reporter in *Conscience*.

228. Dreiser to Markham

Saturday, Feb. 27—1915

Honey Girl:

Today as I was reading the doorbell rang and on opening in came Fritz Krog—fresh from Chicago, St. Louis, Washington Mo. & points west. I wondered for a moment whether I was recieving a bug, but soon decided not, still he rambled on interestingly about a dozen things. He seemed very sane, had decided that he had been more or less crazy but was not[1] going to pull himself together. Had taken a room in King Street, had secured a small job

with some moving picture company and seemed to be alright. He asked after you—said that you seemed to him exceedingly pleasing etc. I thought he might be hungry & invited him out to have something after which he departed to catch up on sleep, as he said. He told me some of the most interesting experiences I have heard in a long time.

Honey, it is much colder again here today—very. The spring has departed & were having icy weather. I fancy this may last into March after which the weather will get softer, if not better. Saw young Booth in Pa Gallup[2] this A.M. He had been drunk somewhere recently, been arrested & beaten up & his brother only recently got him out.—A youth with some spirit after all. I also saw the Nordis on the street and an ass by the name of Gollomb[3] who fawns on me until I want to heave ho! I hate these terribly servile people.

Today Krog said he never saw a more beautiful studio. The sunlight was bright & the fire warm & it did look charming. Buzzells speaking of it to you reminded me. If we only had a bookcase, two or three rugs and some pictures we would be fixed.

This won't reach you till Monday & you haven't yet made it clear on which night you open. If it's Monday I want you take this letter as my most yearning wish for a real strike for you. If it comes out to suit you, wire me. My heart will be with you every moment. If it isn't Monday be sure & tell me just which night it is.

So sorry your being crowded out of Miriams studio. I know how you dislike your home & wish I were coming to live with you but as I wrote you the other day I don't see how now. Later maybe. Here I sit & think of you & of the time you'll be coming back or I'll be coming out there. Now & then I take the picture of you as a kid out & look at it. I wish we could produce as fine a baby. But we mustn't think of that just now, or until we see a way out. Meanwhile we have to play were starting one each time. Write me regularly & here's lots of love & luck. No nice walk for us this bitter Saturday.

L—

[1] Dreiser wrote "not" but may have meant to write "now."

[2] Franklin Booth, at Gallup's Restaurant.
[3] Bror and Margaret Nordfeldt; Joseph Gollomb (1881–1950), journalist, drama critic for the New York *Evening Mail* and, later, other papers, and screen writer and author.

229. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Feb. 28—1915—Sunday

Honey Girl:

Tomorrow is March 1—I think—and the spring isn't almost here again. Don't you wish we were off in the country somewhere together? Last night such an amazing thing happened. After Krog left I went to Paulas and encountered Jig Cooke & others. Then I came home and no sooner got here than Mrs Drey called up. She is sailing next Saturday on the American and wanted me to come up to give her some advice. It seems she wants to flit from where she is without paying for her lease & I advised a fake exhibit at Phila—in order to get her pictures & trunks out. Then to leave her furniture such as it is with her friends in the adjoining studios. This she is going to do.[1] Coming home about 1 I went to bed and no sooner (as it seemed to me) fell asleep than I heard an endless knocking in my dreams. Finally I woke and heard it at our door. I jumped up thinking you might have come on from Chicago but no sooner got out in our big room then I heard water pouring. It was coming down from just over the middle of the folding doors. I opened the door & there was Mrs White and the Italians from the top floor. It appears they had gone to sleep and left the bath room running over. The floors in both rooms were fairly wet, the ceilings almost ruined and that nice wooden chair marked so by lime that it won't come clean—or rather smooth. It's scarred. Mrs. White was almost drowned out.

Of course they were profuse in their apologies. They offered to pay, though I don't think they will. The great difficulty will probably be to get Crist to fix the ceilings again. As for the rest nothing

aside from the chair was damaged. But I lost my nights sleep nearly & today feel punk.

To night I am going to the Metropolitan Concert at the invitation of Sophie Braslau who is singing there.[2] She sent me a seat & said she would join me, after her turn. The fair Edna Hume[3] showed up with a note in the last mail last night, asking me to autograph a copy of "The Titan" for her and please come and see her. I shall probably have to autograph the book, but I am going to write and inquire—why the sudden burst of enthusiasm. She is just back from Cincinnati. What do you know?

No letter came today and if you didn't special delivery any it's just as well for there never seem to get here on Sunday anyhow. I didn't hurry mine for I was afraid you wouldn't get in any. Kiddie sweet, outside these few items there is nothing. I am very tired & expect to come home early and turn in. Today has been beautiful, though cool, and I have thought of you all day long. The Nordis said give you their regards.

Well heres luck to you on your first night whenever it is & much love. Think of me at bed time & when you wake in the morning.

L—

[1] Because expenses exceeded income from sales, Drey (Anne Estelle Rice) decided to return to England. She arranged to leave 77 paintings in the care of two friends, Horace Holley, an art dealer from her Paris days, and gallery owner Charles Daniel, as well as one with Dreiser (see Dreiser to Markham, 6 March 1915, letter 237). In October, Holley would entrust 22 paintings to Dreiser's care. Rice never retrieved the paintings. A 1923 photograph of Dreiser standing before two of Rice's paintings (*Nicoline* and *La Négresse*, both 1910–11) at his Luke's Place apartment is held at DPUP (see fig. 21). For the Dreiser-Rice relationship, see Carol A. Nathanson, "Anne Estelle Rice and 'Ellen Adams Wrynn': Dreiser's Perspectives on Gender and Gendered Perspectives on Art," *Dreiser Studies* 32.1 (Spring 2001): 3–35.

[2] Sophie Braslau (1892–1935), American contralto who debuted at the Metropolitan in 1913.

[3] Edna Hume, silent film actress.

230. Markham to Dreiser

Feb. 28, 1915

Sweetheart my boy

You will be surprised to hear that I am down at the Stratford.[1] I gave up waiting for you and came, where I can be alone and retire into myself, away from family. The time is getting so near and I am wearing rather badly nervously, I think, for want of perfect rest, so here I stay.

Precious angel child, I have cried out in my heart endless, endless times tonight to you, and always felt as though you were busy, preoccupied, content. Have I your love, dearest, as you have mine? Do you feel anything like the heartache of loneliness that is eating me now? Baby, baby! I want to put my arms around you and hold you close, oh so close, and then curl up and go to sleep, my body curved to yours or yours to mine. Do you want me as I want you, my lover husband? Away from you it is best to be alone. I know that now. Should anything ever part us I think I should lead a wretched life. I love you as the breath of my body, and when I have you no longer may there be no breath in my body. Goodnight, my precious.

[1] The Stratford Hotel, erected in 1872 as the Gardner House, was the oldest first-class hotel in Chicago. It changed its name under new owners to the Stratford in 1902 before being closed and torn down in 1922.

231. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Mch 1—1915—Monday

My Honey Kid:

It seems to me your letters are getting very brief these days—briefer and briefer. What's ailing? Bored with the daily task?—or just nothing much to say. Considering your appeals to me sometimes for long notes your giving almost as short measure as the

tradesmen these days. . . . Last night I went up to the Metropolitan concert and heard Fritz Kreisler[1] play. It was the first time for me and I was greatly impressed—more I think than by any violinist in years. He is so sure and apparently prodigal and yet so truly sound. I never heard a better artist I am sure. Beside him Elman[2] seems a little tenuous and frail—not so suggestive. Wotherspoon[3] sang (very badly I thought) and some new German woman whose name I have forgotten[4] but who looks like a healthy, 40 year old washerwoman. She had a good voice though.

Still cold here & not softening. I had a note today from Reicher asking me to edit "The Girl in the Coffin" but I do not see what to do to sharpen it up—do you?[5] I have also an invitation from Mrs. Drey to go & see a Miss Doris Mayo dance tomorrow night—a new Isadora Duncan she thinks. I wonder—but I think I'll go. In the meantime between these meetings I'm reading constantly and marking time. Today I finished "The Turn of the Balance" and like it very much—only it seems a little dreary on the sex or love side—which may really make it all the truer for all I know. It makes Norris's "Vandover and the Brute" and Tarkington's "Turmoil" look like thin work—only the Turmoil is almost better in some ways then Norris's story. But I have missed you & the place has seemed lonely and oppressive. I'm glad I'm going to have a chance to go to the opera tonight.

Sweetie, I'm so sorry your reading didn't come out to suit you.[6] It's a pity, when you can do well, if you have a chance, to have it spoiled. I sometimes think it's best to kick out at the last moment in such things rather than take the chance of being discredited. But perhaps you did better than you say—and anyhow you may have a better chance somewhere else. What do you hear from Lola[7]—anything—or have you written her at all?

I'm going to start reading "My Mamie Rose" tomorrow (thats Owen Kildare) & then "The Octopus" and then "What Maisie Knew."[8] I find these books of realism suggestive—even if they don't help me directly. They seem to strengthen my own method of proceedure.

Well, Kiddie, I must quit and run. I've read until seven & now having written this, I must dress and beat it. No dinner tonight

but I don't want any. I find my shorter rations make me feel ever so much better—& that truly. I wish I'd drop to 170. Well night's'e-night and think of me. If you were here you & I would go somewhere but as it is I can only wish & wait. Much love.

L—

[1] Fritz Kreisler (1875–1962), Austrian violinist and composer, one of the leading violinists of his era.

[2] Mischa Elman (1891–1967), Russian violinist who, like Kreisler, commanded large audiences.

[3] Dreiser means Herbert Witherspoon (1873–1935), American bass singer who retired from singing in 1916 to focus on teaching.

[4] Melanie Kurt (1879–1941), Austrian soprano who joined the Metropolitan in February 1915.

[5] In his letter dated 27 February 1915 (DPUP), Reicher followed up on his phone call with Dreiser, asking "Did you already work on the alterations I suggested for 'The Girl in the Coffin'? . . . As it is possible that I shall have to give yours and the other playlets before 'When the New Wine Blooms' I would thank you for making the alterations as soon as it is convenient to you. Let me have several copies."

[6] Markham's dramatic reading of *War Brides*. See Markham to Dreiser, 25 Feb. 1915, letter 225.

[7] Lola May, Markham's fellow actor in *The Lure*.

[8] *The Octopus, A Story of California* (1901), by Frank Norris, the first volume of an uncompleted Trilogy of Wheat, about the conflict between farmers and the railroad transporting the wheat. *What Maisie Knew* (1897), by Henry James (1843–1916), about a daughter whose innocence triumphs over her divorcing parents' cruelty.

232. Markham to Dreiser

Mar. 1st, 1915

Sweetie Boy

Please forgive your Lyhon Cryhon for being cross. She has been nasty all the time lately, seems to me, when she looks back on her letters. She hasn't been a tender, trusting thing at all—not anything like what she ought to be. She's just bad. But, oh baby, it is

just because she is tired and lonely. You know that, don't you, boy? You know that in her heart she loves you above all there is in the world and believe in your love of her—always. Boy, boy! Nothing she says counts excepting that she is dying to put her head on your shoulder and go to sleep there nights and wake up there mornings and so be really fit for hard work through the comfort of your presence. It would be so sweet to pay little flying visits to you between rehearsals, that is all! Just forget the letters of the past few days and forgive them, please.

I am now on the train out to Father's to bring down another load of necessaries for the theatre. Dress rehearsal tonight. Opening Wednesday night. Last night after I wrote you I went to a lunch counter and ate a bowl of puffed wheat and cream, and a hamburger steak sandwich, then home to bed.

Dearest, I wrote all this hours ago. It is now late at night, and I am lying in bed longing for my boy. There was no dress rehearsal for me tonight, after all. Things were so delayed, so it will be tomorrow. I will have this mailed in the morning so it will reach you Wednesday, only later than it would have had I mailed it tonight. Do you miss me, baby? I am very miserable. I don't mean that I am especially deserving of missing but that I just feel miserable.

Before you get my next letter you will have had a telegram as to my failure or success. God knows I need ardent prayers tonight to put me over, but I have not failed yet and I cannot now. Things are going to come out all right.

I'm going to say goodnight now, beloved, and so to bed. I love you with all my heart, precious, and wish you were here. But I know you will be lurking around in spirit and I will catch at your hand in the wings before I go on. The wings! What a nice place to think of meeting in spirit, isn't it? My whole thought will be of you and when I come off, dearest, the joy will be in whether or not I can report success across the wires to my little haven. There is so much I would like to say but I suppose it just sounds silly and gushy so we will let it go. With endless love,

Adoringly

233. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

March [3][1]—1915

Honey Kid:

So this is dress rehearsal night. You can't imagine how much I am with you in spirit—how a somewhat tense thought of you is with me all the hours and I yeild to the feeling that I am close and must make you do your very best—which would ensure your success anywhere. All afternoon I have longed to be close to sort of buoy you up so that you couldn't possibly do less than your best. You know how I wired. It was just before I began this and somehow I felt that I could not write until I had wired. But I know you will succeed—and as sure as anything, wanting to do the fine things you want to do, you will write your name large in the histories of the stage, or I miss my guess.

But to begin with—what do you think—of this paper—24 sheets and envelopes for 10 cents.[2] I saw it in Woolworths window in 6th Ave and took it for a lark. It can be used up in various ways. Also in passing Silas in 44th Street I stopped to inquire after our gilt epergne and finding it unsold and locked up in a store room (they didn't even seem to know where it was) I brought it away. It looks better than you would think—on the piano at present—and we might as well keep it.

Finished "My Mamie Rose"—this A.M.—a rather poor autobiography and began on "The Younger Set"—Chambers.[3] Never having read a Chambers book I am curious to see how he works. Thus far it is the trivial soufflé, psychologically speaking—with here and there a really good picture. How Huneker could find it in him to praise this stuff I don't know.[4]

By the way Krog is in jail again. Being out on probation & released on condition that he stay away from New York he was picked up on the streets here, apparently by a detective. I feel terribly sorry for him, since I think he is a little crazy but his woes annoy me so that I scarcely know what to do. He seems to feel that he can unload his troubles on his friends and promptly writes

me to come to his aid, but I do not see what I can do. I have no money to devote to a lawyer. He asked me to call up Franklin Booth but when I did so Booth refused to have anything to do with him or the matter—saying that he could not be annoyed—which is true. He also asked to notify Amick—which I have done by letter.

But enough of that—when talent passes so far beyond the normal as to become wild the hell-holes called public institutions are all that are left and yet I hate to think of Krog so involved.

Today came a duplicate bill from Dr. Darrach[5]—but he will wait if I have anything to do with it. Of all the pompous, shabby cheats I think there is one.

So you are at The Stratford. I wonder what your father thinks? Here you go out there for a little while and cannot stand the home he offers. I suppose you do not get off under ten a week. Has he loaned you any money? I don't blame you if it is as dull as you seem to feel only it seems a pity for his sake & yours that it should so get on your nerves. A strenuous family, eh.

Well, I haven't anything more to say except I wish you all kinds of luck and to wish that I were there. I could go to a concert tonight with the Rosenthals[6] but have declined because I'm tired. I seem to sleep rather badly these days—not long enough—and so have to go to bed much earlier some nights.

Much love.
L—

Are you flirting with anyone—and if so, who?

[1] Dreiser has written "5" but the envelope is postmarked March 3, 1915.

[2] Dreiser is referring to the change in stationary—the new acquisition is slightly smaller in size, at 7.25 x 11.10 inches (versus 8.97 x 11.55).

[3] *The Younger Set* (1907), by the prolific novelist Robert W. Chambers (1865–1933), is a romance set among the blue bloods of New York, with a theme suggesting that the younger members will redeem the follies of their elders.

[4] James Gibbons Huneker (1857–1921), music, art and literary critic. Dreiser is likely referring to a verbal recommendation. Dreiser respected Huneker's opinion and had sent him the manuscript of

Jennie Gerhardt prior to its editing. For Huneker's positive review of *The Titan*, see "The Seven Arts: 'The Titan,'" *Puck* 75 (27 June 1914): 21.

[5] See Dreiser to Markham, 10 Feb. 1915, n. 4, letter 206.

[6] Elias Rosenthal.

234. Markham to Dreiser

March 3, 1915

Sweetheart

Your letter today made me most unhappy.[1] Are you having such a good time that my letters bore you? You seem to measure the length of them entirely by pages when, as I have been writing of late, they should be measured by what is on the page. Tonight is my opening. I have been depressed all day, but I shall pull myself together. You wrote nothing of the work of Sophie Braslau Sunday night, and yet she was your hostess. Now that I am not there you find all the music you seem to crave, and never have when I am around, and then write me cold letters like today's, written before you went to the opera Monday night. I suppose you were her guest Monday night too, or were you? You never took the trouble to say anything more than that you must hurry to get there.

Oh baby, I hope she, and whoever else of all the people I know nothing about that you are seeing, are keeping you happy. I want you to be happy. But if it is an effort to write when in the mood for other people, just don't write. I don't want to be a drain on you. I love you with all my heart and soul, but in my absence others seem able to give you so much that you have to do without when I am there, mainly, I suppose, because you would no longer be looked upon as free and eligible if my existence were known. And women seem to want your friendship only on condition that you are free and open to winning, so that you cut yourself off from all these when I am present and make me feel, and at times treat me, like a jailer.

Oh, beloved, I shall miss you so tonight. I have wrapped my whole life so utterly in the happiness I have had with you and

am always dreaming of having that I lie here in Chicago this afternoon utterly alone, and utterly uncompanioned, even though some one should come. More and more, as I go on with my work, will I have to be away from New York. And more and more will you find you life only when I am away from you, I fear. All winter you have cried for music and never got it, and the minute I am gone you have your heart's desire—and not through me. Oh, if these things do not mean more to you than I do, tell me about them that I may know of your pleasures, or if they do mean more, drop me. I love you too much to want to lessen your joys by preventing them.

Adoringly . . . . .

[1] See Dreiser to Markham, 1 March 1915, letter 231.

235. Markham to Dreiser

[March 3, 1915]

Sweetheart Precious Angel—

Oh, this priceless letter this morning! Cryhon has been bad, just bad. But if you only knew how different your yesterday's letter was from today's you would see the little misery, what with opening to come, was not altogether my fault. Baby, today's letter would make up for a thousand ills, a thousand lonelinesses. I cried as I read it, but only from happiness. Dearest boy, the season here will end the 20th. No one knows yet what will happen. People all think "Conscience" would make a great vaudeville act.[1] Precious, I just wanted this to come with the other, and so will rush now to get it on the Century.[2]

[1] Although the potential of *Conscience* as a vaudeville performance would be the subject of a number of subsequent letters, there is no indication that such a performance took place.

[2] *The 20th Century Limited*, an express train operated by the New York Central Railroad, also contained a U.S. Railway Post Office car for the sorting of mail enroute.

236. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Friday, March 5—1915

My Honey Girl:

Such a moaning letter as I got today—the one written Wednesday when you were so sure I was happy that I couldn't even take the trouble to tell you about it. I'm glad it didn't come alone for I would have had to enter on a long and ex-culpatory explanation which now I scarcely think is necessary. I'm not running around with anyone. The time gets terribly dreary on my hands about 6 P.M. I feel sometimes as though I could not stand another minute of being alone. It doesn't do me very much good to go anywhere to tell you the truth. I can go as a rule somewhere but many an evening I prefer to stay right here and go to bed early rather than to bother with anyone. When you are here it is entirely different. I may fuss and fume about something or nothing—it's all about the same, but I'm never lonely and I never have been since I have been with you. You have cured me of those terrible depressions. I feel content if I just have you. Just to sit and hold you or lie in bed and pull you close is all the solution I need for spiritual difficulties—those moods which have no relation to money and money troubles—but when you are away I feel as though half of me were gone and I don't know what to do—so I just suffer. Like yesterday. I felt as if I must leave here soon unless I could see you again. Now comes your letter saying you may come back about the 20th and that cheers me a little, only I'm afraid you won't and that I won't get to come out there. If you don't I don't know what I shall do. The idea of using "Conscience" as a vaudeville sketch appeals to me a little but the thing that is worrying me is where do I get off. If you are jumping from town to town a week at a time or less I don't suppose I ever could do it and write—though I might come to some places & besides I don't see where I am to get easy money soon—so the situation looks very dreary to me. But wanting to be with you and not being able to is depressing me and scratching me all the time like a hairy shirt and

I the truth. I wish you wouldn't think I'm forgetting you for others for I'm not. There are some blooming fools whom I meet who wouldn't want to come here knowing that we are not married—and aside from seeing them out of sheer weariness of being alone I should not and do not want to see them at all. There are people no doubt as you say who would not want to see me at all unless they thought I was free—and who for the same reason would resent and not want to see you, but I do not want to see them at all and do not run after them. I give you my solemn word I haven't. Such a person is Mrs. Hatton,[1] another is Edna Hume, another is Mrs. Herbermann but I do not seek those people out and have not (Mrs Hatton is not here of course) since you left. Over at the Holladay restaurant the other night three ladies descended on me en masse and one made her attention conspicuous seeing that I was alone, but I immediately came away not because I was morally trying to preserve myself but simply because I was not interested. I could have amused myself. She would have hung on me fast enough but I did not want to. That makes me seem unsocial to some. It gives me some lonely hours which I might otherwise fill in that fashion, but that would not be satisfying the real lonliness that I feel and so there you are. You are the one that I want but on some days—owing to some idle comment of mine you don't seem to believe it. But I'm jealous of you & the things that keep you away from me and if you don't believe it, I can only hope that something will show you one of these days. I should think you could almost see if you'd stop & think. Why should I stay here if it isn't to get you back. I don't need to. It's only because I can't be happy any other way—and I the truth.

But why don't you write me how the play is doing? I'm so anxious to know. Today I went to here Jack Powys lecture at the Hudson Theatre & it was really very good. He and this C. E. Chesterton (or something like that) debated & they did it very well indeed.[2] Powys is fiery—like a half-starved library lion and Chesterton is as fat and suave as an English pug—albeit a scholar & lover of letters. The audience laughed and cackled & applauded to the very end. It couldn't help it. Afterwards Powys, Mae Powys, a Mrs. ___ and myself went to lunch & talked it over. Powys announced that he

is to lecture soon (Mch 28th) at St Marks here on Arthur Ficke, whom he seems to have concluded is the leading poet. I think he is making a great mistake when he does not pick on Masters.

However, it is evening again & I have been all afternoon. I told you the Crist-Herrick bunch had renigged on the new bath tub & today to cap the climax they refused to connect the gas stove which I bought & paid for, with the water tank—a matter of 5^{00} more in costs. I asked Crist very pointedly what he proposed to do and he said "nothing more". I would give anything to tell him to take his floor & go to but where can we do better. Isn't it the limit.

But enough of that. Do tell me about the play. If it doesn't succeed what are your immediate plans? I am wondering gloomily when we will see each other again.

Much, much love—
L—

[1] Fanny Hatton (1875–1939), stage and screen writer of comedies with her husband, Frederic Hatton. In a letter to W. A. Swanberg, Markham recalled an evening in the Hatton apartment when "Mrs. Hatton crowded Theo into that tiny corner, almost rubbing her body against his. When Theo could take no more he said we must leave. She followed us out to the elevator and said 'I know you're going with her and she's very nice, but mature women have something to offer.' That woman's performance was such that, given the slightest encouragement, she would have lain down on the floor and spread her legs before the assembled guests" (29 Feb. 1964, Swanberg Papers).

[2] For a brief description of the lecture, see Dreiser to Markham, 26 Feb. 1915, n. 2, letter 226.

237. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Sat. Mch—6—1915

Honey Sweet:

I can't tell you how much your todays letter with the clippings concerning your work pleases me.[1] It's made me happier than

anything that has happened to me in I don't know when—much happier than the success of any of my books ever has. I've been so anxious for you to succeed—solely that you might be encouraged to go on and not lose heart—and now that you've done it I'm much happier than I could have been if I were the one doing it. I feel so convinced that the American stage needs you with your ideals and your spirit and if you can just live through the dull days of cheap and petty indifference you will get all the reward that a serious artist can expect. I wish you would send clippings to all those who ought to be interested and send at least a dozen to me. I want to send some to Bigelow, Reicher, Powys and so on—and also Mame and Syl.[2] and don't want to give up those that I have until you do. Lengel blew in this afternoon for a few minutes and asked after you & when I showed him the clippings he seemed (as I know he was) honestly pleased and said he thought it was really a remarkable showing. He also added rather pathetically I thought that he wished he would write a one act play for you.

By the way I ought to tell you—though I know it will grieve you, wanting a kid as you do, that Mrs. L- is underway and expects to be confined in September.[3] She is having so he says, those squally days all ladies have after the third month.

Again I meant to tell you long ago that Amick told me the finish of the Dyberg story. Franklin Booth was infatuated with her but she was rather indifferent it seems. Then young Seitz of the Pathe Co.[4] came along and although he had been courting another woman for several years turned to Miss Dyberg & took her away from Booth who was badly cut up about it. The young lady Seitz was courting, seeing that he had found someone in whom he could be interested besides her immediately decided that he was good enough, accepted & married him. Then the fair Dyberg beat it to Washington and got married and Booth took up with Miss Hurst whom he cannot marry, though he wants to, because she has a husband who will not give her a divorce. So they stay together betimes since that is the best they can do.

But to return to you. It ticked me so much to see that the gentleman who was so uncertain as to whether you could do the part

and so surprised that you did got only one indifferent dismissal by one critic. Theres some comfort in that. And again your dear mother being about to give you flowers amuses me. It's nice of her at that if she doesn't bore you—only after all those fierce letters it's funny. But when Bissell sends you flowers & George Middleton rubs your ankles I don't know whether I'm so pleased or not. The old imp of jealousy located somewhere down in my inwards stirs and I have to push the ideas away to be really content.

But I'm so glad your started and the only thing that grieves me now is that I am here & you are there. I might get another hundred and pay my fare but could we really live—and would it be wise. A total of $28.50 (Rent & telephone) must be paid here whether we are here or not, and in addition five a month for another two months on the typewriter yet. But even so, if I thought we could get along I would chance it for a month anyhow because I am so hungry for my kid. I want to sleep with her again and wake up in the morning to find her dozing on my pillow. It's no fun away from you at all & if I could manage it we wouldn't be separated soon again. If you can find a simple place with a decent outlook & want me to come—or think we had better rather—I'll do it. Oh, but you'll get a good squeezing and kneeding and kissing if I do.

By the way Mrs. Drey left this noon at 12 on the New York, taking nothing save her clothes with her. She was dreadfully disappointed in N.Y. She left all her furniture (gave it rather) to a Miss Prahar[5]—a sculptor in the same building with her, and the Miss Doris Gomez, the dancer,[6] also in the same building whom I mentioned, didn't I. She left us one of her pictures—a study of a girl with red hair which I went this P.M. & got & hung in the front room over the couch where it looks charming.[7] I also filled the epergne with fruit—apples, oranges, bananas & the like for the looks of the thing. I never saw prettier fruit dish in my life. It's on the back of the piano.

And also by the way—this same Miss Prahar (who is a impish looking thing in black) and I fell into a discussion of Alastar Crowley[8] whom Harry Kemp[9] told us about as celebrating the black mass in London. Crowley is here now and he is going to let

me meet him this week. She says that in London & Paris that he has a following which indulges in phallic rites under his direction & that he is a degenerate but a kind of mystic. She also says that his masses in Paris degenerate into sex orgies in which all the happy vices are practiced in common in the same room by all the worshippers! Hows that?

Incidentally Miss Gomez dances here & there & while I was there she came in & we all had tea. They seemed interested in Washington Sq for some reason—having read of it in the papers—and so I marked the two of them down to Paula Holladays for Tuesday night. They don't drink anything so my bill will be small. Afterward they have some studio where all Mrs Dreys paintings are now hanging which they want me to go & see. Mrs. Drey said that Miss Gomez is a delightful dancer. And to me she looks as though she might be. She is just the type.

But all this is beside the mark and of no import to me beyond breaking what would be too much lonliness. If we arrange this Chicago deal you will see how quick I will drop all this & come out there. Am not feeling very good today. My shoulder feels rheumatic or rather [Dreiser left a blank space], and I am depressed by the day which is sloppy—snowy—& blowy—just the worst kind of March weather. The papers say there is a blizzard on in Chicago. I would rather have a blizzard than this. And in addition I have a kind of headache—but even so.

But Sweetness I think I would be alright if only I were near you. You've spoiled me with your pettings & lovings & yeildings until I'm not much at being alone anymore. Write me a full letter & tell me what you think. How we would snuggle up & lie close—eh.

Lovingly
L—

[1] Markham's letter no longer survives, but she was delighted by the play's reception and the laudatory reviews of her performance. For an example, see Markham to Dreiser, 8 March 1915, n. 1, letter 241.

[2] "Syl" is Dreiser's sister Cacilia Sylvia Dreiser (1866–1945).

[3] Nelle McNeff Lengel, who was married to Dreiser's friend William Lengel. Their first child, Nelle Elizabeth Lengel, lived only a few days.

[4] George B. Seitz (1888–1944), American actor, playwright, screenwriter, and director, began his film career in 1913 as an actor for Pathé Frères. At the time of this letter, Seitz had directed two films, *The Exploits of Elaine* (1914) and *The Romance of Elaine* (1915), both distributed by Pathé Frères, and he would go on to direct more than 100 films.

[5] Renee Prahar (1880–1962) began as an actress before turning to sculpture, focusing on angular portrait busts of people and animals, a method she called "triangularism."

[6] Contemporary newspaper reports comment on Doris Gomez as a member of Paris's Folies Beregere and her "sensational 'Dagger Dance'" in January 1915. She was also arrested on charges of obscenity for her scanty costume during a vaudeville performance at Hammerstein's Victoria Theatre ("Victoria Players Arrested," *New York Sun*, 8 Jan. 1915: 6).

[7] This may be Rice's painting *Nicoline* (1910–11), which had been exhibited in Paris (see "Paintings by Americans at Paris's Autumn Salon," *New York Times*, 23 Nov. 1913: 20; see also Dreiser to Markham, 28 Feb. 1915, n. 1, letter 229).

[8] Aleister Crowley (born Edward Alexander Crowley, 1875–1947), English poet, mountaineer, and occultist. Crowley gained considerable notoriety for his founding of the occult religion Thelema, based on Egyptian deities, as well as his use of black magic, drugs, and "sex magic" to reach an altered consciousness. In some of his writings he refers to Doris Gomez as one of his mistresses with whom he practiced sex magic. Crowley had arrived in New York in October 1914.

[9] Harry Kemp (1883–1960), poet, playwright, and biographer, promoted himself as the "Vagabond Poet" and was active in Greenwich Village social life. Later, he acted with the Provincetown Players.

238. Dreiser to Markham

Sat. Mch 6—, 1915

Honey:

Please get fifty of each of the best reviews and send me ten or twelve of each. See that the name of the paper is indicated in each case. And send yours to the various managers. This ought to do you a lot of good. Am writing later in the day. Do you still love me?

L—

239. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Sunday, March 7—1915

My Kiddie:

Just had a special delivery from you an hour ago and now after taking a much needed shave am sitting down to write you. If I had been there the second night and heard the garbled lines I'm afraid I would have been cross a sticks[1] for nothing in you irritates me so much as your indifference or at any rate seeming indifference, to really learning your lines. Acting is so natural with you that at times you seem to have a contempt for the means whereby at least a portion of the subject is expressed. And it's so terribly unfair to the audience who pay for a perfect rendition and desire it and even suffer (as I do anyhow) when errors are made. But, perhaps, as you say it was nerves—but wouldn't being letter perfect obviate at least a part of a fluke. The critic in The Journal says the play was cut. Did you forget so much that he thought it was cut to unintelligibility?

But enough of that. I get mad, but I get over it, only wishing you would never jeopardize the least chance in these opening years to make yourself effect. Our March storm continues—snow and slush—the going underfoot is dreadful. Mame phoned this A.M. that she had leased the house at 120 W. 11th Street (one of that group that sets far back in the yard and has ornamental iron balustrades in front) and that it has fifteen rooms and 3 baths. Rental $1,600. She is moving in at once, I believe. I fancy the rooms there must be charming. Also the Lengels phoned, wanting me to go out to their place to dinner, but I refused. Am so busy reading & so anxious to get done that I begrudge the time. "The Younger Set" was so bad that I could scarcely finish it and now am reading "Joan Thursday"[2] so much heralded by Dell, which so far is nothing much. Really Dell and most of the better critics give me a pain. He is always shouting about something which is only moderately good. And I see where Frank Harris now announces that David Graham Phillips is the most wonderful thing American has done

in a literary way.[3] Do you remember our trying to read "The Hungry Heart"[4] and finding it dull—immature? Quite all of his stuff is just the same.

But enough of that, too. I've been wishing all morning that there were some way in which one could spend our week ends together. Sunday is a devil of a day to wake up alone on. And usually with us we had the most fun, poking around over breakfast and then going for a walk. I certainly agree about no partings if it can be avoided. Twice now—three times as a matter of fact I've tried & suffered to be the band.[5] I expect I'll have to accommodate myself to your work or you'll have to accommodate yourself to mine. I wonder in tis lonely state that you really don't prefer to live at home or with your mother—or to alternate between the two places rather than be alone.

There's no news. All Krogs old friends—Amick, Brown,[6] Booth & others have combined & agreed to write the judge recommending that he be sent to an institution for the insane. They seem to be certain that he is crazy and I guess he is. If the institution is fairly decent he'll be better for it really, for he hasn't a penny. Halsey[7] went and got on his feet again fairly well—and so will Krog. As for your worrying about your nerves and mind I think it's silly, but if ever it should happen I'll take you in my arms before any possible parting could be effected & we'll end this silly, gay old game together. You wouldn't mind going along with me & I know I wouldn't with you. Could this be called a suicide compact?

I wish you'd calculate the running cost of our lives for the next few months very carefully & see where we get off. If Mrs. D- will only come to terms with me I will have disposed of any expense in that direction for 18 months at least. It's possible in view of the 12,000 edition of The Financier that Harpers sold but won't pay me, charging it off against what I owe them that Lane will continue to dole out $100 a month for a few months anyhow. If you continue to earn $50 a week could we afford to shut this place up, pay the rent & I come out there. You never seem to seriously calculate on all the dribbling expenses beforehand but I wish you

would this time. I need a spring suit which I will have to get somehow and there are other things sure to come up. If you think it best for me to stick it out here, I will, but if we can figure a simple life out there counting the cost of the rooms here well & good. I never saw our place look lovlier than it does now with the fruit bowl full & the new painting, but if it were wise to close the whole thing up we could, don't you think.

Kiddie I want your nice soft self in my arms tonight. I'd like to sit & hold you in front of the fire and then undress you & have my little orgy with you & then go to bed & hold you close. Wouldn't that be nice. Instead all I have is the silent rooms, my books & the cold bed. Aren't you sorry for me?

I love you much
L—

[1] Dreiser means "as cross as two sticks," British idiom for angry.

[2] *Joan Thursday* (1911), a novel by Louis Joseph Vance (1879–1933), about a girl who uses people as stepping stones on her rise from poverty to success on the stage.

[3] David Graham Phillips (1867–1911), novelist and muckraking journalist best known for a series of articles in *Cosmopolitan* in 1906 entitled "The Treason of the Senate." He was assassinated in 1911 by a man who thought Phillips had insulted his family in his novel *The Fashionable Adventures of Joshua Craig* (1909). Frank Harris (1855–1931) was an Irish-born novelist and journalist who is best-remembered today for his series *Contemporary Portraits* (1915–1923). The comment Dreiser refers to appeared in the *New York Sun*: "I have a book here by an American author, David Graham Phillips, the greatest novelist who ever used the English tongue—as great as Balzac" ("Germans Will Win, Says Frank Harris," *New York Sun*, 25 Jan. 1915: 4).

[4] *The Hungry Heart*, a 1909 novel by Phillips about a wife who, tiring of her husband's neglect, pursues an affair.

[5] Dreiser means "to beat the band," American idiom for intensely.

[6] Robert Carlton "Bob" Brown (1886–1959), writer in many forms—comics, avant-garde poetry, magazine fiction—and publisher, who knew Krog during Dreiser's *Delineator* days.

[7] Perhaps (William) Forrest Halsey (1877–1949), magazine writer, novelist, and screenwriter.

240. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Monday, Mch 8—1915

My Honey Girl:

Was glad your Fridays letter today though your note of Saturday discounted it, coming as it did yesterday. I feel somehow each day as though I couldn't stand this strain much longer and unless I get myself better in hand am afraid I shall have to come west to pull myself together—if I can only get the money. Tried to get in touch with Jones today but couldn't. The serial idea has fallen through finally I think and now only the book remains.[1] Am doing really serious and to me necessary & helpful reading going through books that you & I would never read together anyhow. Finished L. J. Vances "Joan Thursday" today & started on Stephen French Whitmans "Predestined."[2] It's all a dull grind, this reading, but I'm determined to catch up on this American stuff, just to see whats been done and to see if I can sharpen up my own methods a little. Thus far I have gained a few points but not many. Mostly I see better ways of doing the thing I am reading.

But oh, lord I get so lonely. Will this damned separation never end. This morning, at Gallups, I met young Ray Wells[3] & he asked after you, sitting down at my table to hear the news. He seemed very pleased and interested and I didn't catch on until toward the last that he was thinking that I was talking about Richmond. When I explained Chicago, he livened much more and seemed to think it was quite wonderful. He told me of your early school days and wanted to be remembered to you and to wish you success. He says he is sure by now that he prefers Chicago to New York.

You will be interested if ever you get back here to see Mames new house. It is beautiful—one of the best arranged houses for her purpose I have ever seen,—15 rooms & 3 baths and one of the cleanest, nicest subcellars I have ever looked at. There is a big, green yard, front & back with real trees. The parlor floor consists of two rooms bigger than our two, with porches front

& back which could be glassed in & french windows. There is a white marble fire place in each room—in working condition. To the left of the rear room, facing south, is a small bedroom which could be fitted up as a kitchenette or anything—also giving out on the porch. On the two upper floors are each—two large rooms devided by a good bath & closets, and two hall bedrooms—every room light, bright, charming. In the basement are two more large rooms—bright enough to rent, & two smaller ones. Mame intends to have them all papered light, painted white and fitted up with colonial furniture. She has borrowed the black floor idea and when it is all done it is going to be a peach. I wish we could afford the 1st floor. Then we need only pay rent while there & could duck out at leisure. And our furniture would make a paradise of those rooms. You have no idea how lovely they are. She hasn't fixed on any renting value as yet but I'm sure she'd want more than we could pay. And see how charmingly we've put this in order. But there is one thing to be considered. If we did go in there I think she would turn the whole thing over to us at death and then we would have it. Her plan is to take the companion houses right & left & make them all one. Think what a dandy thing you & I could make out of that.

Kiddie, I do hope your tomorrows letter indicates how long you are to stay—whether your coming back on the 20th or no. You weren't sure about that April business & it troubles me to be uncertain. I think you must cast a long distance spell over me for I'm as restless as a cat. When I think of the general expenses here I hate to risk my loan hundred traveling out there & then finding our expenses leaving us stranded. And yet when I think of my nervous state here it seems as though almost anything would be better. If I could just chuck the whole thought of the separation & go about my business I be alright, but I can't. And so I speculate & speculate as how much longer it's to be.

Outside of what I've written theres no news here. I saw where George Evans—"The Honey Boy"[4] whom I used to know is dead in Baltimore. Also Krog has been remanded to Bellevue for 10 days observation. I'm going to see him tomorrow. The snow has

stopped, the temperature risen and today is as bright & spring like as anything. And that makes me home sick. Oh, hell!

And so you see where home is.

Much love—

L—

[1] William Lengel had cut the manuscript of *The "Genius"* and prepared a serial version, but the two were unable to interest a magazine. See Louis Oldani, "Dreiser's 'Genius; in the Making: Composition and Revision," *Studies in Bibliography* 47 (1994): 230–52, esp. p. 237.

[2] *Predestined, a Novel of New York Life* (1910), by Stephen French Whitman (1880–1948), a naturalistic novel of decline in which the protagonist, born to wealth and privilege, inevitably deteriorates and dies a failure.

[3] Raymond Wells (b. 1892) attended Chicago University High School with Elaine Hyman.

[4] George Evans (1870–1915), Welsh-born songwriter, musician, comedian, and proprietor of the Honey Boy Minstrels. His song "In the Good Old Summertime" (1902), with lyrics by Ren Shields, was a popular hit and appeared in many films.

241. Markham to Dreiser

March 8, [19]15

Dearest Lover

I had three such wonderful letters this morning. Even the little scrawl saying you would write later was a joy, it was so enthusiastic. Precious! Thank you a thousand times for your gladness. It is all that makes my success count for anything. Absolutely all! I miss your constant comment on life, on your work and mine, on everything in fact, but it does buoy me up to have you so pleased. I wonder what you will think of the Amy Leslie notice. It is a whopper.[1]

But oh, dearest, if you do not think you can travel with me I want to give the thing up right now. I wouldn't do it for less than a hundred and fifty, so that we could live in comfort and not have much difficulty in getting you comfortably fixed to write each place. At

least, that is the way it seems to me, but if you could not be comfortable going along I could not be comfortable going alone. This visit to Chicago has proven that I simply won't go through such misery again. I expect to come flying home at the end of this week unless something comes of "Conscience" for vaudeville, but if they are going to use it for that, and the try-out comes out all right, I expect you to join me just as fast as you can. Truly, truly, lover, so long as I am so wrapped up in you and so long as my happiness is dependent entirely on you, I do not intend to try to content myself at long distance. I've had four weeks of that, and it's enough. Hereafter we must arrange things differently, that's all.

It has been such a beautiful day here, and as I swung along my heart sang with joy at the thought of my home-cooking. I almost wanted to cry with sweet memories when, on my way, I went to the little teashop on Fifty-seventh Street where we once ate such a hearty lunch. When I say sweet memories, though, it seems as though they were never more sweet than the most recent ones. If love endures it grows tenfold, doesn't it? I wonder when we are a great deal older whether it can be much more intense than it is now. I am so content loving you so much as I do, and I suffered so terrifically last week under the strain of opening without you to comfort me, that I think I love you quite enough. Baby—Oh, calling you that makes me think of Mrs. Lengel. It seems rather bad that she is to become a mother when they are having so many difficulties, but if they really want a child now there is nothing could equal going ahead and having it—no amount of financial preparedness could outweigh the glory of that. I cannot help envying her a little—though a Lengel baby could not be half so nice as a Markham-Dreiser baby—so I really have nothing to envy.

. . . . . (at the theatre)[2] Every one is combining to make a fuss over me. It is too thrilling. Senor M has a beautiful but thin voice, and is quite inartistic in his interpretation, holding notes for the mere self-gratification of trailing them out as long as possible, and like crudities. He was quite naive to meet. I played around at a great rate, stopping to talk to no one for more than two minutes—it is

the only way I can drive the blues off at times, just acting like a damn-fool.

. . . . . Dearest, now I must look back. I find I have written quite a letter. Will you be glad to get it? I think so. I imagine you are quite as glad to get my letters as I am to get yours—dearest, my better half. Oh, lover, I can hardly wait to hold you in my arms, to look into your eyes, to touch your dear lips. Oh, baby-heart, do you want to be mothered as I want tonight to mother you, my husband and child in one! I am no longer so dreadfully lonely, but now the fever of anticipation is eating me up, dear lover-boy.

[1] Markham was justifiably proud of the review of *Conscience* by the eminent critic Amy Leslie, who devoted half of her review of the four one-act plays to Markham's performance. Featuring Markham's photograph and a subhead asserting "Brilliant Young Woman. Kirah Markham a Promise Fulfilled," Leslie called her "a brilliant young actress in full blossom" who "is a stately, graceful, vibrant creature, with an effulgent voice, superb poise and a technical proficiency which is not so much education as inspiration" and projected a "career full of splendid promises" ("'Bundle Day Comes to Fine Arts Theatre," Chicago *Daily News*, 6 March 1915: 16).

[2] Ellipses and parentheses are in the transcript. It's not clear whether they are by Markham or by the transcriber.

242. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Tuesday, Mch 9—1915

Honey Kid:

Gee, but I'm glad your coming home. I haven't figured out exactly how were going to live, ad interim, but I'm glad just the same, trusting to luck. I know you'll get something eventually and so will I—so heigh ho! But in the meantime do be sensible and get the copies of the papers which referred to you. They will be so useful. I need some. And if you go in the vaudeville sketch take no less than $150 for yourself. An act like that ought to

command $500 as a headliner and no doubt will. Your share as the leading character is little enough at $150.

I'm so much happier today in the thought that I am going to see you soon that I could write on and on in a lazy, genial spring mood fashion. It's still warmer here than yesterday and brighter. When you get here we may have one or two days in which you and I can tramp and love each other. When I think how we swing along & how, when with you I'm oblivious of so much else I feel quite like a kid again. If you sign up for a vaudeville term, lets meet somewhere soon or I'll be disconsolate. And one thing—you'd better borrow a little money from your father until we see where we get off. I think we'll make out alright though, even if you have to loaf awhile. Doesn't it seem a little queer to you that The Fine Arts, having made a strike through you wouldn't advertise and call the attention of the public to your work & their judgement? Or don't they really care? And aren't you going to be paid for your rehearsals after that definite telegram?

An invitation today from Mae Powys for next Sunday evening to meet Jack & a Mrs. Woodhouse who is very anxious to meet me. Also another invitation from that Mrs. Cooper—(Mrs. Pearl Cooper) the wife of the pianist who was here to play, to come up Friday evening. The Nordfeldts are to be there. An invitation from your rival (Sophia Braslau) to attend the opera next Saturday afternoon on a free seat provided by her. She wouldn't provide you one—but when your back, unless she cares to share us together there is no more exchange of courtesies between us. Crygorn first—or won't you believe that—even though I care so much. An invitation from Ida Vera[1] over the phone to come up some night this week. I am to cut the Cooper & Braslau & Ida Vera affairs unless I get very lonely—for I need the time to read. If your tomorrows letter confirms you soon home-coming I'll almost be sure to for I won't feel half so lonely as I have been feeling. Aren't you ashamed to make me suffer so—you long distance magnet.

Saw Fritz Krog today at Bellevue. Really & truly—and I feel very sad about that—I think he's gone. He told me of a lunatic move he made in conversation with Frank A. Munsey[2] last fall—ordering

a car to be set & paid for by Munsey—a $3,000 car—and when I asked him to explain it he seemed to become confused and that frightened me. I'm afraid his mind is really weak. He starts with wrong premises and that is fatal. I talked to the house physician. He said the symptoms I described were flags of a slow break down—cases like them coming up every day. Isn't it dreadful. And he was truly so brilliant.

There is no other news that I know of, save that I love you. In this stormy world, where things go round & round and break up so amazingly and so pathetically, this little lamp of love is best of all. Your line—"but were holding hands together"[3] comes back to me over & over. In the eternal dark or light what else is there?

Sweetheart mine, come on home and we'll hold fast to each other & weather two sweet old, mad old, bad old dream together.

L—

[1] Ida Vera Simonton (1870–1931), writer and lecturer who had traveled in Africa in 1906 and 1907 and wrote about her observations for a number of magazines, including the *Delineator* when Dreiser was its editor. For her novel *Hell's Playground* (1912), an expose of missionary work in Africa, she convinced Dreiser to allow her to publish a press release under his name, in which "Dreiser" claimed, "it is the most virile novel ever written by a woman" and that "he" had "discovered Miss S- while I was editor of the Del" (Simonton to Dreiser, n.d., DPUP).

[2] Frank Andrew Munsey (1854–1925), newspaper and magazine publisher, who pioneered low-cost production techniques to bring down an issue's price to ten cents per copy, less than half the usual price at the time. Among his magazines were *Munsey's, Argosy*, and *Railroad*.

[3] See Dreiser to Markham, 22 Feb. 1915, letter 218.

243. Markham to Dreiser

March 9, 1915

Sweetie Boy—

Good morning! Unless something comes of "Conscience" from a vaudeville point of view I shall be with you next week this time.

Isn't it nice to think of? Oh, baby, I think I am going to succeed now. We will soon make enough money that we need never be separated. Next time we come to Chicago we will not think anything of paying twenty-five a week for our suite or room, will we, dear? We are just going to do wonders.

Dearest, you make me laugh when you say I should know my lines, in connection with my blunders last Thursday night. Ask any actor, and they will tell you such things will happen when you have been playing a part for months. In fact, we discovered in going over the difficulties of that night that Mr. K had thrown me the wrong cue.[1] Of course I should be master of the situation enough to slide back and catch the thing up. I could have had I not been worn out, but that night it was too much for me. Really, dear, people are generally of the impression that I was exceedingly plucky to go ahead and open with my bum ankle, no matter how big a chance it was for me, and that a reaction second night was the most natural thing in the world. It was one bad performance, and yet there were players from The Little Theatre out there who never knew anything had gone wrong. Aside from them, the audience was an abomination—made up, beyond a doubt, of people who had seen in the papers that one or two of the plays were risqué. They laughed vilely on every possible occasion, and even when I took off my dress they saw something to be amused at, so that I wanted to blush for them.

I absolutely agree to the suicide pact—any way you please to put it.[2]

[1] Mr. K: Walter Kingsford (1881–1958), who plays a reporter in the play. Kingsford was an English actor who had appeared in *Alice in Wonderland* (as the Frog Footman) in the Chicago opening in February 1915, before going with the play to Broadway later in March. He would become a distinguished Broadway, film, and TV actor.

[2] See Dreiser to Markham, 7 March 1915, letter 239.

244. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Wed. Mch 10—1915

Sweetest Kid:

I'm wondering heavily tonight whether it's really true that this Sunday will see you en-route and that Monday, at the latest, I may expect to see you. It seems almost impossible—as if something is certain to turn up which will interfere. I sincerely hope not. Tonight I passed Renganeschis[1] on my way out and seeing it newly painted and hard, green rubber plants standing in the windows went in. There sat Madam, as fresh as ever, viewing a newly papered & painted world. Twelve guests—9 men & three ladies were in the place—all who dined there tonight. I asked why the long silence. She said: "We could not get a lease." So they shut up shop until the land lord came to terms! It does not seem possible. The same soup, fish, meat, sphgetti, chicken & fruit for desert were served. I could scarcely eat for thinking of you and came away depressed. The only times I have been in there has been with you & I should not have gone alone tonight

Last night I went to Moquins instead of PHs[2] for at the last moment the Praher-Gomez outfit phoned they could not come. At one of the tables I saw Mrs. W^m^ Neil Smith[3] dining with another man and looked discreetly away, not wishing to seem inquisitive. After a time she sent over and begged me to join her. To my astonishment I saw that she was a little over-seas and in the hours conversation I had with them it developed that W^m^ Neil has left her and that she and the child are in the country living on alimony. She seemed all broken up, cried, made all sorts of rash & foolish statements which showed a nervously upset mind. I did my best to make her see that brooding wouldn't help & that she ought to pull herself together & find something to do, but no use. She began [to] implore me to return to Mrs D- and begin helping to straighten out the world. Therefore I left rather precipitately, promising to see her some other time. I never saw a woman

more knocked out—nor adrift. And she lays it mostly to Charlie Towne[4] who was & is very close to Smith & poisoned (so she says) his mind against her. You could have knocked me down with a feather. As I looked at her I could see why Smith might leave her but not exactly why he should. To some extent it's the time[s]. I think everyone feels more conscious of their individuality and right to liberty & privacy today than ever before. But when I see how eagerly I hang on to you these days I begin to see, or know rather, that it's all a matter of personality & harmony. If it endures, glory be. If not the thing is to do move out, if you die for it.

Also in Mouquins (28th St) I saw Max Eastman who kept studying me in the mirror. I think he saw Mrs. Smith weeping over my hands & no doubt wondered. He may have thought it an old or new flame. So you see how one may be unconsciously damned—if your reputation is bad to begin with.

So you may go into vaudeville. It seems so odd for you, though with such an ad as this I don't believe it would do you a bit of harm. If you do go wire me anyhow what you think we ought to do. If it can be arranged I want to join you for a while anyhow. This lonely sensation is so bad I don't want to stand it much longer. Sometimes I think you set up a wireless agitation in me which is depressing & yet which is entirely apart from my real strength. Are you a witch—a long distance enchanter. It seems so to me. But Oh lord, how empty of viscera I feel at times. And I never felt that way before with anyone.

Clear & pleasant here today. I'm dreaming of Monday—a sweet night, a good walk soon thereafter. Your todays letter was longest and best—but you only wrote you said because you couldn't find some other place to linger. Aren't you ashamed of yourself. I don't mind though. Play on. It's good for you.

But think—only five days until Monday when you arrive.

Woops!
L—

[1] Renganeschi's Italian Restaurant was located at 139 West 10th Street, just a few doors from Dreiser's flat. The restaurant was the subject of a John Sloan painting, *Renganeschi's Saturday Night* (1912).

[2] Mouquin's Restaurant stood at Sixth Avenue and 28th Street. Like Polly Holladay's, it was a popular meeting place for artists, writers, and others and, like Renganeschi's, became the subject of a painting by William Glackens, *At Mouquin's* (1905).

[3] Florence Smith. See Dreiser to Hyman, 20 May 1913, letter 82, in which Dreiser perceived her as "the most faithful of wives."

[4] Charles Hanson Towne (1877–1949), editor, poet, literary agent. In 1907 Towne left the *Smart Set* to join Dreiser's staff at the *Delineator*, where he was a fiction editor; he later served as Dreiser's agent for a short period.

245. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Thursday, Mch 11—1915

Honey Kid:

Your todays letter was even better than yesterdays for it seemed to make certain the fact that you are coming back Monday. No word having reached me of any offer from the vaudeville manager I presume that idea will hang fire for a time. Even so, I wish I wish I could see you in an evening of one act plays—Langners "Licensed," Tafts "Conscience" and something with a touch of fun in it would be the idea. In "Licensed" I would rather see you do the mother almost than the girl. It would give you such a chance for middleaged character work—and it's about the best part in the thing anyhow, "My Ladys Mirror"[1] wouldn't make a bad fourth—although it isn't much. But it shows you in such a dandy role. If you ever do stock anywhere get them to let you present a "Markham Evening" and then do all four.

Today I finished "Predestined" which I am convinced was inspired by "Sister Carrie."[2] It reads like it. As a matter of fact I think that "Joan Thursday" and "Vandover and the Brute" sprang from the same source. Maybe not but there is something about them which suggests an outside source of inspiration. "Predestined" is far and away the best of the three—one of the best American books I know anything about. They all lack that soft, sensuous life-loving quality that one finds in Frenssen.[3] He has the sweetest,

most enduring out of any of them—not so acrid and not at all hard or vulgar.

I meant to tell you long ago that the meaning of the word "cadgy" is tricky as I used it[4] but in looking it up I find it means mirthful also lustful, which is not what I meant at all. There is one form of it cadge—which means to beg—artfully perhaps and that may be where I derived my use of it. But even so I was wrong. Had you looked it up before you asked.

The flowers you planted have done variously. The ones in the row nearest the window (white blossoms) grew so tall & spindling and bloomed so thinly and meagerly that I had to cut them off. They looked like seeding wild onions. The second row, with one or two exceptions have blossomed & swelled into giant blooms of pink & blue which fill the air of the room with perfume. There are several which appear to be intending to bloom white but they are very slow in getting under way. The third row—thin little wild oniony looking things are so spindling & frail that nothing will come of them I fear. If it were warm enough for them to go outside they would flourish at once, I am sure.

No new bath tub yet, but you can have hot water. The cost of coal is going to drop off pretty quick here now, for our semi-warm days. I notice I need very little fire. The last ton I bought will carry us through I think—making 5 tons or 35^{00} for the winter. And I am satisfied Mrs. White used all of two tons for herself. We ought to use wood after the middle of April don't you think?

I have to smile at your asking me to wait until you come to buy my suit. I'll have to whether I want or not for I couldn't possibly approach Lane for a hundred or even less until after the 16th and I haven't enough to get a suit before. But if I had I rather wait & get you to help me for I know your taste is better than mine. And anyhow we can have a little fun looking for it, can't we. I propose to buy it ready made somewhere.

Poor Kid, with your sprained ankle, I feel so sorry for you. Isn't it getting good and well? My shoulder & arm has ceased aching but now for two days I've had a most severe pain in the right side of my head at the back. I wonder if a thing like that could come from cold.

It's gray and Marchy here today but the condition of the weather doesn't bother me any now that you are coming back. This try out has done you so much good because for once & all it must have established confidence in yourself in you. After the Little Theatre and this, and your handling of Dells things and the Lure film you cannot really ever think that you are lacking in anything but a chance. And that is sure to come. And then maybe, someday, we'll have a theatre of our own. George—how I'd love to select & stage things with you.

But enough. I gotta go eat. In looking through old book stores anywhere if you see a copy of

1. By Bread Alone—I. K. Friedman
2. "The Story of Eva"—Will Payne (a good copy)
3. "Moran of the Lady Letty" by Frank Norris,
4. "Life on the Mississippi" by Mark Twain,
5. "Pat and Shorty" by James French Whitman
6. "Wolfville Days" by Alfred Henry Lewis
7. "With the Procession" Henry B. Fuller, or
8. "The Cliff Dwellers"—by the same author
9. "Main Traveled Roads" by Hamlin Garland
10. "Georges Mother" by Stephen Crane,
11. "Checkers" by Henry M. Blossom[5]

—pick them up, being careful to pick the earliest Editions (1st if possible) and never paying more than 50 cents for any one of them. Notify me if you find anything because at odd moments I am looking here. I want to complete my collection of sound American realism.

So much love. Think, by Monday night maybe, I'll have you in my lap and we'll be talking over things in general at close range.

L—

From a note from Langner I learn that the village must have heard of your success for he says "I am so glad that Kirah made such a hit in Chicago." Think of the sad Ida Rauh.

[1] *My Lady's Mirror*, by Floyd Dell, staged at Liberal Club in 1915, dedicated to Markham, and published as *Legend* in *King Arthur's Socks and Other Village Plays* (1922). See also Dreiser to Markham, [25 Sept. 1915], n. 2, letter 257.

[2] *Predestined* traces the inevitable decline of its protagonist, Felix Piers, through his addiction to alcohol despite his resolve to master his fate and become a writer. The novel is divided into four sections, each centered on a woman in Felix's life; Dreiser is no doubt thinking of "Marie," about an actress who rises while Felix deteriorates. Though similar in plot in the "Marie" section, *Predestined* and *Sister Carrie* differ in treatment, with the most notable distinction being that *Predestined* follows Felix's perceptions rather than Carrie's.

[3] Gustav Frenssen (1863–1945), German novelist whose novels celebrate German regional life. Three of Frenssen's books are in Dreiser's library, including an English translation of *Holyland* (1906).

[4] See Dreiser to Markham, 24 Feb. 1915, letter 222.

[5] Dreiser doesn't always have the correct names and titles. The works are as follows:

Isaac Kahn Friedman (1870–1930), novelist, journalist, and sociologist at the University of Chicago. *By Bread Alone* (1901) concerns the clash between capital and labor during a steel mill strike modeled upon the Homestead strike of 1892.

Will Payne (1865–1954), financial journalist and novelist. *The Story of Eva* (1901) is about a young woman who, fleeing a bad marriage, lives with another man in Chicago and drifts apart before both realize their true love for one another and marry.

Frank Norris (1870–1902), journalist and novelist. In *Moran of the Lady Letty: A Story of Adventure Off the California Coast* (1898), Norris's first published novel, a young man of society, shanghaied into a shark-fishing schooner, falls for a tomboy survivor of a wreck (Moran) and learns what "manhood" means.

Mark Twain (pen name for Samuel Langhorne Clemens, 1835–1910), writer, essayist, and humorist. *Life on the Mississippi* (1883) is a memoir of Clemens's days as a steamboat pilot on the Mississippi River.

Stephen French Whitman (1880–1948), novelist, whose *The Happy Ship: Setting Forth the Adventures of Shorty and Patrick, U. S. S. Oklahoma* (1913) is a humorous novel about two sailors and their adventures in the Pacific Ocean.

Alfred Henry Lewis (1855–1914), journalist, editor, and novelist. Of his novels, seven form a series centered on life in the frontier town of Wolfville. The third of these, *Wolfville Days* (1902), is a series of tales told by the Old Cattleman.

Henry Blake Fuller (1857–1929), Chicago novelist. *The Cliff-Dwellers* (1893), Fuller's most widely read novel, is about businessmen set among Chicago's skyscrapers; *With the Procession* (1895) follows the efforts of the wealthy to keep up "with the procession" of Chicago's growth and modernism. Dreiser had earlier read both novels, in 1903 (see *Riggio, America Diaries*, 86–87, 105).

Hamlin Garland (1860–1940), a writer now known mostly for his fiction about the American Midwest, but also a romanticist of the Far West and autobiographer. *Main-Travelled Roads* (1891) is the book that made Garland's reputation as the foremost realist of the Midwest, a collection of six stories about life on frontier farms.

Stephen Crane (1871–1900), journalist, poet, short story writer, novelist. *George's Mother* (1896), Crane's third novel and a companion piece to his first, *Maggie, A Girl of the Streets* (1893), is about George Kelcey's struggles to escape his mother's beratement amid his infatuation with Maggie.

Henry Blossom (1866–1919), playwright, opera librettist, lyricist, novelist. *Checkers: A Hard Luck Story* (1896), the second of Blossom's two novels, follows a businessman as he tries to resist the lure of horse-betting.

246. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Friday, Mch. 12—1915

Dearest Kid:

No letter today, up to 6:30 P.M.—the last delivery. What's loose? Or did the letter just miscarry. It seems that I haven't a word to tell you beyond the fact that the pain in the right half of my head seems to grow worse, rather than better. It's troubled me a bit today & I don't know whether it's due to eye-strain or neuralgia or both. If it's no better tomorrow I'll have to see a doctor, I think.

Am very tired tonight from just plain reading. Kaufmanns "The House of Bondage"[1] is very dull. I knew him years ago as a reporter on the Philly Press & then he was delightful. His first novel was poor stuff, though spirited & this appears to be no better though

I think, now that I read it, that the "Lure" might have been lifted out of it bodily. It was published in 1910. But all that white light stuff is tawdry to me—not worth doing.

But hows my girlie? When I think of you I don't care whether the world is tawdry or not. Your not. And amid the clatter & the dust of the common flow it's so nice to have some one who really understands who is artistic and has her eye on the ideal. When I go about & hear the senseless gabbling of ducks I want to come home & wait for you so that we can really live together. The rest is just camping out.

But are you really coming. No letter today makes me think there is a hitch. If so I'm going to be disappointed. But tomorrow will bring some word of some kind & then I'll be more at ease. It's still chill here today but clearing. I have been meaning to say to you that Mrs. White asks after you all the time & constantly refers to how you like things arranged. The first day the clippings came I showed them to her.

"Oh, now, isn't that nice. She'll be pleased with that I know. Chicagos a big place now, isn't it? Like New York now, with theatres and all that. Isn't that fine. And her in one of them and her picture in the papers. She've made a hit. Well I'm glad. Her time has come. And she deserves it too."

She smiled and dusted around as she talked. I'm wondering from the way she merely looked at the picture whether she can read or write. But enough. I feel a little dull, a little disappointed and a little hungry. I think I'll eat & then write you first thing tomorrow & put a special delivery on so it will reach you Sunday A.M.—at lake Park Ave.[2] But do come on if you can.

L—

[1] Reginald Wright Kauffman (1878–1959), editor, publisher, novelist, and war correspondent for North American News Alliance during World War I. Dreiser's diaries record meetings with Kauffman in Philadelphia in 1903 (Riggio, *American Diaries*, 60, 72). *The House of Bondage* (1910) is a novel about forced prostitution in which a naïve girl from the country is seduced by a traveling salesman and then forced to work as a prostitute. As Dreiser goes on to mention,

the plot is indeed similar to that of *The Lure*, and like *The Lure*, *The House of Bondage* was adapted into a play and into a film, both in January 1914.

[2] By the time this letter reached the Fine Arts Theatre in Chicago, Markham had left for New York and the letter, as evidenced by its envelope, had been forwarded to 165 West 10th St. Dreiser did affix a special delivery stamp to the letter he wrote the next day.

247. Dreiser to Markham

Saturday, Mch 13—1915

Dearest Kid:

Since your letter today makes it perfectly sure that your coming I'll just send a word in the hope that it will reach you in time. As I wired Mr. Johnson phoned, asked where you were & then said "I suppose then theres no chance of getting her to undertake a part." I said I [would] wire. His answer was it might not be possible to wait. But I thought I'd wire anyhow.

It is curious but I was under the impression I had commented on the Amy Leslie review. It was splendid but no more than you deserve in my judgement. Still those clippings ought to do you a lot of good. You should have received fifty as I requested & sent me at least twelve. I'm so afraid you haven't done it.

It's lovely here today—warm & spring like. I want to walk but will wait until you get here. Isn't it fine in the spring to be in love & have your sweetheart with you. Life doesn't always treat one so nice—does it. Hurry on home. You'll get something here if the vaudeville stunt doesn't work out. Think how you'll be cuddled & squeezed when you get here.

L—

From 11 to 27 August 1915 Dreiser travelled to Indiana by automobile with Franklin Booth, gathering material for what would become A Hoosier Holiday.

248. Dreiser to Markham

The Roycroft Inn
East Aurora, NY

Sunday, Aug 15 1915

Honey Kid:

At last I get a chance to write you a note and quite by accident. Yesterday at a place called Avoca we studied a new map and found ourselves near the falls of the Genesee and also Warsaw New York. The same road led through East Aurora into Buffalo—so here we are, unable to pass because of curiosity. In spite of all prejudice I must admit that it is charming in its atmosphere—tramped over it is true by strolling companies like ourselves, but good anyhow. A lot of work has been put in the place. We have seen so much of simple country life that this is pleasant for a change.

But how is my honey kid. I have thought of you every day & wished you were along because I know how you would enjoy each step of the way. If ever we get a machine we will get up a tour of our own and different from any. I have practically dictated this one from the start because I didn't want to be bored with old things. We have changed the route so that from here we will probably cross into Canada if we can & come back into the U.S. at Detroit, running from there across country to Ft. Wayne & Warsaw and so down to Carmel and Indianapolis.[1] There I will get a real letter from you I'm sure.

I'm sure I love you in spite of all my seeming nots for at night I miss you and by day I think of you an alive and graceful thing—something like Amy Leslie described you. Be a good girl and think of me. I wish youd have my blue suit pressed & express it to Carmel. I'm afraid I'll need it. How are the Dells & Masters & Mame. If I had Gertrudes[2] address I'd call on her in Detroit.

Do you miss me. Franklin sends his regards.

I love my Kiddie
L

[1] Despite his intentions, Dreiser and Booth did not motor into Canada but instead traveled along the shore of Lake Erie to Cleveland, Ohio, and then to Fort Wayne, Indiana. In *A Hoosier Holiday*, Dreiser

explains that they did not go via Canada because of extra scrutiny of baggage and increased taxes brought on by war-time precautions (New York: John Lane, 1916, 173–74).

[2] Gertrude Hopkins Nelson, Dreiser's niece.

249. Dreiser to Markham

Carmel, Ind.

Friday, Aug 20—1915

Honey Kid:

Just arrived here, having done Warsaw, Silver Lake, Manchester, Ft Wayne & Wabash in the north. Monday, sure, we will leave for Terre Haute where a Gen. Delivery letter would reach me that day. Tuesday we will be in Vincennes and Wednesday in Evansville. Same day & Thursday we will do Linton, Ind & Bloomington Ind. Gen Delivery at latter place would surely catch me. Thursday, also, if all is well, I will reach Indianapolis & take train east, though I can't be positive. I'll be coming by Friday, anyhow.

My how I have missed you & your nice long smooth body. I haven't written because I've been too tired & rushed & that's the truth. All day the car vibrated too much to make even notes. We did over 1500 miles in our roundabout runs. Rose usually at 6 A.M. and were still riding at 9, 10 & even 11 & 12 at night some nights. In each town of any import I tried to write a card or two, but besides yourself there were Mame, Sylvia (she never forgive me if hadn't sent her some & she ever heard), Jones, Masters, Dell—Ed[1] and a few others who got one or two. I wanted to write you at Warsaw N.Y. but was too fagged.

Franklin proved to be a good traveling companion & "Speed" Duncan the chauffeur[2] was always amusing & a fine driver. I saw loads of interesting things. Warsaw proved very painful to me as I fear will Evansville, T.H. & Sullivan. I wished every night as I turned into a good bed in some new hotel that you were there to share it with me. There would have been some brick work now & then.

What a lucky girl you are. $50 and $10 and $18. That makes $78. Your going some. Well, spend it for clothes. You surely need it. And don't think of anything else.

By the way did you send my blue suit. This gray one is dusty & my linen one is too light to wear tonight. It is cold & rainy here. Mrs. Booth[3] says the mail man says there is a registered package at the P.O. for me, but I presume that is proofs as Jones writes me he sent some just six days ago.[4] They know of no other package. If you haven't sent it by the time this reaches you don't bother. I'll have to get along without.

It's raining hard today—the first time since last Thursday. All our days were fine but one. Today we came all the way down state in the rain—and still it was interesting. My grip got soaked, but not the things inside. Booths car is a good one—fine really.

You saw what Bigelow said.[5] We'll go, eh? And I hope you connect with some new good play but with only such a one as will do you some real good. I think the Reichers might be of some service to you but only on condition that they give you a conspicuous role. I fancy your best opourtunities will come through Dixie Hines.[6]

I'm sorry about Edgar Lee.[7] He's a very moody soul & can't be handled very easily. It's quite possible he got a letter from some western lady and hurried back. His soul is possessed of women. If he had found a really interesting one in N.Y. he would have staid.

Well, write me once more as above anyhow. It was so dark here when I came that I can't tell you anything about this place save that it is a nice commonplace house in a fairly wide lawn. I have good though [illegible] furnished chamber. Am so sleep[y] I'll crawl in. Wish you were here to push up against me. I hope when I get back that you have your nice new dress to put on.

Much, much love—

L.

[1] Dreiser's brother, Edward Dresser. Other persons referred to in this sentence are sisters Mame Brennan and Sylvia Dreiser, J. Jefferson Jones of the John Lane Company, Edgar Lee Masters, and Floyd Dell.

[2] Not much is known about Dreiser's driver. In *A Hoosier Holiday* Dreiser refers to his chauffeur only as "Speed," whom he describes as "A blond, lithe, gangling youth with an eerie farmer-like look and smile" (22). In his travel notes for the book, Dreiser describes him thus: "He

looks like a character out of Eugenically Speaking" (entry for 7 Aug., folder 8084, DPUP).

[3] Susan Wright Booth (1847–1926); Dreiser is staying at the Booth family home in Carmel, Indiana.

[4] Dreiser is awaiting galley proofs of *The "Genius."*

[5] Poultney Bigelow had written several brief letters inviting Dreiser and Markham to visit.

[6] (George Wilmer) Dixie Hines (1872–1928), producer and influential theatrical press agent who wrote a widely syndicated column of theatrical news and gossip. Markham became a cast member of Reicher's the Modern Stage, performing in Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson's *When the Young Vine Blooms*, which opened on 16 November 1915; and in Gerhart Hauptmann's *The Weavers*, which opened on 14 December 1915.

[7] Edgar Lee Masters.

250. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ: *LTW*]

Carmel, Ind

Sat. Aug 21—1915

My Glossy Kid:

Letters pour in here so regularly that in spite of all my cards I feel rather behind and in your debt. But as I said on the road I had so little time and Monday I'll be on the road again, hurrying to get done. This A.M. a registered package of proofs from Jones arrived—galleys 1 to 34 inclusive & I had to sit down & read them at once, which took from 9:30 AM to 4 P.M.—so you see how my time is used up. Then in spite of a pouring rain Franklin wanted me to go out & see a fine beach woods near here, which we did, returning in time for dinner. After that a neighbor who likes my books—a Miss Somebody, school teacher—came in and I had to be pleasant for an hour. Now I'm getting my first chance to write you, but it won't do much good as I understand that in this christian country no mails are carried on the train on Sunday! and the last bags are sent out of here before 7 Saturday—so if this reaches you way late you will understand.

It's very charming here as the country always is. The town is nothing—a few churches & stores. Booths house is nice—a conventional frame house with a nice veranda on two sides & green and white awnings. He has a fine studio at the back of this long lot which runs through from one street to another. His studio faces the other street.

I wish we could have a hut or studio on the lake at Warsaw. The two nearest lakes—those more convenient to the town are untouched. What little summer life once existed on them has gone to Winona 5 miles away in another direction, so one could get a most wonderful place cheap. And a row boat would put you at the door of the shopping centre in 10 minutes. Isn't that wonderful, when you think of it?—a beautiful little lake between you & the heart of the town. We ought to go out there some time.

So the dog arrived at last![1] It never rains but it pours, does it. Your work for Grace Potter interests me.[2] I know you'll take fine pictures. I wish you could rig yourself up now and have the Greek pictures taken.[3] You'd take such wonderful pictures that I'm sure they'd sell and you'd make some money that way.

Well, I can't think of a word more to say save that I love you & wish you were out here or I were down there—only every time I get in the country I wish we could live in the country always. I guess I'm a regular country jake anyway. The town don't interest me so much anymore. Here the bed is so good and the air so fresh the food so tasty that I could stay here weeks if you were here. Booths people are simply farmers moved to town. They farmed east of here for years until finally they sold the place & moved here. His father is nearly 80 and very feeble. His mother is quite old too—and an old maid sister looks after the place with the aid of the mother.

Well, honey, Monday, we move again. My route for letters will be
Monday—Terre Haute Gen Delivery
Tuesday—Sullivan & Vincennes—Gen. Del
Wednesday—Evansville & Bloomington " "
Thursday—Carmel—and then home.
I am getting interesting notes and can certainly make an interesting book out of it.

Well, so long Kiddie. I think of you at various hours and wish I could turn you over and handle you to suit. Be a nicey girl. You'll see me next week again.

Love
L—

The "Genius" reads fine in type.

[1] Markham had arranged to take care temporarily of a neighbor's dog.
[2] For Potter, see Dreiser to Markham, 4 Feb. 1914, n. 5, letter 135. It's unclear what, if any, working relationship existed between Markham and Potter.
[3] With Dreiser's encouragement, Markham had been planning to have marketable photos taken of herself in various Greek costumes such as those she used as Andromache, the role she had been playing in *The Trojan Women* when they first met.

251. Dreiser to Markham

Carmel, Ind.

Aug 22nd 1915

Honey Cryhon:

Today is Sunday and a typical country Sunday it has been. There is a Quaker church over the way but this Quaker church is like any other for they have left the old beaten path sufficient to have music (a piano if you please) a church bell, hymns, (the regular kind) a preacher, etc, etc. They evidently never read George Fox.[1] This A.M. the hymns were resounding while I was fixing up my notes.

Today I have done nothing but sit about and shake hands with strolling visitors. Endless autos go by here from Indianapolis and elsewhere. All the farmers seem to have them—good autos too—not Fords. The horse is certainly passing out. We had a fine chicken dinner here—and another fried chicken supper. We intended to go to Indianapolis to take tea with the D. M. Perrys—he was formerly president of the Manufacturers Association of America[2] but just as we got to the edge of this burgh two tires blew out and we had to come back as we couldn't make it. So we ate here instead.

And this is a quiet family, surely. They are as noiseless as eels. We move about or sit about in silence. All are soft voiced. There is no piano, no one to sing, no vigorous talkers. We have a victrola, but only a moderate selection of I. I read all the P.M. in a Greek mythology book. I think your right. One would want to live in a community where a few intellectuals of sort could be found. Apparently there are none here.

Tomorrow if nothing happens we leave for Terre Haute. I would have used my blue suit here but it hasn't showed up, so far. I really need a straw hat & may get one tomorrow. Do hope you are getting along comfortably in my absence. Now is the time for lunches teas and dinners with Roth, Benrimo,[3] Hines, Uncle Maxey, the lute maker and what not. I don't doubt you are out and around in grand style. Your a deep and mysterious soul. Well, have a good time. I hope you do. In the mean while I'll get through this job & see what I can make out of it. It promises rather well. But don't pay any attention to me. I'm merely teasing. I think of you all the time & wish you were here. Much love.

L—

Hows the dog? They have the cutest Spitz bitch here I have nearly ever seen—a beauty.

[1] George Fox (1624–1691) was a founder of the Religious Society of Friends, commonly known as the Quakers. His *Autobiography* and *Letters* had appeared in multiple editions. The traditional Quaker service took place in a meeting house with elders, rather than a minister, presiding. Dreiser describes his questioning about the Quaker service in Carmel in *A Hoosier Holiday*, 363.

[2] David M. Parry (1852–1915) was president of the National Association of Manufacturers from 1902–1905 and the founder of Parry Auto company. A conservative who agitated for anti-labor policies, he died on 12 May 1915—three months before this letter. Dreiser writes about the proposed trip in *A Hoosier Holiday*, where he describes Parry as "the most strenuous opponent of organized labor that the country up to his day had produced" and his own general antipathy for both "organized labor" and "organized manufacturers," though for the moment he is more in sympathy with labor; Dreiser's interest lies in seeing the Perry estate (379–81).

[3] "Roth" is a friend of Markham, perhaps the actor Edmund Roth, about whom little is known. See also Dreiser to Markham, 22 May 1916, letter 322. J. Harry Benrimo (1874–1942), actor, playwright, and director who notably coauthored, with George C. Hazelton, Jr., *The Yellow Jacket: A Chinese Play Done in a Chinese Manner* (1912).

252. Dreiser to Markham

Terre Haute House
Terre Haute, Ind.

Aug 23rd 1915

Honey Sweet:

It only came to me this A.M. when I was leaving Carmel—got your note wondering about when my letters would begin to come that I had skipped your birthday.[1] It has pained me all day. I intended doing something about it the week before and if I had thought I would surely have sent a telegram. As it is it's all over and here I am regretting it. Will you forgive me? Next time I won't forget.

This morning at 10 we left Carmel & went into Indianapolis where I dropped my laundry & was compelled to indulge in a pair of yellow shoes. My others had cracked so. Then we came on here & I began to hunt up such things as I could remember—St. Josephs church & school, the old house at 12th & Walnut, my father's mill & the like. I found the house & the church, but no mill. It is torn down. This place is full of pale recollections for me—most curious.[2]

At Carmel we dropped Speed, who lives there, and took on a new chauffeur, a cripple, but very good. The ride over was delightful and in the morning we are going to strike out for Sullivan Vincennes and Evansville. Undoubtedly well reach Evansville by tomorrow night and then Wednesday we'll go through Linton, Bloomington and Indianapolis and unless something interferes I'll be ready to start back Thursday. Will let you know. I'm so glad your busy & that your Armstrong engagement didn't fall through.[3] I'm sure it will do you a little good—give you some money to get some clothes.

Terre Haute is a queer city—more interesting than Indianapolis in its way though not so larger. It is more compact and more

liberal in its air. Indianapolis is full of foreners. The Wabash river here looks very large on account of the rains. They say we have beautiful roads South to Evansville and I hope so. Some of those today were very bad. Local roads make a country seem even handsomer than it is, if it is handsome.

But I'm wondering how my kid is now, not about T-H-. Your letters have been very short for 3 days & tomorrow I won't get any—probably not Wednesday. Did you get yourself shoes & stockings and some other necessary things. I hope so. When I see how the western Americans roll about with means I get very disgruntled, not so much for myself as for you. You need good clothes to get ahead.

Do you really love me anymore, or is the stage occupying you now completely. I always think once you get plenty to do you won't care so much anymore though I wouldn't want you to bother with sentiment if it didn't aid you. But I think I shall always love you after my fashion as Dowson says—a very queer fashion you'll say.[4] Think of me any how & wish me peace for I'm always brooding as I ride & never quite happy away from you. If this reaches you in time write me one more letter, c/o Booth at Carmel.

Lovingly
L—

[1] Markham was born on 18 August 1891.

[2] Dreiser describes his visit to Terre Haute in search of his birthplace and St. Benedict School in *A Hoosier Holiday*, 409–13.

[3] Paul Armstrong (1869–1915), American playwright, who died of a heart attack on 31 August 1915. Newspapers had announced Markham to play the lead in a revival of Armstrong's vaudeville one-act satire, *Woman Proposes* (1913), in which a man convinces a woman that women entrap men into proposing marriage. It's not clear whether the planned performance took place, but if it did, it was likely in Brooklyn, where it was announced on 6 September 1915 to play at B. F. Keith's Orpheum Theatre (*New York American*, 6 Sept. 1915: 6). Armstrong had been married to Rella Abell Armstrong (1878–1950), whom Dreiser met in Europe during his 1912 tour; after the Armstrongs divorced in 1913, Dreiser later formed a liaison with Rella (see Riggio, *LTW*, 219).

[4] Dreiser is referring to the poem "Cynara" (1907), by the English poet Ernest Christopher Dowson (1867–1900), where the line reads, "I have been faithful to thee, Cynara! in my fashion."

253. Dreiser to Markham

Hotel Kidd
Princeton, Ind.

Tuesday Aug [24] 1915

Honey Girl:

We didn't quite make Evansville tonight—not that we couldn't have but we decided not to go on. Came down from Terre Haute through Sullivan & Vincennes. Sullivan was a sad blow to me—so tame and dull. Vincennes wasn't much better. It hasn't grown 5000 in 30 years. The sun blazed all day & then tonight a full moon came out & it [is] warm & lovely. Can't tell you how lovely it seemed. Most of the route tonight was through a low fertile river valley like that of the Euphrates I presume. Few towns but splendid farms. Am tired now but wish you were here. Have a nice large room now with a nice large bed but no kid to keep me company. You won't have time to write me any more after you get this but you'll see me soon. Will write or wire exact time of arrival.[1] Much love.

L—

[1] On 27 August Dreiser telegraphed that he would "ARRIVE SATURDAY PENNSYLVANIA ONE FORTY-FIVE GET GENIUS PROOFS FROM JONES."

In September Dreiser returned to his friend Poultney Bigelow's place on the Hudson River for a brief visit, leaving Markham behind at their 10th Street flat to work with the Modern Stage productions of The Weavers *and* When the Young Vine Blooms.

254. Dreiser to Markham

Bigelow Homestead.
Malden on Hudson, New York.
Tuesday, Sept 14—1915

Honey Kid:

It's very beautiful here now but I'm afraid my stay is to be of short duration. It appears that they are to leave early next week for some points in Virginia. This week end there are to be seven or eight people here—all sorts—which prospect does not please me at all. I think I'll come back Friday. I wish we had some cheap place back in Jersey or Rockland Co. N.Y. (that was where Madge Jenisons artist friends were) to which we could retire for a week or so. I like the country & would enjoy working in a quiet place—wouldn't you?

Mrs. Bigelow has some dandy flowers now which I have just been looking at.[1] She has made a kind of country garden to one side of the house. It's almost as warm here as it was in N.Y. only the air is so much fresher. Last night I slept in our bed upstairs with all the windows open and slept like a log. This A.M.—at seven if you please—we had breakfast on the veranda, off in the north corner—a space nicely concealed from the sun by a screen. It was very pleasing. Last evening we sat on the porch until after ten—an hour, I could see, that was late for them. This morning they are planning a trip to a town called Palenville, 10 miles west to visit some [illegible], and B- is already calling me to come on. They seemed to be really disappointed at not seeing you. I think you made a really [word omitted] impression.

Well, hows how? Did the pages come? And what about Forts book.[2] Write and tell me? I wish we were off in the country in some little cottage with a small farm—for awhile. The thought of noisy 10th Street cheers me none.

So much love. Don't join the Criswell-Gomez dope group.[3]

[1] At the bottom of the page Lillian Bigelow added a postscript saying, in part, "we were so disappointed you could not come with your husband" and hoping Markham would visit in October.

[2] Dreiser had met Charles Fort (1874–1932) in 1905 when, as editor of *Smith's Magazine*, he published some of Fort's writing. Thereafter

they maintained a close friendship. Fort was a dedicated eccentric who propagated fantastic hypotheses about the scientifically inexplicable. Fort had earlier sent Dreiser the manuscript of "X," a book which, according to Dreiser, demonstrated that human beings and the world they inhabit were nothing more than the emanations of some cosmic mind. In July Fort sent Dreiser the manuscript of another book, "Y," which "was going to prove an ethereal world where people had electric bodies and when merged we would have electrical bodies too" (Dreiser to Fort, 11 Oct. 1915; Elias, *Letters*, 197). Dreiser tried to interest a number of publishers in both works; when he could not secure a publisher, Fort burned both manuscripts, and Dreiser's descriptions are all that remain.

[3] Doris Gomez joined Aleister Crowley in experimenting with cocaine as a path toward wisdom, and the unidentified Criswell was likely part of that quest. See "In Search with Doris Gomez for Cocaine in New York" (1915), qtd. in *Aleister Crowley in America: Art, Espionage and Sex Magick in the New World*, by Tobias Churton (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2017), n.p. BookReadFree.com, https://tinyurl.com/bdz2debu.

Markham travelled to Albany, New York, to visit her aunt, Jennie Hyman Mendelson (1880–1967), who in 1913 married Jerome Mendelson (1874–1940), the brother of her first husband, Norman Mendelson (1870–1911). Both were part of A. Mendelson and Son, lye and potash manufacturers.

255. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Wed. Sept 22nd 1915

Honey Kid:

Although you've only been gone a few hours various things have happened which will interest you for a moment, anyhow. In

the first place Mrs. Jarmuth phoned to ask it I wouldn't lecture before various organizations on the modern stage, here and in Europe. I told her of course that I can't lecture, as much as I would like to. Then she wanted to know if you wouldn't—whether you couldn't get up a lecture and deliver it. Thinking that might be a good thing for you I told her I would try and induce you so to do. If you are interested write her as to what you think you want to say in that line.

Next Jones called up and said he had arranged with Brentanos to put my portrait in their window for two weeks and wanted me to deliver it to him next Tuesday or Wednesday.[1] I thought the frame needed doctoring up with gilt or that we ought to borrow a good frame from some dealer for two weeks. What do you think? And how shall I go about it? Do you suppose Nordfeldt would object to having the frame retouched? Lastly I had word from Hale that he had drafted a note to Scribners and found them interested in my travel book and that he may be able to sell it there though he isn't sure yet.[2]

When you left I came straight home and did some work on my travel book but something I have eaten has upset me very much and Ive been working all the P.M. against a feeling of nausea. I'm not hungry but thought I would try potatoes and milk and see how I come out. I hope to feel better tomorrow. For another thing I'm going around to Mames about 8 P.M., take her her dog letter and swing awhile. Maybe that will fix me up. Haven't heard a word from Powy's though somehow I expected to.

Well, by now you know how your trip is coming out and whether you are going to enjoy it. I hope you are for I think you need a change of some kind. I wish you'd practice dancing and some exercising to loosen yourself up. It just occurs to me that skipping the rope—an old pugilistic stunt would be great for you and you could do it here in the front room when at home, while I do my dumb bell work. I must get them today or tomorrow.

It's lovely here now, warm and pleasant. I found your cards awhile ago and am sending you some. Whenever you really get away & I think how nice you are and how much I really care for

you & how much you care for me I feel ashamed. I must have a lot of Peer Gynt in me but I don't believe in old button moulders.[3]

So much love. Write & tell me how you are.

L—

Here's a nice kiss to you.

[1] Jones had arranged for Brentano's bookstore to display Dreiser's books, including a portrait of Dreiser by Bror Nordfeldt (see fig. 12).

[2] Despite Hale's efforts, Scribner's was not interested in *A Hoosier Holiday*, which was published by John Lane on 17 November 1916.

[3] Dreiser refers to a character in Henrik Ibsen's play *Peer Gynt* (1867). Gynt is a roisterer, a braggart, and a liar who lives a dissolute if colorful life. The Button-Moulder is a mysterious creature that appears to Gynt in his old age and tells him he must be melted down with other faulty souls in the Casting-Ladle unless he can explain whether he has done something distinctive.

256. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Sept. 24—1915

Honey:

What a sad little letter comes from Kid this A.M. If your so unhappy I think you'd better come back. The place is very still without you and I imagine always when everything is very still that it's my duty to work very hard, and so I scratch and scratch & scratch here at my desk. Yesterday P.M. I went over to Mames and found her wildly enthusiastic on the subject of Christian Science & new thought once more. Things aren't going well and so—whenever things aren't going well I notice that she takes refuge in Divine Mind. Austin seems dopier than ever to me.

But I didn't stay long. It was to dull. I took her the letter about Wendy & went out and bought a can of salmon for him and then went up to Mouquins to avoid being lonely. There I met Mr & Mrs Roberts. They were very cordial and said they had been around here five or six times since the Masters affair but always

we were out. Bill Roberts, her husband is going to the Hospital for an operation for 3 weeks but afterwards she wants us to come to dinner. She has an idea of inviting that Duncan[1] who is now with Reicher—and his wife. She says that they are very charming. If we have any preferences though she says she will respect them.

Incidentally Powys called up this A.M. and wanted me to come over tonight but I was in no mood for is so put him off. He called up about 8:30 so I presume that the fair Mae was at his elbow urging him on. He seemed very nervous and out of sorts so I was glad when he rang off. I am afraid she is much to choicy for me.[2]

And then Mrs. White announced that this was her last day with us. Yesterday she had a touch of neuralgia and she seems to think she will have it more this winter than ever. She talked in a gloomy mood—about her failing constitution and I felt rather sorry for her—but she may have been putting on at that. The great question now is where to get a woman to clean.

It's cooler here again today and I'm thinking I must surely get out and find a fire basket. Yesterday I went up to our phone Co to kick about the phone calls and they explained that these forty eight calls weren't extra in August at all but that on the whole year we were only entitled to 600 messages whereas we had 658—running 60 to 65 messages per month whereas we should only have had 50. I looked over my bills and found that we had sent messages as follows—Aug—1914—27; Sept, 1914—68; October 1914, 65; Nov, 1914,—74; Dec, 1914, 50; Jan, 1915—62; Feb, 1915—51; March, 1915—65; April, 1915—47; May, 1915,—61; June—1915—46; July 1915—64—a total which makes their statement ok but it seems to me we are being charged for a lot of calls we never make. Certainly while you were in Chicago I scarcely touched the phone but the bill don't show it. However I'll pay now & if we want to note down our calls for a month or two we can—just to see how many we are averaging.

Honey Kid I wish you wouldn't feel so blue. You won't have any fun at all this way and you make me feel bad. Everything is all right between us. I don't know any other lady I'd trade you for this side of the Styx. I think of you nearly all the time you are away

or I am and wonder about you. I do wish we were much better fixed but I all. If we had money to take a good long rest I'd feel fine again. Write me a happier letter tomorrow. I sent you the two photos this A.M. So much love.

Theo.

[1] Augustin Duncan (1873–1954), actor, director, and brother of the dancer Isadora Duncan. Like Markham, he was a cast member of Emanuel Reicher's production of *When the Young Vine Blooms* and the director of Reicher's production of *The Weavers*. In 1914 Duncan married the actress Margherita Sargent (1883–1964).

[2] Although Dreiser writes that May Powys is too fastidious for his taste, her brother, John Cowper Powys, believed May had a tendency to flirt with Dreiser. "Little May amuses me more and more," he wrote their brother Llewellyn a year earlier. "She does go it—my God!—with Theodore Dreiser. I wonder if she'll make his Jew-girl jealous. The Statuesque Elaine has that capacity one can see" (18 Nov. 1914; *Letters of John Cowper Powys to His Brother Llewellyn*, vol. 1, ed. Malcolm Elwin [London: Village Press, 1975], 174).

257. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

[September 25, 1915]

Honey Kid:

It's Saturday afternoon and I wish you were here now so that we might go somewhere. It's a fine day and somehow about this hour on Saturdays, since I have known you anyhow, I've gotten into the habit of getting restless and thinking of all out doors. I haven't a place in mind where we could go at the present and no money particularly to go to any good place—but we'd go anyhow wouldn't we. I feel when we are together that most any old place is all right with you.

I'm so glad you got another suit out of your visit and hope it really becomes you more than the last. Your letter describing the family atmosphere is as good as a picture. You ought to

write some time or other soon—you picture things so definitely. I should think you could do short stories to perfection. But that bunch!

Dell came in at four yesterday and sat about until six saying he was sick. He cheered up greatly I noticed however as he was permitted to talk and finally left in great spirits. Before he left he made tea and served it and finally admitted that he wanted to do something besides work on the Masses—that he must really. I suggested that he extend "Joseph" and "St George & Greenwich Village" into something, only to change the name of the latter to "St George & Fifth Ave" or "St George & New York."[1] He wants to do it and said if you would that we would work these, or something else out together. He wants to get out typewritten copies & have us consider them. Incidentally he confessed that his "Guardian Angel" play was taken almost bodily from the Revolt of the Angels by France.[2]

Sure, honey, I'll write you about the pictures arriving.[3] They are to be here Thursday or were, only I am going to write him to either deliver them Wednesday or Friday or early Thursday morning as I have an invitation from P. W. French, an antique dealer and decorator to go with him to see the house of Clarence Mackey, out near Saddle Rock on that day. He is refurbishing a part of Mackeys home.[4] Mr. Sullivan of the Art paper introduced me. I thought of saying to you to come either Wednesday or late Thursday—or early Friday so I'll be home. I won't get another chance to go through the Mackey house very soon.

I'm sorry your not enjoying yourself. If theres no fun in it at all I should think you'd bolt and come on back. Im not doing much of anything but resting my nerves these hours. I seem rather run down nervously and have for sometime now. Yesterday I went over to an athletic goods co and got me a pair of 12 pound dumb-bells—24 pounds all told and last night & this A.M. took a little exercise. They're heavy but the work really rests me showing that I need it. I'm going to take up the practice of deep breathing again to.

Well, K'nitten, I can't think of any more news of any kind. All is swell except that we're without a maid and I fear me much we'll have some trouble in finding a good one. I may quit work about four and go out and look for a 19 inch fire basket in some old iron shop. But in answer to your plea of yesterday I'll tell you that I love you—as though I hadn't made it pretty clear for some time past. Write me. In tomorrows letter I speak about the arrival of the pictures—the threatened arrival.

L—

In Woolworths 5 & 10 cent store this A.M. I saw blue china cup & saucers—and after dinner cups—quite pleasing in color for five & 10 cents each.

[1] Dell's plays referred to here are *The Chaste Adventures of Joseph, A Comedy*, staged at the Liberal Club on 11 December 1914 and published in *King Arthur's Socks and Other Village Plays*; and *St. George and Greenwich Village*, the play that marked the opening of the Liberal Club, in October/November 1913, which was not published. Keith Richwine summarizes the contents of Dell's Liberal Club plays in his dissertation, "The Liberal Club: Bohemia and the Resurgence in Greenwich Village, 1912–1913" (University of Pennsylvania, 1968, 130–36).

[2] The "Guardian Angel" play is *My Lady's Mirror*, produced at the Liberal Club on 11 December 1914 with Markham in the lead, and published as *Legend, A Romance*, in *King Arthur's Socks*. In a letter to Arthur Davison Ficke, Dell confirms the source of the play (14. Jan. 1914; Dell Papers).

[3] Dreiser refers to the paintings by Anne Estelle Rice (Mrs. Drey), which were now being transferred into his care by Rice's friends Horace Holley and Charles Daniel. See Dreiser to Markham, 28 Feb. 1915, n. 1, letter 229.

[4] Percy W. French (b. 1871), with Mitchell Samuels, the co-founder of French & Company art dealers. Financier Clarence Mackey (1874–1938) commissioned architect Sanford White to design his home at Harbor Hill in Roslyn, Long Island, in 1902. At the time, the 576-acre estate was the largest on Long Island and the largest mansion White designed. It was demolished in 1947.

258. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Sunday, Sept 26—[1915]

Hows My Lyhon-Cryhon:

Yesterday Dell came over at 3 P.M. bringing the mss of another short play—a dramatization of Klaus Heinrich Boas.[1] He seems to have fixed on me as the one who must solve his dramatic career for him—when I cannot solve my own. He staid here until five and then to help him with his Joseph play I took him up to the library and made him look over Egyptian interiors and scenes. Joseph as now planned has four acts and some interesting things in it. It promises to be pretty good. Afterwards—at 7:10 he called up Margery[2] and she proposed Billy or Jim the Oysterman in Eighth street and went there.[3] Eisen[4] was there—a heavy lonely looking creature and I wanted to invite him to join us but they gave no sign, so let I him go. Afterwards we went over to their rooms for coffee and Margery produced some new nudes of herself—photos. She seems to be taking a great interest in her physical charms in the nude these days. Dell seemed a little disturbed at her desire to show them, but I think he is unduly anxious. And then Justus Sheffield came in, but on seeing me left. There was a dance downstairs. They seemed to want to go to that, so I came home.

Otherwise all is peaceful here and I'm awaiting your return. You think I don't miss you, but when you get away a day or two I always do. I think you have such a gay lovely spirit Crygorn. I treat you badly at times but then you have your spells to and they really don't mean much of anything. Somehow I don't attach much importance to anything these days save the need of going on and making the best of things. Theres much I'd like to have but if I didn't have your temperament to restore me there wouldn't be much need of anything else.—or so I feel.

How do the Mendelesons wear on you—ill or well? I'm enclosing a letter concerning the pictures or rather a poscript which you can show if you wish. If your much out of sorts present it

and come back. Theres no use being unhappy. The Dells haven't said anything more about going to Albany so that's off. If I felt that I could afford it I would like to come up on the train and come down with you. But I'm not [word omitted] whether I had better. There are many things I think of that need to be done this fall.

But anyhow write me one more nice letter and tell me when your coming and once you're here things will look much better to me. I wish we could dope out a play. Dells activity makes me feel that I ought to do something—or that we both ought to. Can't you think of something.

So much love. When you get back I'll be very glad to have you hold me tight at night.

L—

P.S. Horace Holley[5] has just notified me that all of Ann Estelle Rices paintings to the number of sixty and several of them six by seven feet in size are to be sent here Wednesday. They are moving and have no room for them. We owe it to Anne Estelle to take them in but what to do with them I don't know. It means this place will be turned into a paint shop unless you come back and straighten them out. I don't want to curtail your visit if you feel like staying but in that case I think I'll get out for the time being. It's an awful load really but what else can we do, really. Write me what you think.

[1] *Klaus Hinrich Baas: The Story of a Self-Made Man* (1909), a realistic novel about the rise of a German merchant by Gustav Frenssen. It's not clear which play Dreiser refers to.

[2] Dreiser means "Marjorie," as in Marjorie Jones.

[3] William T. Ockendorf expanded his business operating an oyster stand into his restaurant Billy the Oysterman in 1912. When he died in 1914, his son, George Washington Ockendorf, continued operations under his father's name. The restaurant was located at 10 West 47th Street, with a branch on East 20th Street, so Dreiser may have been confusing restaurants.

[4] Perhaps a reference to the poet Maurice Aisen. See Dreiser to Markham, 27 March 1914, n. 6, letter 171.

[5] Horace Hotchkiss Holley (1887–1960), poet, art dealer, and writer about the Bahá'í Faith. Holley had known Anne Estelle Rice in Paris; after the outbreak of World War I, Holley relocated to Greenwich Village, and Rice entrusted the care of her paintings to him when she returned to England. See Dreiser to Markham, 28 Feb. 1915, n. 1, letter 229.

Breakup
1916

"I cannot face the coming years in this intellectual harem"
—Markham to Dreiser, letter 295

As 1916 dawned, what had seemed to be a companionable, loving relationship had begun to pall. Sometime during the fall of 1915, Dreiser began to feel hemmed in by Markham's continued presence in their shared flat and the consequent limitations her presence posed for interactions, particularly correspondence, with other women. And Markham began to feel excluded from Dreiser's remarkably busy and varied social life. The tension was apparent to others. Floyd Dell, who continued to maintain a friendship with both, wrote to his friend, the poet Arthur Davison Ficke, about a beach excursion with Dreiser, Markham, and his paramour Marjorie Jones:

> When I went over to Elaine's [Markham's] in the late afternoon, she was looking very sad. "Ill?" "No." "What then?" "Im going to leave him." "What for?" (Foolish question). "I don't think he's keeping his word. We agreed that if either of us, etc., we would

How to cite this book chapter:
Newlin, K. (ed.) (2026). *The Dreiser–Markham Letters: The Correspondence of Theodore Dreiser and Kyra Markham, 1913–1944*. Pp. 467–606. Winchester: Winchester University Press. DOI: https://doi.org/10.21039/book5.d.
License: CC BY-NC-ND

> tell each other. And I don't think he's telling me." It seems that she had found some letters he had left lying around. . . . She had read them, called him up, told him she was going to leave, and he had said he could explain everything. She was waiting for him to come and explain. We waited, and he didn't come, and he didn't come. I said, maybe he's not coming. She: "Well, that will save me the trouble of listening to a long, trumped-up, invented excuse." But he does come. I discreetly retire. Half an hour later, M.J. and I meet them, we take the car beachward. I look at Elaine quizzically. She whispers to me, "Well, I don't know how it's all right—but it is!"[1]

The upshot was a planned separation, with Dreiser decamping on 26 January for Savannah, where he could finish writing *A Hoosier Holiday* in warmer weather and without what he had come to see as Markham's nagging. In the meantime, Markham sublet their Tenth Street flat and stayed with friends while she fulfilled her acting obligations. She had originally been scheduled to appear in a revival of her Chicago success, *Conscience*, in a benefit performance in November 1915 for the Twelfth Night Club, an organization for professional women of the theater, founded in 1891, but that performance was delayed. The play, now retitled *Copy*, was staged in a matinee performance at the Belasco Theatre on 11 February, and she would conclude her role in *The Weavers* on 26 February, after which she planned to join Dreiser in Savannah, provided the relationship was still ongoing. They continued their daily letters.

"Dearest, I wish you would bear with the meanest man in the world," Dreiser wrote on 2 February. "Truly I need you. I should think you could see that. I must have you as a staff to lean on and yet it seems as though I must have moments of separation too. I can't understand myself—honestly and truly I can't" (letter 264). "Bub," the spirited Markham replied, "I want you to know that if you want to be alone there is nothing more desirable in the world for me than to help you be alone. But your inclination is to twist your desire to find friends whom you will not share with me and to whom you show greater courtesies than you ever show any of

the friends we have in common, into a desire to be alone—at least in my eyes" (4 Feb. 1916, letter 267). Their letters became increasing acerbic as they attempted to find a compromise between Dreiser's desire to interact with women friends (not all of whom he was romantically attracted to) separately from Markham and Markham's desire not to feel excluded.

In his letters Dreiser is remarkably honest about the nature and extent of his feelings for Markham: he loved her more than anyone, he would tell her, but he also wanted to be able to correspond, if not meet, with other women. "I also feel that I never can really measure up to your needs or expectations," Dreiser explained on 15 February. "You want some one who will love you in a single minded and whole hearted way, unmixed with any thoughts of any other human being and while I might say that and try it wouldn't really be true" (letter 275). Markham was no wallflower and minced no words in her reply: "As for my wanting you to love me singly and whole-heartedly, you are unfair. You assume that your curiosity is something abnormal and must be indulged in while I love you singly and whole-heartedly because it is my nature. You see you are absolutely wrong. If I have manifested no curiosity it is because I have squelched it, or tried to, feeling that loving you was not worth while unless I gave my all to it. But really, if it is necessary that you investigate among the fair sex, that has little to do with me that I can see except to insure me greater freedom, which at present, at least, I don't desire" (17 Feb. 1916, letter 279).

Eventually, they managed to arrive at an understanding of sorts, and Markham joined Dreiser in Savannah on 21 February. "He was resentful when I came," Markham recalled, "making snide remarks about my interfering with his life."[2] The now-quarrelsome couple managed to endure until 19 March, when Markham returned to New York to look for a job and an apartment since they had sublet their flat, while Dreiser remained behind to work on *The Bulwark*, long promised to John Lane. While Markham reported discouragement on both the job and apartment fronts, Dreiser described the movies he was seeing.

But, as was now his habit, he couldn't resist an opportunity to resume their argument about his interest in other women and poke Markham about what he perceived as her effort to control his social interactions: "We can do so many things together if you'll only not try to wall me in completely," he wrote. "I think you ought to let me know such people as I choose in my own way. It doesn't mean any disrupting of our relationship" (26 March 1916, letter 282).

And so the argument raged, with Markham becoming increasingly irritated and incensed at Dreiser's self-serving reasoning. Finally, she wrote a lengthy, detailed letter eviscerating his various explanations, particularly his notion that he had to hide his relationships from her and his belief that women did not want to share intellectual companionship between man and woman with another woman—herself, in this case. She had come to see that Dreiser was not going to, or was incapable of, change: "I should think, having reached the age of forty without finding a woman you wanted to live with, you would be content to cease dragging out affairs that (if they are as unimportant as you would have me believe) must be half dead." Finally, she pointed out before signing the letter "Lovingly," "I'm beginning to think you're too old for me. I couldn't think it possible if it were not that you constantly make me realize that you would sooner part with me, with our present and future, than give up these tragic reminders of your past. It stifles me. I cannot face the coming years in this intellectual harem" (letter 295).

By 6 April Dreiser had returned to New York, unsure whether the relationship would continue, fully prepared, as he wrote, to live elsewhere unless Markham invited him to return to their home. Apparently, they patched things up. But the interlude didn't last.

By 2 May Markham had returned to Chicago, in part to consult the family doctor about some unspecified medical issue but also as her own distancing operation to clarify whether she could, or wanted to, continue their relationship. Matters quickly deteriorated into what became daily epistolary battles until finally, on

14 May, Dreiser wrote frankly, clearly, and, as was now his habit, without much thought about the effect of his words. "You credit me with a wild life, don't you? When I see how you feel about it all and how much pain I have caused you I am tempted to say once and for all that I am spiritually too detached ever to be happy in the wedded state and that if you want me cut off from all other women you had best leave me now as I cannot feel that I can so live." He continued in like vein for eight more pages before concluding, in jaw-dropping insensitivity: "If I had you here now I'd put you on the long couch, knees down and do something—much—to your lovely round thighs and then I'd turn you over on top of me and make you squeal with delight while I felt your thighs and breasts" (letter 312).

Markham was understandably peeved. "Your today's letter was the most astonishing document of monopoly I ever saw," she replied and then railed at him about his double standard. "Well, if you wish to leave me, go ahead. If my having the same privileges as you have cancels all reason for our living together, it certainly means that your having those privileges alone should cancel all reason for my living with you" (16 May 1916, letter 315). Though the correspondence continued until the end of May, when Markham returned to New York, the relationship was now doomed. Dreiser had made it clear that, while he loved Markham and she remained foremost in his affections, in all honesty he did not see himself as being able to maintain the couple-centered relationship that even the bohemian Elaine/Kirah desired. "If I told myself fifteen million times a day that I would accept a given, limited order and wanted to, still my spirit would not let me accept it," he wrote, exhausted by the arguing. "I might try and try but it would not work. You had better leave me once and for all for I know that I cannot be made over into the thing you want me to be" (25 May 1916, letter 323).

Markham returned to New York on 5 June, but it's not clear whether the two continued their relationship. Earlier, in February, she had secured a major role in an adaptation of Booth Tarkington's

Mister Antonio, playing opposite the star actor Otis Skinner, which was to open on 18 September. While awaiting rehearsals in August, she joined friends in Provincetown, MA, working with the Provincetown Players as they fashioned themselves into a formal organization, probably in play reading or costuming. But her battles with Dreiser left her emotionally exhausted and unable to withstand the browbeating tactics of the play's director, Gustav von Seyffertitz, during rehearsals. As she explained to Eugene O'Neill biographer Louis Shaeffer, "I had never been yelled at before. . . . When I was supposed to make my first entrance screaming and Von Seiftertitz yelled louder than I, I was finished."[3]

Markham had had enough, and she arrived in Los Angeles in September, emotionally exhausted and, as she later explained to H. L. Mencken, "I was lowsy with gonorreahea, something Dreiser would deny until the day he dies as though there was a moral stigma involved."[4] She had gone to Los Angeles to join the Los Angeles Little Theater, founded by her friend Aline Barnsdall, who had relocated there after producing *Conscience* in Chicago. By 18 November—five months after leaving Dreiser and two months after arriving in LA—she was married to a childhood sweetheart, Frank Lloyd Wright Jr, known as Lloyd, the son of the famous architect.

Notes

[1] Dell to Fricke, n.d., but internal reference suggests the letter was written 12–18 September 1915 (Dell Papers).

[2] Markham to Swanberg, 18 Dec. 1963 (Swanberg Papers).

[3] Markham to Louis Shaeffer, 6 Sept. 1962 (Kennedy and Pettit, 134). See also an interview with Markham, "Another Old Proverb is Disproved: Jill of Many Trades Good at All!" *Holyoke Telegram-Transcript*, 1 Jan. 1927: 3.

[4] Markham to Mencken, 17 July 1945 (Mencken Papers).

259. Dreiser to Markham

Savannah Line
Ocean Steamship Company of Savannah

Jan 27—1916

Honey Girl:

It's one day now since we parted—but not one day since I sailed. Although they took up the gang plank at 6:10 P.M. it was 4:10 A.M. before we started out—just 10 hours later. If the telephone connection hadn't been severed I'd have called you up—although I might not have found you in. Since you left I've been doing what nearly every body does on ship board who isn't part of a group—looking, meditating, reading.

It's been a fine day & getting warmer as we go south—clear & bright all day. I've been posting notes, scribbling poems, walking and reading "An Anarchist Woman"[1] which I have just finished. It's fine. You ought to read it sometime—quite wonderful—only its title is a misnomer. It should be called "Two Anarchists" or "Terry and Marie". It certainly suggests the logical consequences of extreme radicalism.

But oh, me! oh, me! The people on this boat and the food—I don't know which [is] worse. And besides this eve, the boat is heaving so gaily that my poor tummy is very qualmy. I sit and try to concentrate on one thing and another but just as I'm getting along fairly well—qualm—and then I have to stop and think whether I'm going to be able to go on. Sweet isn't it!

But otherwise the ship isn't bad and my cabin [is] very good and fresh. I slept quite well last night, even in N.Y. harbor with all the boats blowing. Thought much of you & when twelve P.M. came & I woke & missed you felt your absence keenly. All day my thoughts have been going back to you peice meal, wondering what you were doing & what you were feeling. I'm a hard and restless soul but I crave the affection & understanding which you provide—and only for some blue devils within which I don't seem to overcome easily, would get along fine with you. In the main we have done pretty well don't you think?

Write me care of General Delivery. I propose to seal these notes each day & drop them in the box at Savannah the moment I land. It's five & I have time I'll try & find a room the same day. There's little or news on ship board of course. Your lady in the baby pink lounging coat is the ships pianist & [illegible] & plays & sings nearly all the time, surrounded by the gay sports of the boat such as they are. The lady of the roses poses all day long—a scream. The rest are poor conversationalists not worthy a mention.

Much love. Hope to find a letter at Savannah.

Lover.

[1] *An Anarchist Woman* (1909), by Hutchins Hapgood (1869–1944), journalist, author, and anarchist. The novel traces the life of working-class Marie (the woman of the title), who meets the anarchist Terry, with whom she establishes a life of "free love."

260. Dreiser to Markham

Savannah Line
Ocean Steamship Company of Savannah

Friday Jan 28—1916

Well, Peaches:

Tis another day and tomorrow at noon they say we'll be in Savanna. It's warmer now—oh delightfully so on shipboard. All the doors & windows are open & we sit outside and muse or read or dream in the sun. The food is still punk and the crowd colorless but my berth is comfortable and a steamer chair is not half bad. Am reading "The Spirit of Labor,"[1] making notes & working on the travel book at odd intervals.

Hows my honey kid? I wonder how you slept, how the fire does, whether you miss me any or whether you manage to console yourself speedily. Human nature is a strange compound—my own the worst—and yet I sometimes think that there is something deeper and more splendid about you than about almost any other woman I ever knew. You seem such a fine combination of intelligence sympathy, sincerity and beauty. I may be wrong but

I don't think so. And living with you has been a delight in spite of all I say—delightful because interesting and artistic and full of an atmosphere of affection.

I suppose you will be connecting with all sorts now—hearing all the news and developing interesting situations. Well write me. I will be hunting a secluded spot Saturday, Sunday & Monday & settling down to be alone and work. For a little while I shall enjoy it I know. After that—well after that we'll see whether you'll be wanting to see me anymore. Much love. I'm enclosing the Crist & Herrick check.

Lover—

If a part of this sounds smarty or distant don't believe it. I love & admire you tremendously.

Just arrived in S—L[2]

[1] *The Spirit of Labor* (1907), a novel about the labor movement, by Hutchins Hapgood.

[2] The next day, Dreiser sent a postcard with the inscription, "Arrived safely enough. Not even a cloud on the sea. Present address—for a week anyhow—320 East Liberty Street—Savannah."

261. Dreiser to Markham

320 East Liberty St.

Jan 30th 1916

Honey Kid:

You'll probably hate this paper but it's the best I can get just at present. I tried at several stores but everything was worse. Again you won't like the pencil but I'm all out of ink and it's Sunday. I spent so much time looking for a room yesterday that I didn't have time to attend to anything else. And at that I didn't find a room to suit me—just a room. I took it for a week—up to next Saturday—but before then I hope to give you another address. This place isn't bad. It has two big west windows overlooking a yard, but in a town so full of houses with balconies I am satisfied that I can find a room with one.

Well, Savannah doesn't satisfy all expectations perhaps, but it does pretty well. It isn't as hot usually as it is now, so I'm told, but it does pretty well. All windows and doors are open—at least at present. The palm really grows here naturally, not to any startling height in so far as I can see, but there are many all of 30 feet tall. The trees are all green every one and the grass. Some flowers are blooming here and there, in yards—and canaries in cages are hung outside doorways. Negroes abound—nearly two or three to one white, I should say. The negro sections of which there are several are all picturesque—low one story cottages, usually built in rows and all alike—many of them in alleys—or narrow streets. The yellow bandana, the pink or green or brown shirt waist—the light blue or brown skirt are common, It's very different to anything in the north. Yesterday I felt that if it would only stay as warm as it was it would be an ideal place to live. Today, although slightly cooler I feel that it is still nice.

Hotel rates here are rediculously high—hence this room. The De Soto—furnished like a barn, but very large—wants 17.50 per week for a room & bath without board 31^{50} with. Every other hotel wants $2 per day for a room with bath. But furnished flats are cheap I here—as low as fifteen or eighteen per month in charming neighborhoods. S- is not on the sea. It's a 45 minute ride by train to Tybee the nearest beach—and that's not in order now. Thunderboldt is a yachting & picnicing centre on the Savannah River—about 30 minutes out. I rode out there last night to cool off—but came right back since there was little to see. But imagine tree toads chirping and hearing blue jays & whippoorwills at evening at this time of year.

But how are you? I expected a letter Saturday P.M. anyhow. Called at the P.O. at 9 P.M. on my return from Thunderbolt but there was none—only a letter from Dodge[1] and other truck.

Forgot to tell you before I left that Willy Pogany called up to say he couldn't go to the theatre and wanted tickets for another night!!! Also that he had made a caricature of you. I should like to see that. Jones[2] has not sent my report yet & I am not looking for news from anywhere else. Do you sleep well? Where do you stay now?—at the Kemps[3] or where. Read Crabbe on the way down but

didn't care for these particular poems very much.[4] Wish you were here. You enjoy this for a day or two anyhow. Want you to send me a set of your picture. One of you as Nan, one as Andromache, one as yourself & one as Mother Hillse if you have one taken.[5] I propose to make group of them.

Write soon. I think of you all the time.

L—

Please don't forget the brass shovel & poker.
The local bookstore has 3 copies of The "Genius" as the girl called my attention to it as "very good."

[1] Ben W. Dodge (?-1916) was a friend dating back to 1907 when his publishing firm reissued *Sister Carrie*. For Dodge's earlier effort to enlist Dreiser in a new publishing venture, see Dreiser to Hyman, 30 March 1913, n. 2, letter 27.

[2] J. Jefferson Jones of the John Lane Co. Dreiser is awaiting a sales report for *The "Genius."*

[3] Harry Kemp and his wife, the actress Mary Pyne (1894–1919). In *A Gallery of Women* (1929), Dreiser would base his sketch "Esther Norn" on her, and the character of Leif Doane on Kemp.

[4] The English poet George Crabbe (1754–1832). In his diary entry for 26 January Dreiser recorded that he began reading Crabbe's long narrative poem *The Village* (1782) (Riggio, *American Diaries*, 119).

[5] Dreiser refers to pictures of Markham as The Girl of the Streets (Nan) in *Conscience*, Andromache in *The Trojan Women*, and Mother Hilse in *The Weavers*.

262. Dreiser to Markham

320 East Liberty—
Rent only until Saturday
Address c/o P.O. Box 282

Jan 31—1916

Cryhon:

What's the trouble. Not a word from you yet and I've written 3 letters and sent two cards. It's five days exactly since I left. For convenience sake—until I find out where I want to live here—I'm taking a P.O. Box. It's only 60 cents till March 31st! Address me

there P.O. Box 282—Savannah. It's another wonderful day here—quite like the Riviera. If I can find a room with a balcony I'll be content. Should you decide to come down I think we could get a seaside cottage at Tybee—furnished—for Feb. and March—Probably until May or June 1—at say $20 per month. I'm not sure but I think so. Ran over yesterday afternoon late. It's quite deserted now but attractive. The regular season is from June 1 to Sept 1.—!!!!—

Whaddy-ye know?

Love—
L—

263. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282
Savannah Ga

[February 1, 1916]

Dearest Kid:

Whatever is the matter? This makes day no. 6 without a note and I am having a hard time explaining to myself what it is all about. I'm giving you and myself a day or two more before I try seriously to get a word. Either you are sick—and that scarcely seems possible—or you have decided to teach me a lesson or to drop me entirely. If it is the latter, why not just tell me in one letter anyhow. I have had no mail barring two or three letters the first day—and usually there is some sort of mail. If you aren't going to write or see me anymore, make some statement and let me instruct the P.O. to forward my mail direct. I know I have treated you badly. When I think of you and myself I am miserable. You are entitled to do whatever you think best and whatever you do I shall not trouble you with complaints. I can't. But do please say what the trouble is and end this suspense. I give you my word, beyond aiding in adjusting any details, I shall not trouble you in any way. But if you think that I do not care for you—explain it any way you will—you are entirely wrong. Care is not the word—you are like myself to me—only much more important and significant and endlessly fascinating.

But there—I think I've said all I can say. If I do not hear by tomorrow I shall wire[1]—and if I get no reply then I shall seek information via others and adjust my mail with the P.O. direct. I shall have to.

Under the circumstances I can't tell you of the charms of the city or its possibilities. I don't feel like it. But I am writing. It is my one method of relief. Until Saturday noon I can be reached at 320 East Liberty St. After Saturday noon—I can be reached at 103 W. Taylor St. But any letters should be sent to P.O. Box 282—

Do you really feel we ought to separate?[2]

L—

[1] Dreiser's telegram, sent on 2 February, read: "Are you sick or don't you want to write reply collect postal telegraph Savannah."

[2] This last line was written across the left edge of the page. In the upper right corner, where the date would normally appear, Dreiser wrote, referring to an enclosure that has not survived: "This palm is from outside my window."

264. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

103 W. Taylor St
Also, P.O. Box 282

Feb. 2nd 1916

Honey Kid:

Your telegram certainly ended though it did not solve a mystery which is puzzling me yet.[1] Telegram in hand I went down to the Chief Clerk and asked how long mail took in coming from N.Y. One day, as a rule, he replied. And here it was a week. He said he would make a search and finally produced one letter—that of Jan 31—and a form card from the Superintendent of Station O. saying that a package of clippings was being held for want of postage—that no package of clippings, once delivered would be forwarded unless a new stamp was put on it. So I have to wait now another week I suppose for that to come back. In the meantime

I'm wondering where all the letters "since Friday" are. I am due three more from you, plus any written since the 31st.

Cryhon, dearest, I wish you would bear with the meanest man in the world. I don't know what gets into me. Actually I think I'm a little crazy at times or possessed [by] a devil. I don't mean what I say. I'm intensely in love with you. I should think really you could feel it—at times anyhow—the atmosphere of union which holds between us. Why at night, as a rule, I never feel that I can get close enough. I want to hold you close so that life won't seem as hard as it does. And though I rail and storm and crave freedom of action and a certain amount of lonliness, only the knowledge of your true affection for me sustains me these days. I feel always as though life were a thin and pointless game—for me—but so long as you believe in it, or in me, it is alright. I absolutely sink to suicidal depths when I think how pointless the whole game is without love. And truly I need you. I should think you could see that. I must have you as a staff to lean on and yet it seems as though I must have moments of separation too. I can't understand myself—honestly and truly I can't. I must be insane—or life itself is lunatic. Here when I thought that you had decided not to write me anymore and to use this as a good time in which to break I have been so upset that I thought of returning to New York. I know at bottom that when all was over and I knew what the worst was I could weather any storm—and live—but I would not be particularly interested in doing so. When I think of you and your work and your possibilities I would like to live to help you. I would like to share in the things that I know you can and will do. As for myself I would like to write a little more if I can do it and not be miserable but otherwise I shall not long hold out. The game isn't worth the candle. I think of your art and your naturalness and your fine, lovely emotions all the while. I know you have faults—not nearly as many as I have. But they are unimportant beside your real worth. Only if you can—and you really love me—give me a certain amount of latitude. You do already as a matter of fact—much more than any other woman that I know anything

about would—but try not to turn on me. Time will certainly make some changes in my composition and we will probably be happier as we go along. Last night I lay and thought of you for hours and wished you could percieve my thoughts and feelings. You would never really doubt my need of you or what a place you have made for yourself in my live and do write me every day for awhile, anyhow. I need your letters.

As for this place, if I weren't so much alone, it would be delightful and it is anyhow. The older portion of the town is beautifully planned according to the sketch I have made on this page.[2]

These are all large squares at each street intersection, set with palms, flowers, evergreens and sometimes—not always decorated with monuments, stone benches and the like. It's somewhat like living in a park. To my horror and disgust I find that in the newer sections this plan has been abandoned and the houses are built in long rows like everywhere else. This old portion was laid out nearly 200 years ago by an Englishman[3] and it looks like the work of someone who loved art and life. Since then—but America will have to be reborn to be anything. All that fine old understanding and taste seems to have gone out of us.

It is gray today—almost the first gray day. Yesterday I wrote all day in the cemetery park just back of me, under a palm if you please. Negro maids & children were here and old men, and pedestrians. By dint of not thinking [about] your silence I managed to work after a fashion. It blew up slightly cool toward six and then I went to dinner. But I do wish you were here—if only for a short time. You would like it so and we would have such a good time.

I have lost all faith in Ouija boards.[4] God knows what it is but it lies all the time. If one's subconscious Self betrays one like that then indeed we are damned for good. If it is a low order of spirits one ought never give them any encouragement. I hereby swear off. Sunday night when it was saying to you that I had a new sweet heart I was lying here wishing you were here so that I might take you in my arms and caress you. What can you think of a thing like that—after that. And the German emperor being dead. Rot.

However forget all that. If you'll just stand by me things will come out alright. Only love me and don't grieve and in a little while I'll come back or you'll come down here, or if you go west I'll join you. I don't know whether I can stick it out as it is. I need rest and I feel rather down and out physically, to tell you the truth, but I'm lonely too—and perhaps that's the hardest and worst thing on me—even worse than sickness in N.Y.

Much love. I wish I could see you coming in the door & could take you in my arms.

Now can you make me out.

L—

Don't mind my letter of yesterday. I was very much wrought up.

[1] Dreiser quotes Markham's telegram of 2 February 1916 in his diary: "Sweetheart have written every day since Friday love. Kirah" (Riggio, *American Diaries*, 133).

[2] At this point in the letter, Dreiser sketched a street grid of six squares, which he also sketched in his diary for 29 January. See Riggio, *American Diaries*, 127.

[3] James Edward Oglethorpe (1696–1785) received the Charter for the colony of Georgia from King George II in 1732 and founded the city of Savannah in 1733. It was Oglethorpe's design for the city, to include twenty-four squares, each containing four city blocks around a square, which so impressed Dreiser.

[4] Dreiser and Markham at times entertained themselves with Ouija boards. For notes on their session in which the spirits predict the death of the German Kaiser, see Chris Wilkinson, "Table Talk," *Powys Newsletter* 44 (Nov. 2001): 22–28. Markham explained in a letter to Eugene O'Neill biographer Louis Shaeffer, "That anyone could think Dreiser ever took a Ouigi board seriously is too funny for words. Dreiser made copious notes on everything that touched his life; it did not mean that he accepted all of it. For a while our crowd had a lot of fun playing with the thing and I suspect that John Cowper Powys' witch like and charming sister, Marian, took her fortune-telling quite seriously, but that was all there was to our playing with the Ouigi board, just fun" (22 March 1962; Kennedy and Pettit, 127).

265. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box—282
Savannah.

Feb. 3rd 1916

Honey Artist:

What is it your working on that may be a success or a failure—a picture a play, a poem or a garment? In any case your not likely to fail if your really interested. To me your pictures come first—after your stage work—though your poems suggest lyric possibilities of such a high order that I often wish you would work out of a book of them. Think how easy it would be for you to design your book cover and title page.

I thought sure I was disappointed today—no letter in the P.O. box but tonight when I returned here—I can't call it home—from dinner I found this letter—sent here after I gave personal notice not to send any mail here since I'm leaving Saturday morning. You'd better be careful to send all mail to P.O. Box 282—since—if I leave 103 W. Taylor they'll be sure to keep sending mail on there. I haven't moved in there yet and although I will I may soon remove to Tybee where I can bath every day.

The weather continues fine here. Yesterday it rained—a heavy summer like rain. This morning it was quite cold for 3 hours. Then the sun came out and it was as warm as usual. I really [word omitted] they have few cloudy days here. One thing that worries me a little is that that cold I had still hangs on—after a fashion. I have a slight irritation deep down in my chest which causes me to cough at intervals. I don't understand it quite.

Am so glad "The Weavers" is going on, but if it doesn't pick up soon and go big I'll be wishing you were well out of it.[1] You're a courageous soul to fight on as you do and I know you'll win in the end. You have a fine optimism as well as magnetism which will take you a long way.

But Kiddie I wish I hadn't led you the hard life that I have so far. I'm afraid I've discouraged you utterly in regard to myself anyhow—and thats bad. But perhaps things will work out better

in the future. I find I'm really run down and nervous and terribly irritable. Things upset me so and without any good cause. I see now that I am repeating some of the symptoms of my breakdown of years ago.[2] Only in this case there isn't going to be any breakdown. I'm going to get myself in hand—walk and rest it off if necessary.

There was such a nice letter in tonights mail from a man in Wisconsin—Minnesota I mean—one of the best really I have ever received.[3] It is so intelligent and so sympathetic. As soon as I've answered it I'll mail it to you. It encourages me to write, really, to get a letter like that.

Again I had a note from Hartridge addressed to his brother here.[4] I'll be pleased to present it and hope I find an interesting man. Theres no news except that I do believe if you could come down here later, or at any time, you would enjoy it. The city is really picturesque & different—not like the ordinary American city at all. It's Southern and semi-tropical. Such trees as lose there leaves here are beginning to bud out again and I passed a yard this A.M. on my way to breakfast, full of violets! Peach trees are in blossom and vegetable beds never seem to die down. I see lettuce and turnips and onions and radishes flourishing gaily in many a yard. And Negros—there are thousends of them—and so lackadaisical and so natural. Savannah is a rich town apparently and prosperous.

But enough. I wish you were [not] so knocked out from G-Tn- but it'll all be gone by the time you read this. Much love. If you get run down quit and come down here for a month. I'd be so glad to have you—

L—

You & Rupert[5]—is that a love match.

[1] After Emanuel Reicher had resigned as producer of *The Weavers*, in part to forgo his salary and focus on future company productions, the actors entered into a cooperative management agreement in which each actor would receive a portion of the box office receipts—a measure designed to keep salaries low and keep the production

alive. See "Actors Running Garden Theatre," *New York Tribune*, 3 Feb. 1916: 9.

[2] Dreiser refers to his breakdown of 1902–03, in part due to his disappointment regarding the promotion of *Sister Carrie*. For Dreiser's record of this time, see Riggio, *American Diaries*, 53–113.

[3] Dreiser's diary records that his correspondent was Willard Dillman, "a businessman and partner in the printing firm of Brooks-Dillman of Minneapolis. He first wrote to Dreiser on 29 January 1916, giving him a sympathetic and careful response to his novels," and over the years they developed a close friendship (Riggio, *American Diaries*, 134, n. 22). Dreiser's 7 February 1916 response to Dillman's letter is reprinted in Pizer, *Picture*, 63–64.

[4] Clifford Wayne Hartridge (1866–1937) was a prominent New York lawyer, most famous as the defense counsel of record for the 1910 appeal of Harry Thaw's insanity determination for his murder of the renowned architect Sanford White in 1906. In 1914, Hartridge was disbarred for bribery in connection with the case and returned to Savannah in order to write. The note is addressed to Hartridge's cousin, not his brother, Walter Charlton Hartridge (1870–1932), a prominent Savannah attorney. The Dreiser Papers at the University of Pennsylvania include a complimentary one-week pass to Savannah's Oglethorpe Club for 5 February 1916, made out to Dreiser courtesy of Walter Hartridge.

[5] The actor Rupert Harvey, who had appeared with Markham in both *When the Young Vine Blooms* and *The Weavers*, and was now playing with her in *Copy*, a retitling of Oren Taft's *Conscience*, which opened on 11 February 1916 in a matinee benefit performance for the Twelfth Night Club, an organization of professional actresses.

266. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282
Savannah Ga

Feb. 4—1916

Honey Kid:

Your letters are beginning to come in now—at last. One of Jan 28- was held in N.Y. for lack of postage. No clippings have come

because they are being held for postage. Please put them in a new envelope and readdress them or order Romeike[1] to send them direct. You mentioned something from The Conning Tower but didn't enclose it.[2] I sent the Minneapolis letter to Jones who will send it to you. Please remail it to me.

Another sunny day here—and almost as warm as yesterday. The days will be perfect here I fancy toward the end of the month. Have not got rid of my cold yet, but am too.[3] Your account of Kemps flare up amuses me. He really is a little mad, as Pogany says.

How comes "Shadowy Waters" and "The Tinkers Wedding"?[4] Are you going to do them. What becomes of Reicher? Is he organizing a new company? In any rearrangement I hope you get a better part, if you want it. Am moving tomorrow and wish you could see the new place.

By the way what about our fire irons? Did you get them. And did you get anything else beside the mirror & writing board. Rugs are really what are needed. If I saw one down here & had the money I'd almost buy it. Am paying the phone bill today & will settle the gas bill when it comes. Write me whenever you can. I'm in a sort of incoherent mood today though I scarcely know why.

L—

Hope you have an interesting Sunday night crowd.

[1] Henry Romeike (1855–1903) established the press clipping bureau that bears his name in New York in 1887.

[2] "The Meeting of Pericles and Aspasia, by Our Own Theodore Dreiser," part of the column "The Conning Tower," by F. P A., *New York Tribune*, 27 Jan 1916: 9. The article is a bit of satire, directed at *The "Genius,"* in which Pericles, surrounded by prostitutes, encounters Aspasia, who possesses a "superior mind, distinguished, lofty, like his own."

[3] The page breaks after "am." Dreiser either meant to write "aim to" or there's a page missing.

[4] *The Shadowy Waters* (1905), by William Butler Yeats; *The Tinker's Wedding* (1909), by J. M. Synge: neither play appears to have been performed in New York at this time.

267. Markham to Dreiser

New York to Savannah

Feb. 4, 1916

Sweet boy

I have just written six close pages to you and having got the load off my chest burnt them. They were more or less hurt in the lovely letter you wrote the day you received my telegram. [Y]ou still must put up your plea for greater freedom.[1] Bub, I want you to know that if you want to be alone there is nothing more desirable in the world for me than to help you be alone. But your inclination is to twist your desire to find friends whom you will not share with me and to whom you show greater courtesies than you ever show any of the friends we have in common, into a desire to be alone—at least in my eyes. I don't want to meet them—don't mistake my hurt for that—neither do I want you to cease seeing them. Both those desires are long since past, if they ever existed. All that I do want is that when you want to be alone you will say so, and that when you want to go to the friends for whom I am somehow not fit you will say so, that I may at least share in that part of your life which is the going from and returning to our home, even if I may not share in what is beyond it.

I am never going back to the old conditions again, Bub. I am getting too much accomplished these days. But we can adjust all that when we are together, that is if you can agree to be with me and take what freedom you can get with me, realizing that I am trying to help you to it all the time. I tell you I'm through with scenes on the subject, Bub. If you come back to me you've got to realize that if I seem at times to be absorbing you the process is neither malicious nor wilful and can be dealt with lovingly. Two people cannot live together and have complete liberty. Complete liberty cannot come into the same sentence with my name, for I love you, and if complete liberty is a thing to be desired there must be a choice between it and me.

But this is enough of the future! Oh darling, you are a sweet, crazy, wee baby in your funny old heart, and I do adore you,

Bub—if I'm not caught natural like before August I am going to a doctor and if possible by hook or crook we're going to have a son or daughter. I need a child to make me more balanced, more liberal. I should think you'd realize that. But then you're such a child yourself I'm afraid I'm throwing a great deal of responsibility on your shoulders by asking you to become a father. Only I think fatherhood would do you good too. You aren't really selfish, sweetheart, but your life has taken such form as to make it rather difficult for you to think of much but yourself, and I do think it would be nice to have a baby. Don't you? Please say yes!

I froze in my bed last night and scarcely slept. Now as I sit here the room is cold, though the fire is going beautifully. The walking trip sounds sort of fun and would put us both in better trim.[2] What do you think? I have been writing you since before 12, and it is now half-past one, so goodnight, dear love. I shall pretend that you are here and that it is too warm to lie close together, but that if I put out my hand I could touch you. Goodnight, dear.

[1] See Dreiser to Markham 2 Feb. 1916, letter 264.

[2] Bror Nordfeldt had revived his proposal to do a walking trip with Dreiser, this time with Markham accompanying them. See Dreiser to Markham, 16 Feb. 1915, letter 212; and 7 Feb. 1916, letter 269.

268. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282
Savannah.

Feb 5—1916

Honey Girl:

I have been working hard today in my new quarters and seem to be getting along very nicely. Moved in about 10 A.M.—by 11:30 had all my things distributed and began writing and have been writing ever since barring lunch and dinner—or dinner & supper as they say down here. Like my new room much better and the meals are good and cheaper than going out—30 cents each. The people are sociable and agreeable—all men here at

present—and I rather like them. They don't talk about the negro as much as the Virginians used to.

Hartridges cousin—Hon. Walter C—phoned tonight—then came round—I'm writing now at 12—having dropped this letter at 8—and took me to the Savannah Club[1] where I've been ever since. He looks very much like Clifford W. and talks like him. Tomorrow he is planning an auto trip over roads around here to show me a rice field, a cotton plantation etc. I fancy it will be pleasant.

This letter came today from Mr. Maurice J. Speiser (observe how he spells my name).[2] Also the printed pamphlet of the Republic review which I thought you might like to see.[3] What shall I say to Speiser? Had we better get Hines advice—or is Hines still alive? I'm so pleased that your company is doing so well and would like to have you stay as long as there is anything good in it for you. I wish too that you could hook on to something in a Northern city for the summer so that we might go there. I'd like to have you come down her only I wish before you do that we could sort of get things straightened out. I somehow anticipate trouble with Jones (no statement yet) and may have to come back to N.Y. to make arrangements with some other firm, if I can. I don't like the looks of this Lane business.

Am feeling much better here now since this mail business is straightened out and if I had the means would be content to stay on here until May persuading you to come down for awhile. Can get a cottage at Tybee until then for 15^{00} per month furnished—even $12—but I don't know how badly furnished as yet. Expect to find out next week. The weather continues fine and I am told it is likely to remain so from now on. This room has an open grate, a French window to the porch, another window on the street, a bath adjoining and altogether it is very nice. Floor is painted dark brown—wall painted a light tan. Altogether it is not bad—nice and clean and bright. My cold continues however and I am sneezing quite regularly now but I hope to improve. Glad you are getting along as well as you are and hope you will make yourself lots of nice dresses. You could use them here. Wish you would buy me a blue tie somewhere and a small can of albolene if such a thing is

sold. I can't get it here. Pleasant dreams & good luck. Would like it if you were sleeping with me.

L—

Answer about the Speiser letter as soon as possible.

[1] Dreiser means the Oglethorpe Club, founded in 1870 at the former residence of General Henry R. Jackson, at 450 Bull Street. For Dreiser's diary entry recording his visit on this day, see Riggio, *American Diaries*, 135.

[2] Maurice Speiser, of the Stage Society of Philadelphia, had written for permission to stage Dreiser's *The Light in the Window*. Dreiser put him off until 8 March 1916, when Speiser dropped his appeals. In each of his four letters, Speiser spelled the playwright's name as "Dreicer."

[3] Dreiser refers to his review of W. Somerset Maugham's *Of Human Bondage*, "As a Realist Sees It," *New Republic* 5 (25 Dec. 1915): 202–04.

269. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282

Feb. 7th—1916

Honey Mine:

I didn't take your letter of yesterday any too seriously although I did ponder over it so much that I couldn't quite answer before Walter Hartridge here came around at 3:30 with his wife and sister-in-law (I think) and took me out automobiling. They have fine roads around here—hundreds of miles of them so I understand built by convict labor—my idea of the right way to use convicts. We didn't get back until seven and then stopped at some bankers house here got him & his wife and went to the Oglethorpe club here and had dinner. It was 11:30 before I got back and I wrote a sort of letter, holding it until this A.M. but your todays note raises so many other problems that I'll just rewrite all I want to say.

I had about $200 after sending a check to Crist & Herrick, sending the phone check & paying for my ticket. And cashing 25 for use here. I still have all of that as life here isn't very

expensive—certainly not the way I live it. This room costs me 15^{00} per mo. and meals here 30 cents each (only I wouldn't want to eat them all the time). There are incidentals of course—I don't know why but there are. I need a new suit this spring badly and will probably have to get it. If you could bring (supposing you come) or send me another Wanamaker linen suit it would be an advantage here later. Besides I need to have my silk shirts fixed up or get a new one or two.

Beyond these things and what you would need I can't see but that we would live here for $50 or $60 a month—bare running expenses. I do think we could rent a furnished cottage over at Tybee until May 1 or even June 1 for $15 per month—if not less. After that the rates would jump to $50—or $200 for the season. Food over there probably wouldn't be any more expensive than it is here—but there is only one store, a branch of one here. Fish oysters clams etc (shrimps) could all be secured there. We could gather them ourselves. It might be a little lonely as there are few people over there now, but then this place is only 45 minutes away. Or we could keep a place here at $15 per month—perhaps it would be $25 for two and then rent a cottage over there for week ends. We could get it that way for about 10 per month.

There is however your fare to consider and things you may need. If I have any trouble with Jones he would stop paying me under this new arrangement & I would have to return to N.Y. & make a new deal somewhere. I suppose, also in a crisis that we would get a loan of $50 or a $100 from your father until I could straighten things around somewhere. I go into these things to show you how tentative the whole situation is & how carefully we would have to balance things. In view of this if you think you would like to come until June or May or whenever it is, say the word. I would like, as I said for you to get a northern engagement somewhere just for a change but you know your business & what you can do. Write me fully as what you think ought to be done and I'll send you the money for your ticket, etc. Your such a flying soul. I can never tell from day to day what your up to or where you will be next or will want to do.

If you do come down here I think you'll enjoy it. It's warm now. They say they do have cold, gray days here in Feb. but if so they haven't materialized yet. Certain trees & shrubs are flowering. Vegetable gardens are growing. The whole thing is a great improvement on N.Y.

In regard to Nordfeldt I feel that I cannot drop my work now to take up any new travel book. I doubt if I'll ever do another—unless it is India. I must finish The Bulwark & so as much as I'd like—I can't. You'd better say sickness & interruptions have held me back and I can't do it.

Sorry "The Weavers" is busting up. You'd really better quit before it becomes a reproach to be with it. This check will carry until I can here from you and you can tell me what you propose to do.

L—

270. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282

Tuesday, Feb 8—16

My Lady Cryhon:

My check must have come in handy since you ask for $5 in todays letter. I'll send you more as soon as you let me know what you need. Am writing today on my back porch & making good progress. Do all of a chapter a day now & more.

You tell me so many tales about The Weavers that I hardly know what to think. One day you say it is all up—the next that you are going to go on at $10 a week—which would mean that the show was going on. I wouldn't. After the 12th unless you can find something you'd better clinch it and come here—only as I say I wish you could get a northern summer engagement. But if you can't then it would be as well to come here. I find that I write better in this climate. As a matter of fact I know now that I will always write best in a bright, clean warm place. Here, on a day like today or yesterday it is delicious—perfect. I sit and write in the sun soaking in the heat and making up for past days of chill.

Truly Savannah is a charming winter resort. It may not be as hot as the Florida East Coast, but it is good enough. From 10 to 4, it is glorious. From four to 10 the next A.M. it is alternately cooling & warming up again. From 10 P.M. to 8 A. M. or 9—it is cold enough to want a light overcoat (not always). I sleep under a blanket and a comfort. A fire is delightful in the morning. Then comes the warmth and all is well again. I can throw open all windows and doors & think how nice it is to be down South.

Well, honey, about this infant question—I feel almost self righteous.[1] I have made such an honest effort. Stop using a douche—at least immediately after—and see what happens. Or go and see that doctor at 253 Broadway to whom the Ouija referred. If it can be done I am willing. At the time I was having my prostate treated 1908–9—about six years ago—I was told my fertility was beyond question. It may have been a wrong diagnosis—or they may not have wanted to tell me. I might undergo another examination and see again.

I like to think of your sleeping in the center of the room. It must be quite stately. What all did you buy—a mirror & writing board & what else. There is a dandy old antique place crowded with all sorts of things but the prices are fairly steep. How about our brass shovel & poker. We oughtn't lose those—as bad as they are. Also what about that group of pictures for me. I want the two Andromache ones—the one kneeling & the one lying down. Also the girl in Conscience—the best one. Also the profile of your head. And the one by Miss Shostac[2]—with the fine arms & shoulders. I meant to bring them all along & forgot.

Much love. If you were here now I'd make a very serious effort to settle this infant business—you nice, long graceful kid.

L—

[1] See Dreiser to Markham, 4 Feb. 1916, letter 267.

[2] Probably a reference to the photographer Nancy Shostac (1895–1939). For the kneeling Andromache photograph, see fig. 7; for *Conscience*, see fig. 16; the other photographs have not been located.

271. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282

Feb 10—Thursday [1916]

Honey Girl:

When this reaches you—you'll either be getting ready to do "Copy" or will have done it the night before. If it reaches you in time, good luck—the very best. You know how seriously I take your efforts. If it's all over I hope & pray it came out exactly as you wished. I know it must have though because you have the force and understanding. Even if it didn't on this occasion it couldn't mean much because you can and do do interesting things every time you are really interested. So here's luck anyhow. Your sure to win now or in the future.

I have to smile at your pictures of Sunday night. What a bore O'Sullivan[1] seems to becoming. Cut him out.

Did you get my check for $15? Did you see about the andirons—or rather the shovel & poker? Will you please take down the file American "Genius" clippings and get out 1 copy of the Tribune Interview & send it to me.[2] I want it for use here. Has Jones sent you a copy of "Plays of the Natural & Supernatural"?[3] He has never sent me my statement! Have you ever seen Dell or Marjorie or Wright? I am curious about the whole Dell-Mencken-Wright situation.[4]

Am glad your sending my pictures of you. You think I don't care but I think of you so much more than I have written. You mean so much more than I say perhaps. I think of you sexually so often but when I write I always get off on practical and artistic things.

No matter I love you and if you come down here we'll have a good time together working in this good bed. If not I'll be coming back one of these days and then we'll do it there. I often think of you naked & graceful. Your such a shapely thing. Write me of your results in "Copy"—and once more luck or congratulations.

L—

[1] Vincent O'Sullivan (1868–1940), American-born journalist, novelist, and short story writer.

[2] Bennett McDonald, "Genius Is a Merciless Obsession, Says Dreiser," *New York Tribune*, 5 Dec. 1915, pt. v, 3.
[3] The official publication date for *Plays of the Natural and Supernatural* was 18 February 1916.
[4] The reference is unclear: persons referred to are Floyd Dell, Marjorie Jones, Willard Huntington Wright, and H. L. Mencken.

272. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282

Feb 12—1916

Ma Honey:

By now your performance of "Copy" is a thing of the past and I'll hear soon all about it.[1] I do hope your own work measured up to your desires as I know it must have if you were in good trim. I wasn't quite sure from your letter whether you were giving the play Friday afternoon or night—and as you never gave me the name of the Theatre until your letter of last night—and I was afraid a telegram to the house would miss you, I had to send it care of Dixie Hines.[2] I tried to time it so that in case it was an afternoon performance you would get it at the theatre. But heaven knows what actually happened to it. My experience with telegrams have been as wierd as those with letters. I cannot tell you how persistently I was with you all day wishing you to do a stirring peice of work.

What you write of "The Weavers" and Gus Duncan and Arnold Daly[3] is interesting only I do wish the thing were settled and you were in on a better basis or out entirely. I fancy Duncan could organize an art company which would contain fine material but whether he could key it up to a [illegible] magnetism is something to be seen. Say what you will of Maurice Browne there was an art tensity about him and a devotion to and enthusiasm for an idea, which if he had had more toleration would have carried him far. One must have fire and be able to communicate it to others. I have not seen enough of Duncan to be able to tell, really.

But as for you, if you could once get a start you could provide your own fire. You have it. You need a manager or art group that will see you. If I had the money I would certainly invest in you and a talented company to back you up. You need an organization that would risk ideal and peculiar plays.

By the way what about that Philadelphia organization. Shall I release "The Light in the Window" for a week for nothing. I suppose I might as well. That ass who writes me has never learned to spell my name.[4] He knows nothing about me, outside that one play. I shall have to caution him not to spell my name with a C on the programme, if I release the play!

I am very much disgusted with the Lane Co—really. As I told you—as poor as it was "The Financier"—the last book Harpers published sold over 15000—not counting the 12,000 sold at 50 cents. The Titan with Lane in the first 8 months sold on 8000 and there has been no 50 cent edition sold at all.[5] And The Titan had much more advertising than The Financier ever had. Along comes The "Genius" with the greatest critical acclaim of any—and sells in 8 months (the same length of time as The Titan) only 6500 and he writes that it is not doing very good.

Yet every book store in this town is carrying it—and I suppose every other place has copies, a growth in distribution never achieved by me before. What can I do? I hate to be moving around from publisher to publisher. It looks so bad—and yet. I have a good mind to return to Harpers (they still want me I think) or Doubleday Page.

There is no news here. The weather continues fine—quite wonderful to me. It is warm and bright every day—perfectly clear. They say it is exceptional weather even for here. I write on my porch from 10 A.M. to about 5:30 P.M. with about a half hour off for lunch. Then I walk or go out to the country club or over to the Oglethorpe where I now no a few individuals—club fashion. The south is very stand off-ish.

Am anxious to hear what your plans are now—whether your going on with The Weavers, going into something else or coming down here. If it gets very warm by March 1 or 15th it might be

advisable (entirely so I think) to move up into Virginia where the spring won't be so far advanced. Charlottesville is wonderful and Roanoke. If you decide to come give me notice. I want to find a nicer room, if I can.

There is no other news. I think of you all the time & wish I might hold you close again and that we might live somewhere as I would really like to live with sufficient means to dress you right and to move with that freedom that makes life really attractive. I want to manhandle you once more—

L—

[1] Because *Copy* was performed by the Twelfth Night Club in a single performance at the Belasco Theater on Friday, 11 February, and was not a regular theater offering, the play received few and brief notices of two or three lines in syndicated theater notes, with the most extensive comment reading, "Miss Markham and Mr. Harvey gave a vivid performance of the two chief characters and the playlet will probably be seized for regular production" ("The Theater," *South Bend Tribune*, 21 Feb. 1916: 6).

[2] Dreiser's telegram to Markham, care of Dixie Hines, was time-stamped "FEB 11 205P" and read, "LUCK TO MY KID YOU KNOW HOW MUCH I WISH YOU SUCCESS YOU CANT FAIL."

[3] Arnold Daly (1875–1927), actor, playwright and producer, who introduced early plays by George Bernard Shaw to American audiences. Augustin Duncan served as one of the guarantors when *The Weavers* shifted to cooperative management, and apparently the company was attempting to interest Daly in producing the play.

[4] Maurice Speiser, of the Stage Society of Philadelphia. See Dreiser to Markham, 5 Feb. 1916, n. 2, letter 268.

[5] Dreiser's concern stemmed from his mounting indebtedness to the John Lane Company with book sales as his only means of repaying that debt. Royalty statements from Lane show that as of 31 December 1914, *The Titan* sold 8016 hard copies and 500 $.50 edition copies; one year later, the novel had sold only 100 more copies. By 31 December 1916, *The "Genius"* had sold 6203 hard copies and 375 $.45 copies, leaving Dreiser owing $1224.68 against advances for all three of his John Lane books.

273. Dreiser to Markham

P.O Box 282
Savannah.

Sunday, Feb 13—1916

Honey Girl:

By dint of hurtling along I completed the travel book this A.M. and now have that burden off my back. And now that it is off and done I like it—I think there are many rather fine things in it and that when it is typed and cut—illustrated or not—it will make an interesting book. I think however that Booth intends to illustrate it.

I have no word as yet as to how your play came out and do not expect any until tomorrow—since the government P.O.s do not work in America on Sunday. I am not even sure whether the trains carry mails.

The most wonderful thunder storm came up just a little while ago. It is now over but while it was on water came down in buckets. The sky in the west was a greenish yellow and the lightning and thunder made a fine accompaniment to it all. I had the pleasure of sitting on this porch and watching it all go by quite dry.

There is no news save of scribblers toil from me. It took 62 chapters to finally wind up the travel book but many of them are quite short so that I fancy with cuts it will come to considerably under fifty.[1] I expect to put in eight or nine hours a day on The Bulwark until I get it cleaned up, if I can stand it. I still have a slight scratching in my lungs but it is getting milder and milder so that I think by now I am all right.

Did you get my valentine. I chanced to see a great display in a book store here and picked it up. Your pictures came and I have them spread out in a row. We never had an original of the kneeling one that appeared in Harpers, have we.[2] I think I write Miss (?) out in Chicago and offer to buy one if she will fix a price. What is her name.

By the way I am enclosing this slip out of my hat which I want you to take to that Danbury Hat store on Broadway near 50th and get me a new one just like it. Or perhaps you could buy me a velvet (or silk fur) hat—which is it?—such as Wilkinson had.[3] (By the way, how are they) If you will tell me which you prefer to do I'll

send you an additional check—provided you decide to get the silk one. It's no use trying to get a hat here. They don't keep anything decent and this one I have is pulled out of shape.

Hope to here in your next letter what your plans are. If you are coming down here you will enjoy it for a time anyhow. If not I may move farther north soon. But I don't want to run into cold weather. Not any more this winter—until I get rested up. Do you miss me? There is always room in my bed for you—and I think of you every night—in the right way.

L—

[1] Indeed, as published *A Hoosier Holiday* has 61 chapters, at 513 pages.
[2] That is, Elaine Hyman as Andromache in *The Trojan Women*, as published in *Harper's Weekly*. See fig. 7.
[3] Louis Wilkinson (1881–1966), English writer. Like his friend John Cowper Powys, Wilkinson lectured on literature in America; he had recently published several stories in *Smart Set* and was present at Dreiser's and Markham's entertainment with the Ouija board.

274. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282

Feb. 14—1916

Dearest Kid:

I fancy I must be turning into a dry as dust correspondent. I keep on writing regularly but get few replies. No word since Wednesday or Thursday, when you mentioned looking after the scenery for Copy but that may be due to faulty train service so I'll wait until tomorrow anyhow. Four days from Friday ought to bring a note. I recall that you telegraphed from Chicago. However if I don't hear it's all right. I haven't recieved any mail via you in some time. Is any lying there for me? And you haven't answered my inquiry in regard to the Phila. Little Theatre.[1] Please send back that mans letter—I didn't keep his address. And also the letter from Willard Dillon—[2]

Much love—

L

[1] Dreiser refers to his correspondence with Maurice Speiser of the Stage Society of Philadelphia. See Dreiser to Markham, 5 Feb. 1916, letter 268; 12 Feb. 1916, letter 272.
[2] Dreiser means Willard Dillman. See Dreiser to Markham, 3 Feb. 1916, n. 3, letter 265.

275. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282

Tuesday, Feb 15—1916

Honey Kid:

After my letter of yesterday this one of yours today (written last Saturday) has certain humorous aspects. You speak of my having failed to write one day—Wednesday. The last letter I had from you was on Friday—exactly 4 days ago. That is all very well—only a sense of the humor of the situation ought not to be wanting.

You spoke of wanting news of my social life here. That is also funny although lacking exact information you can't be expected to appreciate it. The fact is I haven't any social life and barring one auto ride with the Hartridges and one return dinner I gave them at The Savannah—I haven't had any. Mr. Hartridge—a charming man in his way—isn't as interesting as Clifford Wayne—and you know what that means. His humor is confined absolutely to that which relates to liquor and negros. It's not bad for one evening. After that it falls horribly. Mrs. Hartridge[1] is stout and comfortable and dull. You might stand her for a time or two. Then you would be bored—as I am. I do not care whether I ever see either of them again. They really do not interest me.

At the time I went there there was a neice whom I actually believe to be weak minded—faintly cretinous. And a sister of Mrs. Hartridge who is pretty but painfully waspish and full of cutting remarks. She seemed to be down on Savannah society, principally because she had not been able to marry money, as yet. There is the whole thing in a nut shell. On the auto trip and at the dinner I gave them she was present. I have not seen her since and do not expect to.

Now as for the distribution of my time. Rise at 8:30. Bath. Breakfast at 9 here in the house. (Charge—30 cents) Go to P.O. and for a 10 minute walk afterwards. Then back here and work—either writing on my book—or any letters I may have until 1:30. Lunch here—(Price 30) Then to my book—until 5 or even 6—when I walk because I need exercise. Back at about 9—because in walking I nearly always get my dinner out if I eat any and so to bed. I can prove this for although I left New York on the 26th I did not get here until Saturday the 29th and did not get a room and settled until Monday the 31st. On Tuesday, Feb 1 I had things fixed so I could write comfortably and by last Sunday exactly 13 days later had written 12 chapters—almost a chapter a day. I cannot do much better than a chapter a day, working all day long because I do so much changing and revision. If I had been socializing as you seem to think I would not have been able to get so much done. You can reasonably believe that.

However I am not going into all this to induce you to come but merely to explain. I am not in the position of a suppliant and cannot be put there. I have been writing to you every day because I am sincerely and truly fond of you and am happy to be with you when I feel that it is an atmosphere of affectionate human relationship and not one of critical watchfulness and restraint. Since I have been with you I have never interfered with anything you wanted to do nor have I been away from you at any time when it was not more or less unimportant and whether I was present or not I have used the times you were engaged to do nearly all the things I have wanted to do.

Mostly your letters since I have been down here have been critical. They have sounded as though you were throwing the whole problem of our relationship over in your mind and making up your mind whether you wanted to go on with it or not. You have not written me regularly but at intervals and in a desultory way. I have not quarreled with that because I have felt that you might well be justified in your mood and besides you were entitled to make up your mind. All the time though I have been hoping that you would be loving me so much that you couldn't resist writing

me tenderly in the long run—not so much for your own sake as for mine. However, if you are reaching the place where you cannot endure me any more as I am and are troubled by all that I do I cannot blame you for not wanting to come. In a way I feel for your own sake—not mine—you had better not. I would like to have you come—am wishing all the time that you would—but I also feel that I never can really measure up to your needs or expectations. You want some one who will love you in a single minded and whole hearted way, unmixed with any thoughts of any other human being and while I might say that and try it wouldn't really be true. Not that I would ever actually or spiritually be disloyal to you or distant from you in my mood, but I know myself. I am too rediculously inquisitive and curious not to want to know how the world wags in many directions. You are not like that. Besides the minds of few current men appeal to me whereas the perhaps foolish adoration of a few women who think—or think they think is soothing in the face of so much critical opposition. However you know, as well as I do, how little of all this even—I take seriously or have. I like to correspond—for awhile anyhow.

But in this case you are the judge and the doctor. You must decide. I am not asking you to do anything you do not want to do or cannot do in a warm generous spirit.

Just now you are at a fortunate turning point in your career. Things are surely coming your way and will continue so to do from now on. You will not need assistance from me or anyone in a year or so and even if you did I would only be too glad to give it to you. Personally, if you feel that you cannot take me as I am and that you are going to be very unhappy in being near me and being compelled to watch me at close range don't come—I'd rather you wouldn't. You needn't even write me, if you feel greatly irritated over this and me. I am in love with you, but I can get along. I will see that you are supplied with means until you connect solidly. You can have the studio there and I will send you so much a week to live on. Later on, if you wish I will withdraw my books and mss and turn over the whole place to you. But actually I would rather have you come and live with me and be my love.[2] I think of you

all the time and wish you were here. I never stop thinking of the happy times we have had together and how interesting and big and fine you are in so many ways. If you don't come or wish to leave, my heart will follow you persistently in all that you do. I will take more joy in what you do than will you yourself, I do believe.

But let that be as it will. I am not going to believe that you are not coming until I learn that you are not. I shall arrange against your coming and if you do you will be happy here for awhile, anyhow. We will go about and see all that there is to see and I will take you in my arms once more and enjoy my girl as I love to. Perhaps once you are here you will not think me so bad as I seem.—I lead and we will have to lead such a simple life. The change would be good for you. If you don't like me after a week or a month you could pick up and leave again—it is not so far to New York. And who knows—you might eventually reform me. Miracles are still achieved—even in this dull work-a-day world. But if you do come—wire me. I want to be sure to get a place—to see one at least—to which we can go in case you do not like this one. A budding star must be well looked after.

But in case you don't want to come and don't want even to write to me soon drop me a line to say that much. I will take care of everything in connection with the studio as before. But I do wish you would come—really and truly. I love you and would love to have my kid with me.

L—

I'm so pleased over the Otis Skinner deal[3]—I can't tell you how much. In case you do come bring the mss file of A Hoosier Holiday. I want to get all the mss together.

[1] Catharine Honoria McIntire Hartridge (1879–1949).

[2] Dreiser is quoting the opening line of "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love" (1599), by Christopher Marlowe (1564–1593).

[3] Otis Skinner (1858–1942) was a leading American stage actor. He played the lead role in Booth Tarkington's *Mister Antonio* (Sept.-Oct. 1916), and Markham was scheduled to play opposite him in what would have been her most important role to date. But as she

explained in a letter to H. L. Mencken, the emotional turmoil of leaving Dreiser left her "utterly debilitated, flunked out completely as Otis Skinner's leading woman" (Markham to Mencken, 17 July 1945; Mencken Papers).

276. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282

Wednesday, Feb—16—1916

Sweetheart:

Most of our difficulties seem to arise from delayed letters. In this mornings mail I got two—one dated Feb 8—and another Feb 5—. You mailed them without stamps—or the stamps came off & I had to send to N.Y. In the one of Feb 8th you tell me what you think of the Phila Little Theatre idea—and then in your letter of Feb. 14—or rather 13—(it's stamped 14 on the outside) you jump on me for going ahead without waiting to hear what you had to say. But I didn't go ahead. I wrote [to] find out for how long they desired it and what facilities they had for producing it as written. I sent his reply but I never answered and will not except to refuse. I thought you would like to see the request and give me an opinion.

Again when I wrote yesterday I hadn't had a letter for four days, not any comment on my telegram nor any word as to the play—save that you had done well—after which you proceeded to jump on me for my hidden social life and my probable escapades. It had its humorous aspects but it was irritating and I wrote what I felt only I'm sorry now if I seemed distant or unloving because I didn't feel that way. I wish we could quit rowing. Love can't go on that way—or if it can—and I suppose it can—we couldn't be together much which is just as bad. You vary so in your moods from day to day that I can't tell any more what's going to happen next. These delayed letters and this one of this morning—the 13th are so lovely that I would say nothing could separate us. In between though are the letters of 12 and the 9th remote and critical. For the life of me now I can't tell what you will do—whether

you will come Monday or turn on me and stay away. For my part until I hear from this letter anyhow I propose to go on believing that everything is all right between us and that you want to come and will come. If you don't now perhaps you change your mind later. If you do I thought we might knock off for a day or two after you arrive and go down to St. Augustine. It's only five hours from here. We might even take our trunks and live down there, coming back here later. Jacksonville, Fla. is only 4 hours by rail and about 9 hours by water. You might like that. There are lots of nice boat trips from here—to Charleston and Beaufort, So. Carolina, Augusta and Brunswick, Ga—on one up the Savannah River, the others down the coast—and so on. If you chose at certain times—Saturdays & Sundays—we could do these.

But Kiddie, in spite of what you complain of in every letter I'm not cold toward you. Really and truly I think of you all the time. I have your pictures in a row on the mantle and never get up or go to bed what I wish you were here to sleep with me and love me and let me love you. I am happy to be with you. At times in New York, I got irritated because I didn't seem to be getting any where with my work but now that I've finished the travel book and am working on The Bulwark again I feel better—I know that I can do this book and down here where I can rest and feel free of the damnable cold weather you don't know what a difference I feel in my point of view. This sunshine and the green trees are a tonic. I could stand a room with more view and perhaps by the time you show up I'll have one or we'll get one—or go to St. Augustine. But I do hope you forget all about what's been said and just come. Don't worry over me so and just love me. Things will come out all right. I want to have your nice smooth body to fondle and feel you hold me tight. Don't you want me?

Last night by the way, quite in the dumps, I went to a moving picture house here called the Arcadia. 10 cents. It's supposed to be the best. Saw a film of "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine"[1] and it was lovely—really beautiful. They do have such good things at times. Between shows—just as I was going out—I heard some one

starting to speak & looking up to a gallery over the door saw a fat local manager, entirely surrounded by visiting actors and actresses. He began the usual guff about great stars condescending to visit the movies in person and then introduced Francis X. Bushman and Beverley Bayne as the leading exponents of their craft.[2] She was gotten up to look like the queen of sheba and smiled and simpered. I fancy from what Mr. Bushman said that your brother Bob stands no show any more. He took her hand and called her the sweetest sweetheart on the stage and said in addition to that that she was all of that and more to him. She leaned against him affectionately, so I suppose it's all day with your brother—for the present anyhow. She belongs to the Mary Pickford—Lola May school of sexy actresses.[3]

Well-up—so far so good. I'm waiting for the day when you will lay them all in the shade with real tragedy.

In regard to the furs—I'm enclosing a check for the Wanamaker bill. I think your idea of a cedar chest is fine and will save money. In addition it could be sent to that big storage warehouse at Broadway (or 7th Ave) and 52nd Street, where it would be kept in a cool, fire proof place for 25 cents a month. Why not get one, put the furs in it and send it. Learn the price, write me at once and I'll mail you a check to cover it. I believe also you ought to have those fire irons repaired. They'll look good, even if we don't use them. Better do it.

In regard to Jones I think I'll draw as much money as I can against The Bulwark, without signing a contract for it and then raise the questioning of an accounting. If things are not straight they couldn't keep me anyhow—if they are I would just as leave stay. I'll talk to Hartridge the next time I see him or write him. In regard to Hoggson I don't know what to think. That Goodwin film was arranged by Captain Lambert before ever I called on Hoggson—they are not doing anything now in so far as I can learn.[4] I offered to take $150. Would $50 less make much difference. Perhaps I'd better make it $75. But if I'm to hear at all—I'll hear pretty soon now anyhow.

In the matter of a spring suit—if your coming I'd rather wait until you get here.

Does this letter seem cold? It certainly doesn't to me. I think of you and love you in a thousend ways. Come on down and be my Savannah girl. You'll see how much passion I've stored up.

L

[1] *The Trail of the Lonesome Pine*, a 1908 bestselling novel by John Fox, Jr., was adapted for stage and film a number of times. Playing in Savannah was the 1916 film, adapted and directed by Cecil B. DeMille.

[2] Francis X. Bushman (1883–1966) was a leading film actor and matinee idol known for his sculpted physique. Beverly Bayne (1894–1982) was a film actress who starred with Bushman in 24 films. Both began with Essanay Studios in Chicago in 1911. They would marry in 1918 after their affair became public.

[3] Mary Pickford (1892–1979), born Gladys Louise Smith, was a Canadian-born actress and one of the most popular actresses of the early film era and the first to become known as "America's Sweetheart." For Lola May, who acted with Markham in *The Lure*, see Markham to Dreiser, 29 Jan. 1914, n. 1, letter 122.

[4] In October 1915 Dreiser had been approached to join a new film venture, Mirror Films, in a probable capacity as scenario director (see Dreiser to Mencken, 10 Oct. 1915; Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 201). Dreiser had been recommended by his friend William Lengel, who was the editor of *Hoggson's Magazine*, published by the Hoggson Brothers, a building construction firm. The firm advertised for investors, began construction on studio facilities, and released three films and began another before folding in May 1916. William J. Hoggson was an architect and served as President of Mirror Films. Harry Lambart (not "Lambert") (1876–1949) was a silent film actor, a former director at Vitagraph Studios, and served as the managing director of Mirror Films before he left in February 1916. Nat Goodwin (1857–1919) began as a vaudeville actor before transitioning to silent films; he starred in each of the films Mirror released but sued in May 1916 (and won) for breach-of-contract over failure to receive wages. For more on the film venture, see Swanberg, *Dreiser*, 193.

277. Dreiser to Markham

[tel]

SAVANNAH GA

FEB 10:15 AM 17TH 1916

KIRAH MARKHAM,

DEAREST DISREGARD LETTERS AND COME DOWN NOTHING TO WHAT HAS BEEN SAID BRING A WARM COAT WIRE IF YOU NEED MONEY AND IF YOU START MONDAY WON'T WRITE AFTER FRIDAY GET THE HAT IF YOU THINK CHANGE ADDRESS AT POSTOFFICE TWO OF YOUR LETTERS DELAYED FOR WANT OF POSTAGE.

L.

278. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282

Thursday, Feb [17]—1916[1]

Honey Kid:

Enclosed is a check for $45. I hope it is enough. I think perhaps you had better buy a round trip ticket since in all probability you'll be going back the same way. If you can sublet the studio do it as it will be just so much off the general expense and we haven't so much to go on but what it will be useful—help a good deal in fact. Am so glad you decided to come. I hope it's as nice the day you arrive as it is today. You'd think you were in summer land sure enough. Just had a card from Edgar Lee[2]—I sent him a picture card—saying he thinks he will come down here too—Savannah Winter Authors Conference. Don't run into any more debt than you can help as we'll have to step along quiet like until fall—if not longer. A pleasant journey. I wish I was coming down on the same boat. If it's the City of St. Louis get them to give you State room 55. And don't expect good food because you won't get it. Take along a little fruit—tangerines and grapes—or something different. All they have at table are oranges, apples and (I believe) bananas. It's easy sailing or was the time I came—not even one good pitch or roll. Much love. I'll tell you more about that later—

L—

[1] Dreiser dated this letter "Feb 16," the previous day; the envelope is postmarked with a special delivery stamp for Feb. 17 at 1:30 PM, and with New York received stamp for Feb. 18. Markham has written upon it a list of items to bring to Savannah, among them "Theo's hat" and "albolene."

[2] Edgar Lee Masters.

279. Markham to Dreiser

NEW YORK TO SAVANNAH,

FEB. 17th, 1916.

Oh, Theo—

How little I must be able to express myself if my Saturday letter inspires this bitter reply.[1] My only questioning was due to my desire not to intrude should I be superfluous, and any effort on your part to prove overwatchfulness in me would find its own condemnation in re-reading my letter.

As for my wanting you to love me singly and whole-heartedly, you are unfair. You assume that your curiosity is something abnormal and must be indulged in while I love you singly and whole-heartedly because it is my nature. You see you are absolutely wrong. If I have manifested no curiosity it is because I have squelched it, or tried to, feeling that loving you was not worth while unless I gave my all to it. But really, if it is necessary that you investigate among the fair sex, that has little to do with me that I can see except to insure me greater freedom, which at present, at least, I don't desire. However, it was in recognition of your leading line that I questioned before I precipitated myself into Savannah—not to find out for my own satisfaction but in order to remain away from yours.

And so I will wire you now that I am coming and trust to fate that you don't receive me in a towering rage because I come.

Sweetheart, it took many re-readings of this long volume of yours to weed out the bitterness and find a little love underneath. But I have found it and am the happier for it—not as happy as I might have been had you written me with the same eager calling to come that I was calling: "May I come?", but blow away all the

cobwebs of doubts of each other and start all afresh in the sun. Oh, boy, it would break my heart if I had many such letters from you! I must get to work now. I have no money to speak of, but am getting myself in order in order to come. Will have to wait till I hear from you, though, with regard to money for my transportation.

Bye-bye, lover-heart, for now.

[1] See Dreiser to Markham, 15 Feb. 1916, letter 275.

280. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282

Fri. Feb. 18—1916

Honey Girl:

I don't know whether this letter will reach you but I presume it will before you leave—Hope so anyway. The play book came today and it's very good to look on, the handsomest volume ever made for me. In sending me my copies Jones writes "Brentano's buyer, Mr. Loase, says it is the best looking book he has ever seen in a long while". So there you are. I shall have to inscribe your copy "To Kirah—who made its looks."[1]

Outside of that I have not a thing to report save that I have seen about 9 broken horse shoes in the last two days—only I don't take as much stock in those things as I once did. It's as warm as May or June in New York. The wind (from the south now) feels like rain. Last night it was so warm I had to throw off nearly all the covers and I always sleep with windows & doors open. Just now down stairs Sallie the negro servant is singing a negro melody so sad and haunting that I keep wishing you could hear it. It's just one line—"wait for me" but she keeps repeating it over and over to such a melancholy tune.

Am hard at work on "The Bulwark" and it's a tussle because I find it difficult to hold myself in. I am crazy about the idea of the book though and know it will come out all right in the end because I am so interested and so anxious that it should. Wish you were here today. Feel strangely depressed and lonely. Meant to tell

you in yesterdays letter—if it's a clear day when you arrive stay on deck forward and look at the country as you come up the Savannah river. See the city in the distance. It's beautiful. Also please [word omitted] your boat to see what time it actually leaves. You may not have to go down before 5:30.

Once more a pleasant journey. I've look[ed] at rooms & rooms but haven't found anything very good. Have two to show you in case you don't like this. Wish we could stay at the De Soto.[2] Much love. I'll be glad to get you back again.

L—

[1] Markham did the book design for *Plays of the Natural and Supernatural*, published this day by John Lane, and wrote the songs in *The Spring Recital*.

[2] The DeSoto Hotel, designed as a luxury hotel in Savannah's Historic District, opened in 1890 and became a center of social life.

While Dreiser remained in Savannah to work on The Bulwark, *after her month-long stay Markham returned to New York to look for acting jobs and also for a place to live, for she had sublet their Tenth Street apartment when she joined Dreiser in Savannah. She was unable to find a place that suited her and decided to share the Tenth Street apartment with their tenant, one "Corey," until Dreiser returned.*

281. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282

Sunday, [March 19, 1916][1]

My Disappearing Venus:

I had a bad evening after you left but I'm not going to dwell on that here. It don't do to brood over ones ills too much. But I

thought of you out on the sea often & often. I do hope that you had an easy voyage and that you feel well now that you are back. The best of luck to you, honey.

The express package contained "The History of Great American Fortunes" by Gustavus Myers in 3 volumes.[2] I thought there was only one! This A.M. the enclosed letter came.[3] I told Sallie of your desire to say goodbye and propose to get the reciept you want. I know you took the cold weather with you for this morning it is lovely, but I hope you find nice weather up there for me. I don't want to stay here any longer than I can help. I missed you last night—no one to hang on to—and this A.M. I am breakfasting alone and no one to fuss with or to have reprove me! It's a real miss this, just the same.

Love to my nicey girl. I felt so bad when the boat finally disappeared behind the dock down the river. You looked so very small—a mere dot. Much love and be good. I'll see you soon anyhow.

L

Am sending this care Mame for fear the P.O. Dept might return it. Give her & Austin my love.[4]

[1] Dreiser dated the letter "Sunday, March 20th," but meant the 19th, which fell on a Sunday.

[2] Gustavus Myers (1872–1942), American social critic and historian, was the author of *History of the Great American Fortunes*, 3 vols (1909–10) and *A History of Canadian Wealth* (1914), among other books, in which Myers argued that corruption and criminality underlay the formation of accumulated wealth. Dreiser admired Myers (he had published his essays while editor of the *Delineator*), and shortly before he left Savannah he wrote to Myers, on 31 March 1916, to express his admiration for these works, but he also critiqued his depiction of the "common laborer" as possessing "all the virtues which the middle class and the oligarch lack" (Elias, *Letters*, 208–09).

[3] The enclosure has not survived.

[4] These sentences are written across the upper right of the letter.

282. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282

[March 20, 1916][1]

Honey Mine:

Somebody went off and left a hat, a muff, a wash rag—and—well I haven't found anything else yet. It's cooler today but not cold and I'm sick to my tum—feel as though I have been poisoned—vomited once. Am thinking it must be the water here—the boiled water. I didn't eat any supper last night yet this A.M. after drinking three cups of hot water I felt very sick. Am going to pull out of here soon, certainly by April 1 and if I don't arrive in N.Y. I'll come as far as Washington, anyhow and run over about the fifth or tenth. I wonder are you with Mame. Had to write Frank Shay[2] today on account of the Gustavus Myers books. They sent two volumes of History of American Fortunes and 1 volume of History of Canadian Fortunes instead of the three vols of the American work.

Sweetheart I miss you very much. I can't tell you how lonely I am. Am reading all day long to get done with this work as I am looking for a typical case or tone for my novel. But I need you near me. In the future we'll travel together—if you'll let me.

Love to my bouncing Bet.

L—

[1] Date from the envelope, postmarked at 8 P.M.

[2] Frank Shay (1889–1944), Washington Square bookseller and publisher.

283. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282

March 21—1916

Honey Cry—

You should be here today. It's very hot. I'm back in my knee length for good I fancy and today I spent ¾ of an hour lying in cold water. I intended to give up the front but since she hasn't

moved me yet I'm thinking I'll keep it—it's only a little while anyhow before I'll be going. Bull Street when I went for mail just now—5:30 was crowded with negroes and their charges—great flocks of them on the grass and all those bare trees are budding. Sunday, yesterday & today did it.

Last night I went to see DeWolf Hopper in Don Quixote[1] and he was very good—very—and so was the film. You would have enjoyed it. I thought of you and missed you, but theres no use crying over spilt milk. All I can do now is to think of you in New York and wish for you great luck—a real summer engagement. I wish you could get it.

But this film was excellent. Some one with judgement cut out a popular story—not the involved theme of the novel but its bare plot. I laughed many times as did the audience. Somehow his mood suggested that of Don Quixote.

Do you know I am greatly surprised at the quality of Myers books. Canadian Wealth is a remarkable work and I fancy "Great American Fortunes" is even more so. He has a strangely clear, convincing and impressive style. All his facts are facts, substantiated by letter and page—a most amazing array of details. I can scarcely believe it—knowing him—but now that I think a number of people have told me his books were astonishing and they are. I really think his has a place in historical writing—a very high one.

But Sweetie Kid I miss you—your grinning face in the morning and your gay bouncing spirits. Life seems less endurable away from then with you. I love your fancy and fine dreams. Don't let me sober your spirits if you can help. You have a better grip on things than I have—a truer instinct for the simplicities and the artistries of life. I do hope all your dreams come true. And I know they will because that cheering fronting of life will carry you over all obstacles. If you were here now we'd go out to dinner—to Thunderbolt I fancy. That don't excite you any, does it? But it would me, just now.

Much, much love & luck.

L

[1] (William) DeWolf Hopper (1858–1935), American stage and film actor, singer, and comedian, now probably best known for performing the baseball poem "Casey at the Bat" more than 10,000 times in his booming voice. The silent film *Don Quixote*, based on the novel by Miguel de Cervantes, opened in 1915.

284. Markham to Dreiser

Mar. 21, 1916

Dearest

Here I am in the last place in the world I expected to be. I job-hunted on the room hunting today and it was so discouraging. I had found nothing by night. All the decent houses seem to be full up right now. Only slatternly disgraceful-looking places have maybe one or two rooms. Finally I hopelessly tried the Earle, the Holley and the Brevoort, and the Earle sent me here (Hotel Arlington). For tonight I have a room and a bath at $1.50. They tried to soak me two but the Earle having sent me here with the assurance of comfort I raised Ned. The day has gone like the wind. I had no idea I had so much energy. At a quarter past seven I was waiting outside Mayme's[1] basement door for some sign of life. At a quarter of 8 she came to close the window to make the room warm to dress in. I said "Hello" and of course she was so nearly asleep she was frightened to death. She had wanted me to have her parlor, but even that is rented. She wants to start a very fine laundry in her basement but I told her to stick on the house job. At first I was inclined to think she might as well do anything that would bring in money, but when I had spent the morning going around and seen the rum houses that are all full I wanted to say "For heaven's sake, all that's the matter with you is that you rented your house in the spring. Sit still on the job until autumn and then rent as many as you can handle. It's easy money." I never saw anything like it. Finally about noon I gave up the room job and traipsed uptown. I saw Dixie[2] and he's going to have letters for me by morning to various movie concerns. He said Edith Jarmuth had been calling for me.

[1] Markham's spelling of "Mame," Dreiser's sister.
[2] That is, Dixie Hines.

285. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282

Thursday, Mch 23 [1916][1]

Crygorn:

No letter yet but I'm expecting one tomorrow. The tree outside where the wax-wings sat is budding. It's a fierce, blustry March day with dust and leaves flying and paper, but instead of being cold it's hot. All the windows & doors are open, and the shutters and curtain are flapping. I have had a long cold bath. So you see you left just in time—or did you. At this rate I surely depart April 1. I feel as though I ought to stop in Phila and consult some quakers there. You might come over for a few days and we'll go back together. How? Remember Haverford Station and the blood root plants?[2]

Much love. Hows the play & all N.Y.

Lover

[1] Although the letter is dated 23 March, which fell on a Thursday, the envelope is postmarked 22 March, at 9:30 pm. On back of the envelope Markham penciled a list of addresses concerning rooms to rent and acting jobs.
[2] See Dreiser to Markham, 22 Feb. 1915, letter 218.

286. Dreiser to Markham

Savannah

Friday, Mch 24—1916

Sweetheart:

That was a fine assault you made on the Packard crowd.[1] I like that and I think it may do you some good. They certainly have done nothing for you and as for their getting angry they couldn't do less than they have. It's only by speaking up that way that you really identify yourself with some people.

Am sorry you had to go to 25th Street or that you have to pay so much for a room. At that rate you'd better turn the boys out of 165 for we'll save some money and besides I'll be back before the end of the month. The only contingency is that of your landing some job taking you out of New York in which case it would be as well to have the place rented. From what you say of room hunting it would certainly be advisable for us to take a house at $75 or $100 and rent rooms—running a club buffet in the basement, where drinks and food could be had at nearly any time. A good negro in charge would make it work—one who knew how to cook and would tend to many other things too.

You know that little plant you dug up out near Bonaventure. It has developed a number of very tall stalks—one is 9 inches high—and on the top of each one is appearing group of six or seven of those delightful small blossoms. But I cannot detect that they have any odor.

Went last night to see Mary Miles Minter[2] in some film done here in Savannah. The pictures were very good—of Whitehall and The Hermitage and the Habersham mansion and other places. Another company with King Bagot[3] is here doing a film—three different companies all told now. Who knows, we may be doing work down here someday. I also [word omitted] The Bondsman by Caine[4]—and it was a farce—the worst ever. The money that was wasted on it, too.

How about "The Born Thief."[5]

Am writing and reading at same time—from about 9 A.M. to 7:30 P.M.—and from 10 to 1 A.M. Myers certainly did a most remarkable peice of work in his history—or histories rather. He has done three and they are really great in a way in their driving force. In one he propagandizes a little, but not enough to seriously injure it. Think of him and then think of these strong things. Isn't it strange.

It's continuously warm now. You don't say a word about the weather & I'm anxious to know. I wrote you one letter c/o Mame—enclosing a letter to you. And two c/o 165—one of them containing a letter from Madge C Jenison. Did you get them? All is ok

with me save I am lonely without you. Hope you manage to enjoy yourself while hunting a job. The prospect of getting one doesn't seem good better take back 165—

Much love to my nice graceful girl.

L—

[1] The Packard Theatrical Exchange, established by Clara Beaumont Packard (1850–1911) and managed by her son Chismore H. Packard after her death, connected actors and actresses with theater and film work.

[2] Mary Miles Minter (1902–1984) appeared in 53 films between 1912 and 1923 and then retired at age 23 after a scandal concerning the murder of her lover, the director William Desmond Taylor, in 1922.

[3] William King Baggot (1879–1948), one of the leading stars of the silent era, appeared in more than 300 films between 1909 and 1947.

[4] Dreiser refers to the film *The Bondman* (1916), directed by Edgar Lewis and based on the popular novel *The Bondman* (1910), by Hall Caine.

[5] "The Born Thief" is a story adapted from a Greek folk tale that Dreiser first wrote in 1914 and hoped to sell to magazines and film (see Dreiser to Mencken, 29 Aug. 1914; Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 153). Later, he transformed it into "The Prince Who Was a Thief," first published in *Chains* (1927), which was eventually produced as a Hollywood film in 1951.

287. Dreiser to Markham

Savannah

[March 25, 1916][1]

Cryhon:

In a way I do wish you weren't going to live on with Corey in the apartment. Not that I am disturbed as to the import of the situation from a personal or sex point of view. I'm not. If you desired to circumvent me I fancy there are easier ways. But the looks of the thing are quite a different matter. For one thing there is Mrs. White and then there are the villagers who in the future might

refer back to this as a curious interlude in our relationship. There is something so naive and fugacious about the whole thing that I have to smile. Supposing I announced, in your absence—I am merely jesting of course, that I was putting out two girls to whom we had rented the apartment but one was going to stay on with me. There is so much privacy in that apartment as it is. However, if you feel that you must you may, in so far as I am concerned. Tatically I think it is a mistake for you. Aside from comment in the future (possible) you won't get any rent and you'll let yourself in for meals in the bargain—part of them anyhow. Our resources aren't sufficient to stand much of that. I am very sorry for Corey. I think he is more or less of a poor satellite of Dells but even so. It would be better to pay his rent in some room in the neighborhood for two weeks—or longer if you feel we should. I expect to be back inside of two weeks which would mean a shift anyhow. If you still feel that you ought to let him stay, do so. As for my personally preferring to stay away from you, as you indicate in this letter I don't at all. I preferred to stay away from winter in New York but I wanted you here all the time and shall only be too glad to get you back when the weather breaks. With you and Corey there all our expenses will be resumed in full and that means willy-nilly that I ought to come since I won't have enough to keep up both places. I shall start back about the 2nd or 3rd I think—as far as Wash and Phila—for a few days.

It is so lovely here now—I wish you might see it. That slight chill in the air to which you so much objected has quite gone and a real spring quality is here. To help things along the live oaks suddenly turned brown all in a day or two and their leaves showered to the ground in bushels. Then new leaves began to appear and now they are like any other budding tree—covered with living green leaves. The South is certainly strange, isn't it.

Mrs. Mallory inquires after you and Mrs. Keck.[2] I am going to take the Hartridges out to dinner once before I go, most likely next Tuesday. My work progresses apace. Knopf doesn't know whether he wants Forts book or not.[3] I am writing him to return it to you.

I wish you would choose to understand how single and undiluted my feeling for you is. I think you do only you won't admit it. And while it has the finest intellectual aspects of any that I have known it isn't intellectual at all—nor artistic even—though that seems to have something to do with it, but a still deeper and purely psychic aspect. You ought never to quarrel with me. Your import and influence is too great. And we can do so many things.

Much love to you and write me about the weather there. Am sending your muff and hat. Do think seriously over this Corey business and write soon. The air here just now is so balmy it seems like something in a dream. If you were fluttering about here now it would be so nice. So sorry about the Warner Oland[4] engagement but youll get something else.

L—

The enclosed letter evidently refers to a hotel club scheme.[5] What do you think of it. Please don't sign Kirah to your letters to me. It's a good stage name but I'm not accustomed enough to it in other ways.

[1] Dreiser inscribed "Friday, Mch 2" on the letter but the envelope is postmarked at 10 A.M. on March 25, a Saturday, which suggests he began the letter immediately after receiving Markham's daily letter but did not mail it until Saturday.

[2] Neighbors in Savannah.

[3] Dreiser was attempting to interest the publisher Alfred Knopf, who had founded his own firm in 1915, in publishing Charles Fort's work. See Dreiser to Markham, 14 Sept. 1915, n. 2, letter 254.

[4] Warner Oland (born Johan Verner Ölund) (1879–1938), Swedish-American actor who acted in a number of Strindberg plays on Broadway before transitioning into film in 1915. His Asian facial features led to stardom as Fu Manchu and Charlie Chan. In 1916, he made seven films.

[5] Dreiser refers to a prospectus, enclosed with this letter, proposing that he buy one share for $100 to become a charter member of the Ga-Ko-Mas Club and Hotel, at Lower Saranac Lake, then in the planning stages. He was wise to save his money, for the club was never built.

288. Markham to Dreiser

NEW YORK TO SAVANNAH,

MARCH 25th, 1916.

Chickie-Doodle—oh!

How's my boy today? I've been telling Mayme about your being sick Sunday and all our various troubles, possibly due to the water, and she demands that you come home right away.

You know I am heartsick about the new edition of "The Genius" which I failed to mention before. The paper is two different shades, the first half of the book being grayer than the last, but not content to let well enough alone they want to hide it by painting the edge as the book lies shut with a red dot. I think it's a messy idea, and I think it ought not go through.

I think it would be very well, if you come home by way of Philly, to join you if things don't pick up considerably. The only place where I see any sign of life is The Famous Players.[1] They are Frohman too, and had I gone here last week I would have gone out with Hazel Dawn[2] to do a film. Such is life!

Much as I want to play with you I am more or less blue—not seriously—over the fragments you are calling letters these days. They ain't just nothin' at all, sweetie. I've seen you sit down and pour out much longer ones to your really sincere lovers, though you usually reserve that for a divine solitude. But do try to write me a full three pages once—not too large, either. These things don't hold anything on them at all.

Ran into Harold Hersey[3] this afternoon. What a Boswell he is to you! I don't know what this labor stuff is you've given him to work on, but I tell you, according to him it's very important.

Well, au revoir. I wish I could feel that anything meant anything to you. Each letter suggests that if the weather lasts you will surely leave by April 1st, whereas when I left there was no doubt of it in your mind.—or so I thought. But don't come at all unless you want to. I want you to come dreadfully, but only if you want to.

Goodnight, dear. Oh, I feel all the time as though we were sliding, sliding, as though your early life, Theo, was so much more important than ours, as though I, entering your life at forty-one,

entered only on the top floor of your house, and knew nothing of the sleepingrooms, drawingrooms, musicrooms below. And you lock all the doors so tight and you turn on me so if I finger the keys! Goodnight, dear. I wish I didn't love you so much. It would be so much easier to be colder and hit out alone now. But I do love you.

[1] Famous Players Film Company, founded in 1912 by Adolph Zukor and the Frohman brothers, merged with Jesse L. Lasky in 1916 to become Famous Players-Lasky Corporation.

[2] Hazel Dawn (1890–1988), stage and film actress, was then at the height of her film career.

[3] Harold Hersey (1893–1956), American poet, pulp editor, and publisher, was then working at the Library of Congress while completing a degree from George Washington University. He was an earnest champion of Dreiser, writing letters to newspapers to defend him against attacks. He soon moved to Greenwich Village and later in 1916 became instrumental in defending *The "Genius"* against its suppression. See Swanberg, *Dreiser*, 207–11; Lingeman, *American Journey*, 134–38.

289. Dreiser to Markham

P.O. Box 282

March 26—1916

Honey Cryhon:

I was awakened this Sunday A.M. by a special delivery man bringing your letter. It was nice of you to send it and nicer to get it. The contents amused and pleased me. The Frank[1] womans enthusiasm for "The Girl in the Coffin" is more or less typical of the labor radical which I believe she is. As for Bertha Mann[2] I don't quite make out her excitement—any more than I do Mrs. Daggetts.[3] Of the two Mrs. Daggetts is the strangest for five years ago the facts of that book would have contravened nearly all of her beliefs. As much to my surprise—and I seem to be being surprised variously these days—Elia W. Peattie over her signature in the Chicago Tribune raves over—imagine—Laughing Gas".[4] After that I think

most any trick can be turned. I never expected approval of Laughing Gas, let alone enthusiasm for it, under 10 years. As for myself, I put it first, above all the things I have ever done.

But I think your unkind to jump on me for my short letters. Two minutes, indeed. And yours usually about a minute long—or do they just seem so? I always write because I want to and I think I am telling all the news. I am getting so that I dislike to dwell upon my lonliness. I'm happier when I don't.

What did Mame think of the profile?[5] And have you shown it to anyone else? That is one thing I would like to know about. Incidentally I would like to hear whether Hines said anything about the plays. I suppose not. And did Mame get her copy safely. I haven't heard a word from Augustus Thomas[6]—ignored completely. I [word omitted] the superiority with which some of our American middle weights take themselves. He might have troubled to answer. But I am pleased to know that you talked to Jones about the pamphlet[7] and that he is going to follow your suggestions. If he does I know it will be attractive.

Last night I went to another movie "The Lords of High Decision" by Meredith Nicholson.[8] Such bunk. The more I read our alleged American literary stars—the kind the Evening Globe woman loves,[9] the more I am convinced that I had best stick to my stern themes. Twaddle and illusion. Unbelievable truck. And the movies pay thousends to prody the rot. If we could raise enough money sometime to do one film I believe we could get a start.

Well Billup I'll be starting on back at the end of the week I think. It's very fine here, quite summery and if I run into cold up there I suppose I'll complain bitterly, but spring must be underway soon now in New York—at least occasional fine days. Mays the month when we can walk on the Canal. I wish we had money enough to go into the country right. Curses on my poverty stricken life.

And I'm so glad your letters show that you love me still. Sometimes I think your changing completely but a letter like todays shows the other side. We can do so many things together if you'll only not try to wall me in completely. You do much as you please with your time and moods when you want to. I think you ought

to let me know such people as I choose in my own way. It doesn't mean any disrupting of our relationship. It doesn't mean that I think one fiftieth as much of any one else as I do of you. It merely means that a certain amount of individual method of living is desired and desirable and should be tolerated on both sides. I never saw a woman whom I thought your equal yet and I do not expect to. Can't you permit me a few individual friendships without insisting that it means the end of all. My affection for you doesn't change. Why should yours.

I don't think I'd better pursue this though. We've gone over this point time and again. I think you feel very strongly the other way and I may have to give up all my correspondents to keep you though I don't want to—and I am not absolutely sure that I will—I think one personal, individual point of view comes first up to a certain place—if they are to be worth while at all. After that union and compromise are the all-to-be desired.

But don't get angry over all this. In spite of how anything may seem I love you and want to be with you. Perhaps you will feel that it can't be worked out this way but you can refrain from being angry at me. I think it can. I think it is worth while—aside from love, that we stick together. But don't forget that I do love you. You know that, really.

L—

Notify me about your money state about a week in advance. Are you going to let Cory stay? I'll stake my life you'll not answer one of my questions—not one—unless you make it a special duty.

[1] Alice Frank. Newspaper reports in January 1916 refer to her as a supporter of activist Margaret Sanger, who was charged with distributing birth control materials through the mail.

[2] Bertha Mann (1893–1967) performed with Markham in *When the Young Vine Blooms* and *The Weavers*.

[3] Mabel Potter Daggett (1871–1927), a journalist who worked with Dreiser on the *Delineator*. A feminist and suffragist, she was one of six American journalists invited to tour Paris and Reims in 1916, writing a book about her experience, *Women Wanted: The Story*

Written in Blood Red Letters on the Horizon of the Great World War (1918). In her letter of 10 March 1916, Daggett noted that she had not yet been able to get a copy of *Plays of the Natural and Supernatural*, but she praised *The "Genius"*: "I want to tell you again what real heartthrobbing literature is The Genius. I have my copy all interlined and marked up and nearly every other page has the leaf turned down!" (DPUP).

[4] In her review, Peattie summarized *Laughing Gas*, ignored the other plays, and concluded, "It is a strange, weird, compelling play, full of unexpected sympathy, and extraordinarily descriptive of the vast and lonely adventure of etherization" ("Dreiser's Plays Natural and Supernatural," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, 18 March 1916: 7).

[5] Dreiser is likely referring to a bas-relief Markham had made of his head. Much later, Markham wrote to Mencken about it after her copy had been stolen by a tenant: "Years ago I did a bas-relief of Theo and you were so good as to have it cast in bronze. . . . Would you be good enough to loan me your copy if you still have it to take an impression?" (Markham to Mencken, 25 May 1947; Mencken Papers). For Dreiser and Mencken's discussion of the sculpture, see their correspondence between 4 February and 9 April 1921 (Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 425–29, 439–40).

[6] Augustus Thomas (1857–1934), author of over 60 plays, was noted for his depiction of American background in such works as *Alabama* (1891), *In Mizzoura* (1893), *Arizona* (1899), and *The Copperhead* (1918), which launched Lionel Barrymore into stardom.

[7] A publicity pamphlet for the *Plays* (folder 14226, DPUP) features a narrow sheet of paper with top and bottom folded to meet in the center. The face of the resulting closed pamphlet lists the seven one-act plays; when opened, the list expands to include a critical comment about each play, reprinted from reviews, with all text printed in green.

[8] Indiana novelist Meredith Nicholson's *The Lords of High Decision* (1909) was filmed in 1916 by Universal Film Co. and directed by Jack Harvey. The film concerns the efforts of a Philadelphia millionaire mine owner to crush an independent coal operator.

[9] Mrs. Nell P. Dawson (1870–1923), literary critic for the *New York Globe*, published reviews under "N.P.D." or "N. P. Dawson" and was invariably unfriendly to Dreiser's work, concluding her review of *The "Genius,"* "We hope that 'The "Genius"' will immediately appear in a

German translation. That's how kindly we feel toward the Germans!" ("Books of the Week: Theodore Dreiser," *New York Globe*, 30 Oct. 1915: 8; rpt. Salzman, *Critical Reception*, 225–26). And of his *Plays*, she snapped, "They reveal an author more than ever a literary Monstrosity, arousing curiosity and even wonder, perhaps, but not admiration" ("Plays by Mr. Dreiser," *New York Globe*, 26 Feb. 1916: 8; rpt. Salzman, *Critical Reception*, 256–57).

290. Dreiser to Markham

Savannah

Mch 27—1916

Honey Girl:

Such a wail as came this A.M. and after that cheerful special delivery yesterday. And now I'm afraid that a few remarks I made yesterday about retaining ones individuality will make the situation seem worse. And I don't want it too at all and as a matter of fact, and as you actually know, unless you choose to leave me the situation in so far as love is concerned between us is all right. I love you and you know it as well and as fully as I do. The rub has come not because I don't love you, but because loving you I have talked or written or concerned myself with any other even for a moment. Actually it's not one womans letters or personality or presence but any womans. It was so with Elanora ONeill[1]—save the mark!—and Anna Tatum—and Mrs. Moore and it would be with anyone else. I don't blame you. Actually since I am so infinitely fond of you and have and do put you first I suppose I ought to ignore the approach of any woman and live only with you and enjoy only such joint relationships as we can and have established. I feel as though I ought to since it makes you suffer—(often as though I wanted to)—drop people whom I have known for years, solely to make you happy. On the other hand—all fine spun arguments aside this is a fact—that no woman worth two straws intellectually will approach any man or permit him to share her philosophy or trade ideas with him on a perfectly frank and natural basis unless she thinks that that relationship is private to

themselves. I don't know why it is so, but it is. Old secretive nature seems to work that way. You may answer that the sex element is always uppermost in it then and that that shouldn't be. I am willing to admit that or no, just as you choose. But for myself I have this to state—and it's absolutely true regardless of anything that may be said or cited—that in so far as I am concerned the sex interest I have had in any other woman since I have known you has been limited to almost nothing—a mild bantering curiosity. I can see your mind running to gather data in endless ways but it comes to nothing anyhow. What I say is true. And for another thing, barring two or three cases, I have concluded that aside from two or three women even the applause and the championship and the point of view they have brought with them are not to be put in the scale opposite your force and charm and appeal. They are interesting quite so, but I am willing to pass them up. In regard to two or three others—the inveterate correspondent is one, it isn't a matter of intellect stark and incisive, half as much as it is a certain emotional charm—not to be explained in words—which has kept me sympathetically from throwing the whole thing over. I'm not in love and I am not sexually interested but Im sorry and on that basis I have gone on—or rather let them go on. As I said to you down here I am almost willing to drop all them as rough as it will be. They won't come around like Eleanora and be angry friends. The fact that she comes is proof positive that there never was anything between us nothing beyond mere courtesy.[2] They know of you but they would not have anything to do with you because they envy you. Their envy of you doesn't alter their feeling for me—but to me, since I have known you you have come first. In spite of any seeming paradox I prize you—mentally and physically. Actually I think your wonderful—a great artist. I think your beautiful and endowed with almost every charm and virtue and grace. In my honest opinion your destined to clean things up and as for being discouraged you ought to go out and fight and compel recognition. Your sure to get it anyhow, the earlier for a little fighting. To say that we are drifting apart is rediculous. To me, unless you cut loose perforce, we are coming closer and closer

together. We are more in rapport now than at first. I feel as you do and see as you do. Together we can do probably amazing things. I know we fight, or have, but our scraps are of no import and of fading force really. Were simply destined by some psychic pull to stick. Why under the circumstances be so insistent that every thought and every move must be in concert with you. It will come about of its own accord anyhow. I feel it. If you were only a little less avid in your moods we would get along faster. But though I say this I'm sorry the next minute for having to say it because I love you so and want you to continue to love me. Sometimes—always—when you threaten to leave me, it cuts like a knife and enrages me into the bargain. I might let you go but I would pay for it too. But why need we separate. I am looking forward to days with you in Philadelphia and in the country about New York—or wherever you go if you get an engagement. Sweetheart don't grieve over our love so much. It will be all right—really and truly.

And now on to other things. About the Genius, I am sorry and will write but I doubt where it will help any. The edition is probably run off by now. He'll[3] say he'll change it but he won't. One thing I do propose to do is this. When I get back I am going to look into the royalty question. If it isn't satisfactory I propose to say to him that I am going to change, having first looked around for another publisher. If Harpers will give me a square deal I'll go there. I'll give him back what I've drawn against The Bulwark—take Sister Carrie and the travel book and depart. I think they are cheating me and I'll get even if I can.

In regard to young Hersey—I merely wrote and asked if in the Library of Congress there was a catalogue of congressional investigation since the beginning. He said he would find out. That was all. Have you seen Jack or May Powys. I'd like to know what he thinks of the plays. Mencken wrote me that in William James essay "Some Hegelisms" is a note which seems to confirm "Laughing Gas" as a great chemic truth. I propose to look it up.[4]

Next Saturday, unless I should hear of some engagement of yours taking you elsewhere I shall move on to Washington. I sent my ticket to N.Y. and got 15^{00} for it, and tomorrow or Wednesday

will get my ticket. It's wonderful weather here now, exquisite and I only hope I find a touch of spring in Washington. In Philadelphia, you remember, on some days it was quite dull, but there were others that were so perfect. Do you remember, Sweet Alice?[5] I am giving up the P.O box on the 31st so from now on—for your last letters address me c/o Ms. Keck. After I leave you can write me c/o Gen. Delivery Washington. We might stop down at Annapolis near Washington, that is a quaint old town. But I do wish above all things that you could connect with some summer job—if no more than something that would lead to publicity.

In regard to Wolffs letter I dislike it very much.[6] Theres something creepy about him. 20 per cent is all right or 15—only I would word it differently. Say "20 per cent of all royalties paid to the author". If there were any deductions for one reason or another he would then have to share them.

Much love. My stomach is better and I am writing and digging notes out of Myers. He has written a very remarkable history—one of the best.

Hows the village. Have you seen Kemp and did you ever get back our brass shovel & poker. I think they ought to be fixed even if resoldered, and claimed.

Please don't worry and write me a nice love letter.

L—

The dogwood here is thick now—and wisteria—lots of it.

[1] Dreiser's misspelling of Eleanora O'Neill.

[2] Dreiser inserted this sentence in the left column.

[3] J. Jefferson Jones, the vice-president of John Lane Co.

[4] "On Some Hegelisms" is a chapter in James's book *The Will to Believe and Other Essays in Popular Philosophy* (London: Longmans, Green, 1897), pp. 263–98. In the second impression of *Plays of the Natural and Supernatural*, Dreiser included an appendix entitled "The Anæsthetic Revelation," which concluded by quoting James's "Note" to that essay, on the effects of inhaling nitrous oxide (pp. 295–98).

[5] Dreiser slightly misquotes the first line of a popular song, "Ben Bolt" (1848, by Nelson Kneass), which is "Don't you remember sweet Alice, Ben Bolt—."

[6] Adolf Wolff (1883–1944), Belgian-born poet and sculptor who advocated for anarchist causes. (In subsequent letters, Dreiser consistently misspells the first name as "Adolph.") Wolff had written to Markham (his letter and Markham's reply included with Dreiser's) to request a royalty arrangement for an unspecified play topic he had suggested earlier. Markham in turn proposed a 20% royalty arrangement should she or Dreiser write and produce the play.

291. Markham to Dreiser

NEW YORK TO SAVANNAH,

MARCH 27, 1916.

Dearest Sweetest:

Your letter won't get mailed to you tonight but it'll get written, and in that way it'll be mailed first thing in the morning. I've just returned from a most pleasant evening with Claire Burke.[1] We bummed the offices together today, extracting seats for the play. Marie Tempest and Phyllis Nielson Terry[2] are in (it was rotten except for Tempest), and finally arrived at her place in time for tea. Willard[3] came in. There followed a long discussion. People were not truly married who did not have the life of their unity so much at heart that the wife did not wrap herself entirely in her husband's affairs. He claims that if you had me all the years you were side issuing on editing and such your output would have been greater—your own individual work, he said. I said one could not judge by conditions, that though we had our theories of our individual work being most important I knew no two lovers who were more together than we or had each other's interests at heart. He argued that it was not real if once a year they slept or dined apart, or had a moment's concealed thought. He claims that Claire has done as much to writing his books as he has, though she never touches a pen. Oh, he was mad! And he couldn't see our belief at all. I said what did it matter what we believed so long as it came to the same thing in the end, two people loving and living together as much as possible. That was all there was to it. Claire and I went to the theatre then and were more or less amused. Then we ate in a Chinese restaurant and parted, and here am I, on the edge of my ocean-wave couch. It is as rolling as the sea and not nearly so soft.

It suddenly dawns on me that I have already written you once today, and not a short letter, either. And here I was suffering because I was late in getting this off! So goes it! And you content to spend the year there! Cutey-boy, I want very much to see you. There is a new element in the Village called the Fireside Club, and they are the worst yet. One man is a story-teller and calls himself the Grey Wolf.[4] I think the place is a place to escape from, really. I love you, honey-lamb. I berry lonely chile.

BILL

[1] Claire Burke, actress, most recently in *The Eternal Magdalene*, by Robert McLaughlin, at the 48th Street Theatre (Nov. 1915-Jan. 1916).

[2] Marie Tempest (1864–1942), English actress and singer; Phyllis Neilson-Terry, English actress. Both were then playing in *The Great Pursuit*, by C. Haddon Chambers, at the Shubert Theatre (22 March-April 1916).

[3] Willard Huntington Wright. Wright was then living with Claire Burke. At the time, Wright was married (to the former Katherine Belle Boynton), and Burke was also married, according to biographer John Loughery (*Alias S. S. Van Dyne* [New York: Scribner, 1992], 117–18). Dreiser was intrigued enough by this complex web that he made notes for a story about it, "Willard and Claire" (folder 12658, DPUP).

[4] Bernard Sexton (1881–1952), secretary of the Woodcraft League, founded in 1901 by Ernest Thompson Seton and later merged into the Boy Scouts of America. Sexton apparently assumed the nickname "Gray Wolf" to distinguish himself from "Black Wolf," the nickname Seton assumed. In 1921 Sexton collected his stories as *Gray Wolf Stories: Indian Mystery Tales of Coyotes, Animals and Men*.

292. Dreiser to Markham

Savannah

Tuesday, Mch 28—1916

Honey Mine:

Such a nice a nice note I had from you this morning. And I was so glad to get it. You have seemed so unhappy in all your letters and that reaches me here. I'm glad your taking the apartment but

sorry were going to lose Mrs. White. Now comes the rub of getting a decent girl. You better ask around for someone who knows a good negro.

I'm thinking some of leaving here Thursday by that Savannah River boat—and catching the Washington train at Augusta on Saturday. I went down and saw the fat, sleepy manager who runs this line and he said they could take me and give me a berth and a rocking chair!—that if I didn't mind roughing it a bit he thought I would enjoy it, but that the ideal time was mid-April when everything was in bloom. I am thinking over. If I go I'll wire you and you can send mail c/o Gen Delivery Washington or c/o Mencken in Baltimore. But I'll tell you.

Meanwhile I'm scratching on here as before. Mrs. Kelly had the nerve this A.M. to call me up and ask me if I wouldn't help her on a moving picture scenario. She had a story, and wanted me to show her how to do it! I declined with thanks. She wanted to know if you had gone and then burst into a eulogy of your voice and presence. She said you had such a deep, smooth beautiful voice and that she knew you must be someone of importance by the way you looked. Finally she wound up by wanting to know if I didn't [want to meet][1] the family that lives in the Sherman Headquarters house—a Mr and Mrs. Charlton.[2] I declined that too—on the ground of leaving so soon.

What you say of spring days in New York makes me want to come back. There is a difference between the North and the South in that respect and the difference is all in favor of the North. Theres no tang to this sudden change. It get very hot, everything bursts forth and then the heat stays. The next time I go south I want to go far enough to escape the least suggestion of chill—Havana or Rio. Or I would prefer to try an all cold town like Halifax or Winnipeg. In either case you know what your getting. But the weather we had while you were here is too much.

Last night I went to see two films—"Audrey" with that actress who looks a little like you—Pauline Frederick—and "Hells Hinges"—with that long faced cowboy actor we have seen so often together.[3] I can't think of his name but he's always getting converted by a

religious girl. "Audrey" was fair—the other nothing at all—very poor. But [Dreiser left a blank space] isn't even in your class. She can't really act effectively. You were entitled to that part and would have made a fine thing of it.

Honey Girl I'll be so glad to get back again and once there I won't be so restless as I was. The change has done me good. New York was getting on my nerves. But I feel much better and rested and I think I can work as well there now as here. If I can only make sufficient progress on my book I can raise enough money to carry us after a fashion. We can knock about together in the country and thats as much fun as doing anything else so long as I have you. I miss you in my bed at night and in the morning. What a treat it would be if we could make a strike on something and fit up a really attractive place. So many [illegible] get along so splendidly that it seems as if we ought to do fifty times as well really.

Well heres to us—shin vane or sine fein as the Irish say—meaning ourselves.[4] I've gathered enough data out of Myers books to do both "The Bulwark" and "Pro Patriae"[5] if I can just buckle down to them. I want to crowd in a play or two so as to make some real money. Think only nice thoughts of me and wish me luck as I do you. I think a hundred affectionate things I want to say to you in a day—and yet I don't seem to say them, do I? But I think them all the time, Crygorn. If I leave you'll get a night letter as to where to write.

Bubs-my-Lubs.

[1] Dreiser seems to have garbled the writing: he inscribed "I didn't to me the family."

[2] The Green-Meldrim House, erected in 1953 at 14 West Macon Street, served as the headquarters for General William T. Sherman until the end of the Civil War.

[3] *Audrey* (1916), based on the novel by Mary Johnston, is set in colonial Virginia and is about a surveyor in Indian Territory who rescues an orphan girl. The film indeed starred Pauline Frederick (1883–1938). *Hell's Hinges* (1916) is a western about a minister who travels with his sister, Faith, to a frontier town. It starred William S. Hart (1864–1946), the foremost western star of the silent era who had, at the time of this letter, appeared in 25 films.

[4] Dreiser is groping for "sinn fein," Gaelic for "ourselves alone."
[5] Dreiser doesn't appear to have completed a work with this title, but he cites Myers prominently in his anti-war essay "American Idealism and German Frightfulness" (written but suppressed in 1917, published 2011) and in the book *Tragic America* (1931).

293. Dreiser to Markham

Savannah

March 29—1916

Cryhon Mine:

First of all send that jury notice to me at Washington, D.C. I'll answer it from there and maybe I'll get out of it that way. They make me sick and I'll not serve this time if I have to stay away awhile.

I'm so sorry about the condition of the studio and keep wondering what they have done—whether they have broken or scratched things.[1] I was a little afraid two men would make short work of your delicate arrangement of things. However if they're not too damaged you can make things look right again. $35 doesn't help much against real damage, does it.

I enclose a letter from your mother and a card for some papers at Station C. which I wish you would get. Also a card for an exhibition. Had a letter from Harold Hersey who announces that you are coming there to dinner today. He seemed to be vastly elated over the fact. Incidentally he was sure you would make a great movie actress—which I approve of. I'm glad your getting around and am sure your going to strike something soon—You can't fail to.

Reviews on the plays continue favorable. The Boston Transcript is highly enthusiastic about "Laughing Gas" and "The Blue Sphere."[2] Not a one has had a word to say about "In the Dark" which I like so much. A number of them favor "The Spring Recital." If Jones advertises them right I think they may sell.

You know I feel sorry for Mame at times and at other I don't give a damn. She lets herself in for all sorts of things without a murmur and then fawns on those trashy ONeills for tramping on her.

Think of that horrible Carmel and her mother.[3] And Mame likes them! What more can you say. Why worry about her.

As for us well, I'm loving you, and hoping that things come out allright between us. Your todays letter cheers me greatly. But if your mood changes tomorrow, I should think you could see though how cosy it is for us to go on if you only would. With whom else could either of us live as contentedly—my nice, long, slim, graceful art girl. I think of you always and wish that you could concentrate on all your arts at once. You certainly ought to do some sculptural bits. Do you know I believe that I personally could sell them on a royalty basis. I think Theodore B. Starr or Tiffany would have bought that graceful swaying girl you made.[4] Aren't you going to do that over. And when will we get a piano for you. Alas! Alas! Do hurry & get a job.

Went last night with the Hartridges to dinner and afterward to see Pauline Frederick. They liked her & I liked her a little better—not much. Hartridge is really amusing. Theres some so simple and harmless about his humor. He wanted me to show him and Mrs H. around Greenwich Village when he comes north—or rather us to do it. Do you suppose you could take her round any?

It's so lovely & warm here. Now that I'm really going I hate to leave. If I run into cold in Washington—won't I groan. Write me c/o Gen. Delivery and I'll answer at once. The mails shuttle back and forth so fast between N.Y. and Wash that you can hear from me in five hours almost. Write me here and much love. I hope you get the place in shape again.[5]

Lover.

[1] Dreiser refers to the two tenants who sublet their 10th Street apartment.

[2] See D. L. M. "With the Supernatural," *Boston Evening Transcript*, 18 March 1916: 9; rpt. in part in Salzman, *Critical reception*, 259–60 (Salzman has excluded the extended favorable summaries of *Laughing Gas* and *The Blue Sphere*).

[3] (Mary) Carmel O'Neill Herberman and Josephine O'Neill Herberman. See Dreiser to Markham, 23 Jan. 1914, n. 1, letter 107.

[4] Theodore B. Starr initially focused on silver but had also moved into bronze casting before closing in 1923; Tiffany's, the renowned jewelry and luxury goods store.

[5] Dreiser mailed a brief note separately:

> Forgot this—
> Address Wash. D.C.
> Gen. Del
> You can cash this at any branch P.O. Station—the drug store very likely.
> Keep clippings for me.

294. Markham to Dreiser

NEW YORK TO SAVANNAH,

MARCH 29, 1916.

Dearest—

You write to me, with regard to your varied correspondence: "I think you feel very strongly the other way (I don't. I have only asked for your confidence, never for your reform), and I may have to give up all my correspondence to keep you, though I don't want to—and I'm not absolutely sure that I will," etc.[1] Which is to say in my words: "The right, not to correspond but to receive love letters, is more important than keeping me." I make no bones about your right to correspond with any one you please. I most decidedly declare my aversion to sharing my and your emotional life with a third emotional life. It has nothing to do with intellectual correspondence, and I'm sick and tired of hearing you say so. I've given you every opportunity to let me know about these trivial things. They cease to be trivial if they require an effort to conceal and can cause unhappiness in our lives. Our life together is damned unimportant if these things that can wound me are so unimportant. I tell you I try day in and day out to say to myself: "You should not mind if he enjoys hearing other women say they long for his physical passion. It might be just friendship." But I tell you it's not possible, unless I get a lover on the grounds of intellectual friendship, and indulge him in words as you enjoy indulging women in letters. And this I don't care to do. I love you, but the whole thing

is spoiled. You are sufficient unto yourself—you and your letters. You need trouble no more about me. I will get along. You speak of my trying to wall you in. You are quite free! I have asked for your love, not your life. You seem to think you need nothing for yourself—that the letters of your adoring ones will make up for the love I have offered. Well! Now just let me alone. I've suffered all I can for your temperament, and now I won't stand it any longer. I won't, I won't! Oh, Bub, I can't!

[1] See Dreiser to Markham, 26 March 1916, letter 289.

295. Markham to Dreiser

NEW YORK TO SAVANNAH,

MARCH 29, 1916.

Dear—

The only way you can prove your own point is by proving that it would be any woman, for admitted that I am jealous I can conceive of your corresponding with women if you occasionally kept me posted, without any feeling, provided the correspondence were not emotional. You would not run the risk, though, for fear your theories would be all upset. Eleanora O'Neill is a very fair example.[1] You could have dispelled my terrors in regard to her without my meeting her had you chosen not to make it important by giving it the careful attention of hiding it. But as for all women being passed up as not comparing with me, you reserve three who do. They are too much for you, and for me. Your idea that you would sacrifice your individuality by giving up these letter-writers lends to the relationship with them a very great importance. To me it is very funny. Your individuality, unless these affairs mean vast things to you, must be very trivial if it could suffer. You say no woman worth straws intellectually will approach any man or permit him to share her philosophy or trade ideas with him in perfectly frank and natural basis unless she thinks that relationship is private to themselves. Evidently I am not worth two straws, for I would not be willing to enter into a relationship with any

man at any time unless I felt that I could include you whenever I chose. In the first place, if I were alone I would not pursue any man whom I thought was happy in his existing relationship with another woman, and I don't think any woman worth two straws will. And I don't believe, for all your protestations to me, that you would ever admit to one of them that you are really happy. You are so afraid they might suffer. They are so much more delicate than I.

Mary Kemp[2] once told me of an old love of Harry's writing him a passionate letter saying she would kill herself if she didn't hear from him. He promptly gave the letter to Mary to read, and when Mary suggested he ought to write, smilingly tore it up and said: "She's only bluffing She'll be all right."

But you are so sure your women would die if you withdrew your kindly attentions that you would dodge around the block ten times to protect them.

But, Theo, you speak of perhaps needing to drop people you have known for years solely to make me happy, and there's the rub. I don't want any sacrifices. And that is why I want to separate—because you want to hog it all in the name of individuality and keep us all going, and you look upon my asking you to consider some one else as a demand for sacrifice. I should think, having reached the age of forty without finding a woman you wanted to live with, you would be content to cease dragging out affairs that (if they are as unimportant as you would have me believe) must be half dead. When I came to New York to you I was as one reborn—every day that I have lived with you I have grown more and more to make you my world beside which all other things become thin stars, besides which other individualities seem nothing. But you received me not as a new life but as another woman introduced into the old one, to be kept perhaps close but evidently no more desiredly with the rest.

The other day Alice Frank asked me: "Kirah, do you think you could have held Theodore Dreiser at twenty-five?" and I answered quite frankly: "No." And there is the whole thing. I'm beginning to think you're too old for me. I couldn't think it possible if it were not that you constantly make me realize that you would sooner

part with me, with our present and future, than give up these tragic reminders of your past. It stifles me. I cannot face the coming years in this intellectual harem. I shall try to go on for now, but it can't last. Only don't let's—when the time comes—try to rectify things. You've made too long a fight for your right to collect examples of emotional and intellectual letters ever to give in now. I long since ceased to combat your decisions. For a long while the combat has been between my mind which forgave you and my heart which ached from your selfishness. It had nothing to do with you excepting that I had to confide in the one for whom the combat was held. The ache has not lain in resisting your decisions but in trying to endure them. Therefore let me endure for as long as I can and when I cannot any more, let me pass out of your life without resisting me. The victory is yours. You have retained your individuality (as you call us).

And now I will become quite practical and answer all that you wish to know. Mayme loved the profile. Jones likes it but feels it should be cast before it is photographed. Lucien Carey raved about it. You know I don't think Dixie made himself clear in that letter about the plays. From the couple of sentences he has directed at me, it was just the producers disappointment at plays that could not be produced, much as one would say: "I don't get you, Steve." Mayme is wild about her copy.

You're silly asking about the poker and shovel! I told you when I first came to Savannah that I had taken them home. They are surely there until the boys leave.

And now I will say goodnight. Loving you as I do I have suffered so much that the prospect of having some time not so far off to live alone somehow suggests rest and quiet more than anything else I can think of. Fifty per cent of the time I manage to keep myself quite happy and love you because of the sweet thing you are and the dear or wonderful things you do. The other fifty per cent I love you still, but in spite of the heartache you give me, in spite of the hurts you give me in the name of gentleness to others. Oh! Once you admitted to me that your other ladies complained of your neglect too. Why not make one of us happy? I'm perfectly

willing to see one of the others get you if I think you both will be content. God knows, content for two people out of this bedlam would be little enough. I would gladly give up all claims I may have on you if I thought in your egotism you could let the others go and give some one woman the undiluted happiness you are capable of giving some one woman.

LOVINGLY

[1] See Dreiser to Markham, 27 March 1916, letter 290.
[2] The actress Mary Pyne, who was married to Harry Kemp.

296. Dreiser to Markham

Savannah Ga

Thurs. March 30—1916

Honey Mine:

Your telegram came this A.M. and brought your letter. I'm not going to comment on them much. They are [not] really very important in the sense of making any real difference. I love you and you love me. I'm not sharing any emotional life with anyone but you—and little of any other form of life that I can see. If I said that any other person was wasting emotion on me that's a different matter. But I'm not going to discuss this subject any more. I'm tired of it. I only wrote as I did because of your letters and the comments you keep interjecting. I get angry at times and then get sorry, but one thing I do know is that I love you and love to be with you—and on that base you can take me or leave me. It's rediculous for us to fight. You've had every proof that I'm inordinately fond of you. If I weren't I'd leave you tomorrow. As a matter of fact I'd have done it long ago. It's choice not necessity that keeps me with you. I want to be. —. But here I go, arguing again and I don't want.

Oh sweetheart it's such a lovely night tonight. The air is like it is like that night we walked into Rockaway the first time and found the little inn, by the canal. It is so lovely—and all the memories of those days with you are so lovely. Don't ever believe that love is dead or dying—it isn't at all. I'm coming north Saturday and I'll

run over from Washington—to New York or Phila any day you say. Why can't we spend a few days in Phila this spring.

Lover

This is a short letter isn't it. I've slaved all day up to seven. Came to P.O. found your letter and then came back again. I feel depressed too, because I feel your worrying. But I'll write more tomorrow. All my love and please don't grieve.

L

Send that Powy's clipping to Jones, for me, please.

297. Dreiser to Markham

Savannah

Friday, Mch 31—[1916]

Honey Mine:

I feel rather depressed today but otherwise am all right. Sent you the syrup—packed in a wooden box and excelsior and fancy it will come all right. Lyons grocery here say that it will supply it at 60 cents a gallon expressage extra. The rate on a two gallon case would be 50 cents. Making the cost 85 cents a gallon. I also sent your hat and muff sometime ago. Hope they come all right. Have closed up my account at the bank and will get my ticket today. Am going via Charleston with a 24 hour stopover privilige.

Your letter and telegram of yesterday have me in doubt as to what your latest mood will be. I don't know what to think anymore from day to day. But I can only trust that things will be all right. I want to be with you and hope that I can be. We'll talk things over when I see you again.

There is no news here—not a thing. I have asked you many questions but so far have had no replies. I have wondered whether you showed anyone the profile view and how they liked it. Mrs. Hartridge spoke of it the other night and said she thought it excellent. And did you write Wolf finally concerning the play—and has he replied?

I am doubtful now whether I shall have money enough to let you come to Phila as I thought. I have only $95 now, after sending you the $10 the other day and out of this comes my fare to

N.Y.—$25 all told and the rent in a day or two—$25 more. I still owe Shay for the books $8—and Mrs Keck—about 6^{00}. My expenses in Washington and Phila or en route home, may leave me too little to carry us to the 15th so that perhaps I better only stop in Phila for a day or so to get what I need and then come on. The usually monthly worry over cash begins this way every month and I never seem to get any better off. It sours me and spoils my temper terribly. If you could only work up one of your collateral arts to the place where you could do something with it during the off seasons of the stage we would be so much better off. When I have to worry over money I can't even write well. It kills all my interest in everything.

I am glad you are having a pleasant time socially and hope it all leads to something good for you eventually. If you decide to leave me I am going out in the country to some cheap place and hide away until I get something really worth while done.

I feel very depressed over our whole situation. The enclosed poem I wrote the other night.

L.

To Lyhon Cryhon.

In those days you were not at all
But in the depths of a new green woodland in spring,
And by a rill
And through the young, green arras of the trees
I heard a bird sing.
And, oh, that song.

And from the west fell the slanting rays of gold;
And beyond a hill called a speeding train, faintly;
And from a valley, where cows were, a herd boy.
And then I knew of you,
And that you would come:
—that someday, out of this, your spirit would rise.—
That you would beckon me
And hold my seeking hand.

L

298. Dreiser to Markham

Washington D.C.

April 3rd, 1916

Cryhon:

On arriving here today I thought I would find a note—but nothing doing. I propose to look again in Philadelphia Wednesday morning—c/o General Delivery. If there is nothing then I will assume that the spirit of your last two letters hold and that the less you see of me the better. I expect to be in New York late Wednesday night or Thursday. The weather is so bad here that it is entirely unsatisfactory for what I had planned. I am leaving tonight for Baltimore. But unless I hear from you I shall arrange for a room elsewhere and see you later.

Th.D.

c/o Gen. Delivery, Phila. Pa.

In early May, Markham returned to her father's house in Chicago. One reason apparently was some medical issue for which she wanted to consult the family doctor, Dr. Julia Strawn. Neither Dreiser nor Markham refers to a specific ailment (appendix and "menstrual difficulty" are mentioned), but Dreiser kept asking her about it—and the extant letters do not reveal a reply. Another reason was that Markham wanted some distance until she made up her mind whether to continue her affair with Dreiser.

299. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10—

May 2nd 1916

Cryhon Mine:

Just as I wrote the above two words the door bell rang—it being 9 P.M.—and in walked a central office detective.[1] He showed me

his police badge, wanted to know if I was Mr. Markham (I signed your name) and said he had two more detectives over the way. Then he went back and got them. You would die to see them. They are [a] scream in their way, so serious, so mysterious, going around with the air of a newspaper hawkshaw. One of them even had a bulls eye[2]—at 9 P.M. However they are coming back at 1 A.M. I gave them the keys and they are going to walk right in so I won't have to get up. But sweet heaven. Of all the clowns.

I've been wondering ever since you started how you made out. You looked so much better that I had hopes you would get through safely. I felt so tired when I got back to the house that I took a shoe and dozed until 5. Then I got up and went around to Mames, had my dinner at the French place because I saw Stokes and his wife through the window and came back here and worked on my travel book. Expect to run through it this week—by Friday anyhow—and turn it over to be typewritten. I'm getting nervous about it.

Yesterday evening some one from Amicks studio called up and said that Amick was being married on the 4th, that tonight, Tuesday, his friends were giving him a blowout at his place and wanted to know if we wouldn't come round. There was or is to be a dance, food etc. I told him (I think it was that little short man we met there once) that you were gone but that I would, if I felt up to it, but I'm not going.

Today three letters came for you which I am readdressing—I have had no mail at all!—Also Griffen Barry[3] called up and wanted to pay that $5—also to get some books and his mail. Afterward—3 P.M. he came round and told me he is working for James E. West over at the Boy Scouts as publicity man. He told me Seton-Thompsons resignation had frightened West thoroughly and that he was now trying to make the organization non-military. I told you Seton-Thompson can lick him in that issue and he can.[4]

This noon I lunched with Jack Powys. He is leaving tomorrow at 11. He sent his love to you. He is planning to write a new novel, a book of essays (Suspended Judgements) and a book of poems between now and Sept 1. Poor me—I feel like a lazy, idle failure. He showed me a long poem Masters had written about

him and which he proposes to include in his next book of verse (Masters does).[5] I would advise him to publish a book of contemporary portraits.

Today has been a heavenly day so warm that when I went over to the Powys at 1 I felt as though I must put on my knee length underwear. Mrs Ledgerbeck[6] came at 10, said there was not enough to do to stay for me and promised to return at 3 to clean the windows but she didn't. I have been working in the cool still room and it's been rather pleasant. I have been so glad that ever since you left that we had the nice bus ride and that you left feeling so much better. Quarrels are so dreadful. I feel all shot up even yet. In a day or two I'll be all right again and then I'll tell you what I really think. It's the same as always only it seems not very necessary to say it—just now.

L—

Jack was so funny. He said he was going out to get a suit like mine and shirts like mine and a tie like mine and dress just like me from now on. I was thinking he'd better marry you and be done with it. Or would you dress him the same?

[1] With the entrance of the police, Dreiser discovered that his Italian neighbors were counterfeiting quarters with a machine he had assumed was a sewing machine, according to H. L. Mencken (*My Life as Author and Editor*, edited and introduction by Jonathan Yardley [New York: Knopf, 1993], 153). In a letter to Swanberg, Markham recalls that she was present and the counterfeiters lived on the second floor (18 Dec. 1963; Swanberg Papers). Clearly, time had made the memories of both raconteurs fallible.

[2] Bull's Eye lantern: a type of lantern which could focus a beam of light by opening its door.

[3] Griffen Barry was an actor with the Washington Square Players who appeared in *Another Interior*, which Dreiser had seen at its opening. See Dreiser to Markham, 21 Feb. 1915, n. 2, letter 217.

[4] James E. West (1876–1948), lawyer and child advocate, served as Chief Scout Executive of the Boy Scouts of America from 1911 to 1943. Ernest Thompson Seton (1860–1946), born Ernest Evan Thompson in England, before changing his name first to Ernest

Seton-Thompson, was a noted author of books on wildlife, the founder of the Woodcraft League of America in 1902, and one of the founders of the Boy Scouts. He disagreed with West on the militaristic influence on the early Boy Scouts, preferring instead an emphasis on woodcraft (based on the teachings of Native Americans). While Seton had announced to the newspapers in December 1915 that he was resigning because of this dispute, in fact he was fired by the National Council who had accused him of being an anarchist.

[5] In 1916 John Cowper Powys published the novel *Rodmoor, Suspended Judgments: Essays on Books and Sensation*, and *Wolf's Bane: Rhymes*. A typescript of Masters's poem "John Cowper Powys" is in the Powys Collection at the University of Exeter (EUL MS 433/JCP/11/2)

[6] "Mrs. Lilgeback" in Dreiser to Markham, 22 May 1916, letter 322.

300. Dreiser to Markham

Thursday—May 4—[1916]

Cryhon:

Your first letter which came this A.M. makes me feel as though I would like to weep—it is so sweet. I am truly so sorry that you have to be away from me, since you are feeling so badly. I would be convinced that it is your appendix and that it ought to come out if this menstrual difficulty weren't in the way. I hope by now you have seen Dr. Strawn[1] and secured an opinion. Or if not—that you are going at once. I shall worry until I hear. Life & love weigh on me so at times.

Mame called up yesterday and wanted to see me. Just now she is very elate. She has the refusal of a summer place—the management of it, in Vermont I think—all expenses including car fare and $80 a month. Also of a fine tea and catering plant over in Westfield New Jersey. She wants me to go out and see it with her. I wish you were here to go in my stead. Incidentally those boys in the front room-parlor floor left owing her $16, but in payment they gave her all their furniture (she didn't demand it) worth at least $75 or $100—so shes very pleased over that. Brennan is well & friendly.

And the detectives returned at 1 A.M. They came tramping in a whole file with a dark lantern and sat in the back room 1 hour. Not

a sound—nothing. Just after they left the first time I heard a suspicious bustling in the room. Today there is a sign out in front—2nd floor to rent. The birds have flown. Do you suppose they observed these clowns loitering about? It is too funny. And now one wants to come back tonight and talk things over!

Hows my kid. I think of you so much—how truly gifted you are and so human—Kirah, the gifted. If only your day would come so that you might shine as you should. It's dreadful not to, when so many squashes flourish in the garden. Yesterday afternoon your Negro oyster seller keeled over and I had a dreadful time. Her head got awry and in straightening the whole thing up I accidentally mashed her left breast. Then I tried to do a little modeling myself, being an expert in the manipulation of that particular organ as you know, but I'm afraid I'm a better osteopath than a sculptor. It looks a little deflated or something. However I've propped it up in a rather clever way with what clay was left—making an extra pier in front which can easily be removed & it will stand till you get back. Please do more statuettes. This one wears so well with me.

Went to Williams last night. He was pleasent but not really interesting. Lengel was there and as jealous as a cat. I think he will turn on Williams completely now because I have been nice to him. Afterward he roasted him shamefully—said he had a wife and two children in K.C. whom he was decieving & that this girl was nothing and he didn't think he would write, etc, etc. I got tired, pretended an appointment & left him at 125th Street to avoid his following me down here. And he confided that Mrs Lengel is opposed to all radicals (or erring souls) save me whom "she understands."

Good night!

Well, that be about all, only write and let me know how you are. If an operation is necessary and I can raise the money I will come out only I would be glad if none were needed just yet. Give my regard to your father. Mother I suppose wouldn't accept any greetings from me.

Syonara—as the Japs say

L.

I am not feeling good at all. My nerves seem to be acting up dreadfully these days.

[1] Dr. Julia Clark Strawn (1869–1942), physician and surgeon, received her M.D. at Hahnemann Medical College, an homeopathic medical school, and the University of Chicago College of Physicians and Surgeons. She was Professor of Gynecology at Hahnemann and Chief of the Gynecology Department at Chicago Memorial Hospital.

301. Markham to Dreiser

CHICAGO TO NEW YORK,

MAY 5, 1916.

Sweetheart:

What are you going to tell me when you feel better? All the woes of our misunderstanding are up and stand like abused love motifs in front of me when I read the last page of your letter, and I know you are going to leave me. All day yesterday when I had no letter I felt sure you were never going to write me again. Oh, if you knew how I love you, how I hope and pray that when we both feel physically better all will adjust itself to a loving basis of trust and mutual understanding—if you knew the proportionate space you hold in my dreams of my future you could never want us to part unless you had ceased to love me. I lie abed mornings, praying that I may sleep until a letter comes. I count the days of my exile only to wonder will you want me when the time is up. If you knew the passion of faith that holds me up when I am amongst people you would marvel how I can so doubt when I am alone.

But now to get down to serious trivialities. Father says I am to stay here until I start rehearsing in August.[1] I said I could not hear of it without you. He said you should come out, to try and get one of the studios out where Margery Currey lives furnished for June and July (we can walk from there to the lake for our daily swim), and if necessary he will loan me any help in a money way that we might need, to be repaid whenever I can or not at all. He says of course he cannot do anything like what he would like to

do, but will do his best. I propose that I start trying to find a place immediately, but of course I will settle on nothing until I hear from you. Only Bubs, my Lubs, do come. We could have such a happy time. Don't you think it would be splendid fun to be out in the studios, swimming in the lake, playing around in the park—just getting your nerves in order?

Lover-Love, I shall wait eagerly for my next letter, I know I am going to get no letter for Wednesday for your Tuesday letter was mailed Wednesday,[2] but I shall live in anticipation until I get some sort of letter. One-eighth of my month is passed. I fell asleep last night with the feeling that you had a bed-fellow wherever you were. Oh, I don't care about anything if you'll only want me back by the first of June. You're certainly always going to get anything you want, but if you want me too I am willing to face anything. Don't shut me out of your life, Bub. I know I can't contribute much to it, but I can some. I know that I can make you a little happier. And if there were only some one to whom I could pray I would go down on my knees each night for your happiness. It is the only thing in the world that interests me passionately. I think I shall put a special on this and then it will reach you on Sunday. God knows where you may be on Sunday—gallivanting off with some fair, but so long as you don't resent a message from me intruding I shall not be sad. Come to me, darling—please—

Cryhon

[1] That is, rehearsing for her role in *Mister Antonio*. See Dreiser to Markham, 15 Feb. 1916, n. 3, letter 275.

[2] Markham refers to Dreiser's letter of 2 May 1916, letter 299.

302. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th

May 5—1916[1]

Sweetheart:

Such a nice letter today but the last part makes me feel bad. I always think so many nice things about you which I rarely say

because if I were saying them it seems to me I would be telling you things about yourself all the time. It isn't that you aren't altogether lovely or brilliant or good to look upon. It's just life. It's the essential contrariness in things which at times makes the all desired the not desired. It goes deeper than will—down into chemic unrests and repressions and attractions which create moods and which only the strongest will or other generated moods can overcome. You know that. I'm essentially restless and generative in moods it seems to me. But all that I do or say has nothing to do with my physical and spiritual pull to you—not a thing.

But your so funny Cryhon, so casual at times. Here you write me a letter on the train telling me how sick you are or were and once in Chicago you write me about your father and mother, the Art institute, Dorothea[2] and her character, the Little Theatre but not a word about your condition or whether you are going to a doctor or not. Time for everything but the doctor. I gasp. By the way[3] Your friend that lives in Patchin Place called up and wanted to know if you had gone. A man called up at 6:30 P.M., and wanted to know if you were here. I said no—in Chicago—but did he want to leave any message and he said no. By degrees I think I am going to feel better. Last night I slept very sound—did not wake up until 9:30 this A.M. I must be just tired out.

* * * *

At this point last night Hersey came in here and staid until 11:30 and then I was too tired to finish it. He is now secretary of the authors league and is going to try and find out how to make Jones come accross with a true account. His article has now become a pamphlet which is to be issued in the full and distributed, God knows how.[4]

And just now a special delivery came in the morning mail—which interests and relieves me greatly. It doesn't say a word about the cottage or your plan to ask for it but it has this new scheme of a Chicago studio. I can't say for the moment what I think of it but I'll mull it over and let you know soon. But the doctor news

is comforting though I still think it is your appendix and that it ought to come out. Your excitement about my leaving you is amusing. I had no such thought in mind and as for gallivanting around as you put it, if it is to be it will have to come later. It has [not] occurred yet. I am dreaming and working—rocking and singing all to myself. I miss you and I don't—that is I feel all the time that you are not here and yet there is so much of your personality in the place—nearly all, that it is somewhat like having you here—your aroma—the color of your soul.

Another interruption—Mary Pyne is here to get your address. She says that Dorothea Cheston[5] just brought her around a part in her vaudeville act and offered it to her. Your rage over my kidding that lady makes me laugh. She interests me about as much as a lamp post—but even so.

I wish you wouldn't send me any of that money. You need it more than I do. I can get along. As for paying rent for a studio there, what about this one here. The two rents!

Mame wants me to go to the country with her today but I don't want to go. It's beautiful out but she will bore me so. She wants us to come and live with her in the country. Imagine you & Austin. I suppose I have to go though—Oh Lord.

Are you wondering why the pencil. I have hunted high and low for my fountain pen and am in such a state. If it's lost—and I can't imagine where—I'll have to get another.

Much love. Your really so very sweet Cryhon—such a nice, brilliant beautiful girl. I hope your not missing anything very much this summer by being away. Will put a special delivery stamp on this.

B.L.
Bubs-my-Lubs

[1] Probably mailed on May 6 or later since Dreiser refers to Markham's letter of May 5—her suspicion of Dreiser "gallivanting off with some fair" and her intent to send it via special delivery (there is no accompanying envelope).

[2] Dorothy Hyman, Markham's sister.

[3] Dreiser has inserted "By the way" at the end of the page; the next page begins with "Your friend" indented.

[4] At this time, Dreiser was still suspicious that his publisher, John Lane, had not been dealing fairly with him in the matter of royalties for *The "Genius."* The pamphlet may have been an expansion of Hersey's letter responding to a negative review of the novel, "Great Novelist Dreiser," *New York Globe and Commercial Advertiser*, 9 Nov. 1915: 10. For the Author's League, see Dreiser to Markham, 19 Feb. 1915, n. 1, letter 215.

[5] Dorothy Cheston (1896–1977), English actress who performed most recently in *Chinese Lily*, a Yellow Peril play by Paul Jakobi in late April 1916 as part of a vaudeville bill at the Orpheum Theater.

303. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th St

May—7th—1916

Honey Mine:

No pen yet, this being Sunday. How is you today? I didn't quite make out from your letter yesterday whether your plan was to take the park flat or studio out there at once or not. I think I'll come but certainly will not until I get some money out of Jones and the assurance that he will carry me through June and July anyhow. What time in August will you be coming East? How much per will the flat cost. Look around and let me know. I have to smile at your speaking of your trip as from exile. I didn't bring up your going to Chicago. You seemed to feel at first that you ought to go and I really think you wanted to go. Now that all this trouble has come up I'm exiling you. Well—don't believe it! I think occasional separations are healthy but I'll be glad to see you again just the same. I think of you all the time more or less and if I felt ordinarily free with you would be happy with you all the time. As it is too often I feel as though I had to fight for just room to turn round in—but we'll not argue that anymore. Your away now and I think before we get together again things will just naturally adjust themselves. I feel impossible to myself even at times—how much more so must I seem to you. But for all you may think at times you must

know that I am fond of you. Always at the days end here, when I've worked steadily I sort of look around for you and wish I might here your voice.

Nicey Cryhon—I wonder will you really get tired of me one of these days and leave me. Will you?

L—

Today at noon at the Brevoort I saw Ben Allen[1] and his bride. She is so lofty! O, dear! Oh, dear!

[1] Ben Allen was likely one of Markham's theater acquaintances. Markham stayed with the Allens in December 1917, and Dreiser's later correspondence shows that in 1934 he was a union official in Washington, D.C. (Riggio, *American Diaries*, 227). For Markham's friendship with Ben and Molly Allen, see Markham to Dreiser, 22 Nov. 1930, letter 365.

304. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10

Monday May 8—1916

How is thee today, Lyhon C:

For the last two hours I have been listening first to Hersey about his article and next to Hartridge who has been here to pay a social call principally. And before that Mame came in. In between and all morning I have been working.

I am wondering all the time what you are doing and where you are. Your special delivery which was to reach me Sunday came Saturday so I haven't had a word since then. You and Miriam,[1] you and your father and then you and all the people you ever knew out there keeping flitting through my mind. How dim life is and little we know. I used to think letters indicated something but they don't—nothing at all. One can only trust and that is nothing either. The best is to hope nothing and expect nothing I suppose, but that is a poor reed, too.

But the spring is here so fully today that I wish you were here. At breakfast I walked around Washington Square and it is wonderful.

Tonight, if I can find anyone at all I am going for a bus ride though. I wish you were here to take it with me. Just now I am hungry, not having eaten a thing since breakfast and I can't make up my mind where to go, but I think the little French place. If you were here I would beg for a home dinner—just us two.

Ah well. I suppose it's just as wonderful in Chicago now. When I learn how much that proposed studio is to cost I will make up my mind whether to come or no. Your description of the lake and the park is very appealing. Would that we had plenty of money to enjoy it all.

There is no news. Sunday it rained all day. Today, as I say has been gorgeous, yet I haven't left this desk since 10:30 A.M. when I came back from breakfast and it is now 7:15. Oh yes, I stopped to shave at two—and drink a glass of beer. Do you still love me as one of several or all in one? Which.

I think I have the blues tonight.

L—

[1] Miriam Kiper Buzzell.

305. Markham to Dreiser

Chicago, to New York.

May 9, 1916

Bubs, my Lubs

That wasn't a nice letter Sunday.[1] But I don't think you know really what you want yourself, for if I stay close to you where I am happiest you complain of being thwarted, and if I go about for no other reason than to achieve freedom for you by taking freedom for myself you complain that I don't love you—not the way you believe I ought to, any way. I don't think we could establish any situation that would not give you some cause to moan, and so on that basis I shall just keep my fingers crossed for our wanting to be together and everything else will have to take care of itself. I did not write you last night for I spent the night at Lou Wall Moore's.[2]

I don't know about staying here. I think it would be fun, only if we could get one of the studios on Jackson Park. They wouldn't cost more than 20 a month.

You are a very poor person to look after your own affairs, my sweet. You promised to phone Dixie and tell him we would not furnish the outline and also promised to send Sister Carrie to him. I wrote him immediately about the outlines but I cannot send him Carrie unless I send a first edition, and I don't propose to do that.

[1] Markham refers to Dreiser's letter of 7 May, letter 303.

[2] Sculptor, dancer, and Chicago socialite Lou Wall Moore (1860–1940) was associated with the Chicago Little Theatre and was the costume designer for *The Trojan Women*.

306. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th

May 10—1916

Cryhon Mine:

I wonder how goes Chicago by now with you. By me, New York is beginning to be a little lonely—in spite of all the wild career of self entertainment you credit me with. Yesterday was a beautiful day, but so windy and cool that on those grounds it was offensive. Jones wrote saying that unless The Bulwark was to be ready by August I had better throw "A Hoosier Holiday" into shape as an interlude and this so preyed on me that I got it out and whipped 11 chapters into shape. At that rate I can get it ready for the typewriter in 6 days and I am seeking a typewriter now. May have to use Loretta Maguire. I'm glad you and your family are getting along so well and that Dorothy's lofty airs are weighed in the right scale by you. That you should ever have been troubled by her little school girl antics amuses me—you who are worth 8000 of her, all in one. With all your taste and insight it seems impossible that you should ever have envied anybody.

There is no news here. I miss you nights, your nice, long smooth body and by day, fluttering around like a butterfly. What a soul

you have and what dreams. I wish you were as successful as you will someday be, now. When I think of all the things you do and the way you do them I know you are quite the most wonderful kid I have ever known and that's saying a good deal. I'm waiting now for the letter which is to tell about the Indiana cottage as well as what a studio in Chicago will cost. I have to pay for this blinged typewriting of "A Hoosier Holiday" which will run up to fifty or sixty at the least—fifty anyhow—and that with other things pending makes me troubled about expenses.

Am so glad doctor Strawn is treating you and that when I see you next you will likely be well. I am going up to see Meltzer[1] in a day or two—another bill. Much love to you. I think of you morning noon & night. Your nasturtiums are coming up pretty well now—a new one appearing from time to time. By June or July they'll make quite a showing only some one will surely have to water them in our absence.—I saw that girl who lives at 2 Jane street in the little French restaurant the other night. Also Henrietta Rodman, on the street. I feel quite depressed about my work at times but suppose I will get in eventually.

Do you miss me much.

L—

What you say about Browne is so revealing and so characterful. You ought to write—among 17 other things.

[1] Possibly Dr. Samuel James Meltzer (1851–1920), a physiologist at the Rockefeller Institute.

307. Markham to Dreiser

CHICAGO

MAY [ca. 10–11 May 1916]

Sweetheart:

If you'll look back on the letter that came Saturday[1] you'll find no suggestion that I leave you—just a long whine. If you'd taken the time to write me Friday a really nice letter before rushing off to have a good time nothing more would ever have been said. And oh, sweetie baby! I am happy again, now that you just write me. The

letter this morning of losing me and wanting to come West made me so happy. I will settle up today with mother about the cottage.

I am sitting in the lunchroom of the school at the Art Institute munching a twenty-five cent lunch. Not one familiar face has appeared. All students in smocks and aprons—all just like every other group of students I have ever seen here. How dull it all is! The water color exhibit upstairs is the most interesting conventional exhibit I have seen in a long time. There are some wonderful decorations, and some quite stunning impressionist pieces.

These few days of misunderstanding, going about with long sighs and gloomy looks, have made me a lonely baby. My instinct has almost been to say stay home and I will come by the middle of June and we will do little stunts round about home, but Father would be so terribly disappointed. Write me nice, loving letters, Bubs, and then I will not get blue and you can do as you please.

Your loving . . .

[1] Markham refers to her letter of 5 May (letter 301) and, later, Dreiser's missing letter of 9 May.

308. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th St

Thursday, May 11—1916

Cryhon Sweet:

So you cooked your mother a meal! And me favorite dish!!! And then you wrote that lovely poem on the train! It's beautiful. I really think it's stunning. It seems to have exactly what such a scene has in it—light and clouds and delight. It sings. I am satisfied that you are going to publish one of the lovliest books of poems one of these days—and such a beautiful binding, all of your own designing, and that it will be a sensation. I know it will. The free versifiers will sit by in envy and you will have your revenge. I'm so glad your writing verse. You put into it so much true music, not only of form but of feeling.

In passing the ten dollars came safely and it's nice of you to send it but don't you think you take a big chance not even registering money. So many sharps can feel money in a letter. Coincidently

I did write Dixie Hines and sent him "Sister Carrie" the very next day, via Mary Pyne when she came in here. Evidently, according to this letter he has supplied himself with books now. I'm glad your thinking of the cottage rather than a studio in Chicago. What does it lack in the way of furniture. I wonder could I work on their in the fall awhile, after you go on the road, or what? I'd love a month or so in an out of the way place like that.

It's clearing up here now. Yesterday was a vile day—cold and disagreeable. Even this A.M. it was chilly, but now—4:30 P.M. it's warming up. I've just finished a long single column adv. for Jones. Incidentally I'm enclosing a letter about the "Genius" which just came. I hope Jones tells me it's selling still.

Well, nicey, I'll close. I think of you every time I go out, and of all your quaint ways. I wish you were here just now. I'd have a tousling round with you and then we'd go out or a walk. Am sending douche, glasses, gloves etc in one package. The douche ought to come in handy after the above remark.

How much do you love me—

L

309. Markham to Dreiser

Chicago

May: [ca. May 11, 1916]

Sweetheart:

The inevitable loneliness that comes when I have been away from you for a couple of weeks has settled down in all its mists and fogs of lugubrious blues. If I would let myself I could weep and wail enough to set you mad—though were you near enough to be set mad there would be no weeping and wailing

Mother is most discouraging about the cottage. X knows about "us," and mother is dead sure it would be made very unpleasant. Old friends of mother's who have turned definitely against her because of my actions have a cottage right next to hers. Father is inclined to agree that it is a bad place to be, much as he is anxious to visit us there. And I don't know what to do. Dad is bound I am

to find something near here, but I don't see how it can be done. However, I will turn to tomorrow and see what can be found out south here. After that I give up. I leave it to you—if I don't find anything do you want to come on and see what we can find together, or do you want me to come home? Sweetheart, I am so lonely.

But, lambkin, what are we going to do? It would seem to me that with little jaunts of our own, or furnished tent houses at bourgeoise beaches, and week-ends with various gracious Putnam-Daggett-Bigelow types of friends,[1] we could put in a charming summer there. But I cannot leave here unless you refuse to come, and I do want you to come if you want to and see what to do. Of course father is agreeing to help financially. But it is all so different, so unlike our life together in its normal shape. I just told Dad that if I couldn't find something before long I would write you that I would be home by the middle of June. He took it very calmly. He doesn't want me to—but—

. . . well, sweetest-heart, I am clean run out of vastly important news. I would like to pretend to draw your ear right now, and also put one of those blowing kisses that irritate you so right under your chin. Just writing to you makes me feel better.

Goodnight, lover-love.

[1] Nina Wilcox Putnam (1888–1962), a prolific novelist, short story, and magazine writer, was married to Robert Faulkner Putnam (1993–1918) of the Putnam publishing family. Later, after his affair with Markham had concluded, Dreiser describes a tryst with Nina on 15 November 1917 (Riggio, *American Diaries*, 209–10). Other persons referred to are Mabel Potter Daggett and Poultney Bigelow.

310. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Friday, May 12—[1916]

Cryhon:

Please, when you get this, get busy and design me a cover for "A Hoosier Holiday." If you want the back lettered in any special

way, draw that. Suggest paper, type, etc. Jones wants to bring it out this fall and I want to talk this thing over with Booth. Rush the thing along to me. Am working hard on the holiday stuff trying to clean it up. Hope to hear more about the cottage soon. It's windy & dusty here, but not cold, though by no means hot. I think of you a great deal.

L—

Saw a Chinese ring on Fifth last night which I propose to buy. It was tagged $2. Wait till you see it.

While in Chicago Markham took part in a reading of Dreiser's The Girl in the Coffin. *In the play, Mary Magnet lies dead from what is hinted to be a botched abortion in a coffin in the foreground while strike leader Ferguson attempts to rally foreman William Magnet out of his grief to return to the strike. Unknown to Magnet, Ferguson is the father of the child. In his lengthy speech at the end, Ferguson, who is estranged from his wife, explains the nature of his love for another woman in terms Markham refers to in the following letter:*

> *She did love me anyhow, this other woman, whether I was good enough or not. She didn't get a living out of me. She didn't get my name. She didn't get a right to blame me if I was unfaithful to her—and I wasn't always faithful to her. . . . I never told her I loved her. She just had a sort of an idea I was glad she loved me. I was glad—for a kind of a queer reason. She kept me from feeling lonely. I'll say that for her—she was the only human being I've ever known that could stand between me and mortal loneliness.*

The play seems to have reminded Markham of the reasons for her unhappiness with Dreiser, and her letter sparked a series of letters that led to the end of their relationship.

311. Markham to Dreiser

[before May 14, 1916]

Sweetheart

I am heavily depressed and lonely today—heaven knows why! In the first place, I think I have failed in my mission for—though every one here liked Laughing Gas immensely—they liked the Girl in the Coffin better. Then the evening excited me so. It always excites me to read Laughing Gas, so that I suppose my gloom is a natural reaction. I think in a way Ferguson is partly responsible for my blues. He repeats so many things you have said—he is so willing to grant women the privilege of loving him. You are always separating our two individual situations on the ground that I have declared my love for you so much, and that you are more or less silent on the subject. Heaven knows you are silent! And yet if I claimed that that silence proved a lack of love you would say "what utter nonsense!" And yet always in a crisis you fall back on the scarcity of your declarations as proof that your obligation to love in this situation of mutual agreement is less than mine. Sweet, I love you so much that it is very hard to feel that you can love and patronize all in the same breath as you do. Please, please, be honest with me. If you don't love me I wish you would cease to bestow your toleration of my too exacting affections. Much as I love you, as I want you—hard as I have always fought to keep my belief that you love me—I would sooner end the thing this minute than endure any such situation as your manner has suggested a thousand times, and as is shown so clearly in Ferguson's attitude that I can refer to that more easily than I can explain. There are women who are unimportant enough to simply minister to a big man by a doting, self-sacrificing, dog-like devotion. Beyond a doubt it is the biggest thing a good many of them ever could do even if they never had a chance to. But the man who lets them do it certainly must be honest about it if he is big enough to deserve it. He can make no bones about loving in return. I am not one of these women. My work seems sufficiently important to me to make me feel that I have no energy above what it requires to give

to any arrangement where my love is treated as a soothing drug and no more. But enough. I think you love me. Heaven knows, I hope so. If you do I cannot live longer than the first of June apart from you. How I wish I knew how to fly down onto your desk at this moment. But then you might not be at your desk, and I might not know where to find you, and if I find you I might be more unhappy than ever—Oh, dear! let's not pursue this line!

Well, au revoir, my love. Don't take too seriously all I have said. If we were together I would beg to be daddied, and a brief combination of weeping and laughing on your shoulder would smooth out all the kinks. Heaps and heaps of love.

312. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th

Sunday May 14 [1916]

Cryhon Sweet:

It is Sunday P.M. and having gotten a check out of Jones yesterday I have been digging out old bills—the Born's (10[00]) Lyke, (17) Gas (2.43) Telephone (3[10]) and paying them up. Incidentally I have been writing out information for Henry L. who is writing his article for his book.[1] Incidentally I have been hustling along on more chapters of "A Hoosier" because it is being typewritten by a little Irish girl at the magnificent salary of 10 per. She lives at Madison N.J. and is taking the work home. I found her through the George H. Doran Co. She worked for them, once.

You credit me with a wild life, don't you? When I see how you feel about it all and how much pain I have caused you I am tempted to say once and for all that I am spiritually too detached ever to be happy in the wedded state and that if you want me cut off from all other women you had best leave me now as I cannot feel that I can so live. I find living with you delightful and beautiful but only when it does not shut the door on contacts which reveal new and interesting phases of life and which somehow I feel are essential to me. You say you are willing to give me that liberty if I will give you the same. My answer is that there is no need of living with you on

that basis any more than there is with any other woman. I can live alone and see you occasionally and then neither my affection nor my pride will be hurt by what you are doing. If you are living with me it is a different matter. I do not want the woman I pick for my intimate, day by day companion to be the play thing of others—that others may comment on it and I will not have it so. I declare to you that you are the most fascinating and forceful woman that I know: that I would rather have you than any other to live with, but I also say—and this is final—that I do not want to live with you, day by day, in the same place, unless you are faithful to me, and also, that when I learn that you are not, that there and then, we separate, once and for all. If I should actually learn that since we have been together you have been going with others I would want to quit—to the above extent—and would quit.

You are away from me now. You know what you want to do. Away from you I see and think clearly what is best for me. I am telling you. If you cannot endure this now is the time to say so. Go your way and I will go mine. We will be the best of friends, if you want me as a friend, but no more. But I will not live with you. If you want me to live with you, say so but let us have no more cruel discussions. I am reaching out for phases of understanding which I must have, to grow and be happy. They will in no way affect my affection for you, nor lesson that tender mood in which I hold you. Actually I think they might strengthen your position but you must judge. I feel today as though I ought not say anymore until I hear from you, but I will not act on that. Rather I will write as before and adjust things when I hear from you.

If I thought things were going on as before I would say take the cottage in Indiana for sure: and let us lay in the groceries and things when we get there. Your letter does not say whether there is any suitable living equipment there—a bed, linens, china, etc. If not, and those things had to be bought, the expense might be too much. If so, mere food cost is not worth worrying about. As you say one has to eat somewhere—why not there.

And aside from these hard words above, I still love you. Yes, I do. I think of you all the time and wish you were here so I might

take you in my arms and hold you close. Your so lithe and fresh and bird like—a lark and a poet. Your a very great girl and you don't need me, but I love you and would like to have you with me nicey cook, nicey poet, nicey painter, nicey sculptor, nicey writer, nicey decorator, nicey actress, nicey bedfellow,—what more do you want to be. Your Hebe and Diana and Venus and all the nice Greek ladies rolled into one. If I had you here now I'd put you on the long couch, knees down and do something—much—to your lovely round thighs and then I'd turn you over on top of me and make you squeal with delight while I felt your thighs and breasts. Sweetie, rubbery girl. Do you really want to leave me?

L—

If you say so and can get the cottage I will come on June 1—or any day thereafter.

[1] On 12 May 1916 H. L. Mencken wrote Dreiser to elicit some information about influences and other details for a chapter on Dreiser he was composing for *A Book of Prefaces*. Dreiser responded on 13 May with a lengthy, detailed letter. See Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 229–34; for the essay, "Theodore Dreiser," see Riggio, *D-M Letters*, Appendix 2, 775–90.

313. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10

Monday, May 15—[1916]

Cryhon Mine:

How is she? I have been thinking of you much today, wondering if you have been thinking of me and to what end. It has been gray again and cold, quite like yesterday—a horrible day. I have felt very depressed. Incidentally I have been working at this desk since 10 A.M. and it is now 9:30—barring an hour out for dinner. (I went up to Mouquins.) The only satisfaction out of it all has been the knowledge that in a day or two more I will be entirely through with my revision of the travel book and that it will be off my hands once and for all. I called up Franklin Saturday and he assures me that by July 15 at the latest he will have 32 full page

illustrations and there will be no small sketches. Jones wants to put the charcoals on laid paper of some kind and the text on cheaper paper. Is that all right, do you think. Franklin says he has an idea for a cover but will waive it gladly if you or anyone else has a better one. Please make a sketch. After the Riley book I want no covers by him.[1]

Last night two amusing things happened. I went out at 7:30 to get something to eat and at 8:30 when I came back Eleanora ONeill and some young man were in the hall pounding at our front door. It gave me a world of satisfaction to say that you were gone for the summer, and that I had work to do. I begged to be excused and they left. Revenge!—at last!

Then that O'Sullivan who wrote The Good Girl called up.[2] He was calling for 7755 Chelsea but asking for Mr. Fiske. I never peeped, but merely told him that Mr. Fiske did not live here. In a little while he called again. Same question, same answer. I had to laugh for I knew he had us on the brain but couldn't get some other matter out of his mind either. Then I stuffed paper between the bells and went to work.

What you say about Buzzell interests me. I fancy he finds that Miriams[3] sexual life is not to be confined to him and it is getting on his nerves. She is kind but[4] of very Catholic taste in the former matter. He hasn't got spunk enough to leave her. Incidentally perhaps he sees his literary dreams petering out and that is dreadfully depressing as I can testify. Well, praised be drugs and distilleries. There is a very real use for them at times.

There is no news and I am not seeing anybody to speak of. The time is so auspicious for this clean up on the travel book that I am working from ten A.M. to 10 P.M. with pleasure. Am hoping that once it is over and the first draws near you will want to take the cottage on the Tippicanoe but I am prepared for any answer. And I won't hold any decision you make up against you, for I know how sharply you decide at times.

There is not a thing more save to say that I love you however little you may believe it and wish you were here or I out there. I keep thinking of your poem and wish you would write a lot. Poetry at times—the lyric form—seems the last word in life and

so I wish you would write much. Mencken writes that he is hard at work on his essay on me and will publish it this fall. I hope you get in good shape for your stage work and that you make a great strike. Much love. If you miss me and want me out there write and say so.

L—

Read this bit from John Davidsons "The Ballad of the Nun"[5]

The adventurous sun took heaven by storm;
Clouds scattered largesses of rain;
The sounding cities, rich and warm,
Smouldered and glittered in the plain.

Sometimes it was a wandering wind,
Sometimes the fragrance of the pine,
Sometimes the thought how others sinned,
That turned her sweet blood into wine,

Sometimes she heard a serenade
Complaining sweetly far away;
She said, "A young man woos a maid";
And dreamt of love till break of day.

For still night's starry scroll unfurled,
And still the day came like a flood:
It was the greatness of the world
That made her long to use her blood.

[1] *The Flying Islands of the Night*, by James Whitcomb Riley, illustrated by Franklin Booth (Bobbs-Merrill, 1913).

[2] Vincent O'Sullivan, *The Good Girl* (1912), a controversial novel about a young woman's struggle to conform to expectations.

[3] Markham's friend Miriam Kiper was married to Francis Buzzell.

[4] Dreiser has crossed out "sui generis" after "but."

[5] John Davidson (1857–1909), Scottish poet. Dreiser encountered "The Ballad of the Nun" in Frank Harris's portrait of Davidson in *Contemporary Portraits* (New York: Mitchell Kennerley, 1915); he so liked the poem that he included it in *A Hoosier Holiday*, 262.

314. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th St

May 16—1916

Cryhon Mine:

Or, are you? Tuesday and it's raining so hard. It's been raining all day long and if I weren't working so steadily I know I should be in the dumps—dreadfully so. As it is, at five P.M. and with four more good hours ahead of me I'm feeling pretty good. And I'm wondering what your doing and how your feeling.

Theres scarcely a scratch of news here—Lucian Cary shotted in this P.M. with some lucky Jewish girl whose name I have forgotten. He was after the mss of a novel, which he had left here in that file of papers in the back room. He said he was just about to set sail for Chicago. His wife had secured a job out there at $35 per.—and he hoped to find one. I chided him for falling down here and gave him a list of addresses and names—men to see—and he departed quite cheered up. I hope he gets a job. He and his Jewish lady raved over your negro vegetable vendor as badly spoiled as it is.[1] I'm afraid you'll have to use better braces in your statuettes—real iron or something like that—or a good block of wood. I wish now I had let you put my lead pencil in this one.—Mr. Pennywise that I am.

I had a reminder of you this A.M. when Mr. Sack Antaramian presented his bill for 1[25] which I had forgotten. He cleaned a shirt or something.

But I don't really need to have news where with to address you, do I? If you were here I would just enjoy the flavor of your presence without saying anything, which would enrage you after a time. Away I must tell you that every little bit I see you here doing something with your restless energy or wanting me to stop and do something with you. What old chemic substances do you represent with your long, slim, graceful head and beautiful body. I see you before the mirror declaring that you "look like hell today", or flying out for things to start a dinner with, or bursting in with some charge against somebody's ideas or actions. A great girl you, kiddo—the most interesting of any that I know.

Last night going to bed at eleven I wished so much that you were here. I love the thought of your brooding, stormy and yet gay soul being about me all that time. Your burst of tears, your laughter, your profound, quite psychic maternity—it's all fascinating. If I come out to the cottage we'll have a fine time playing about the country together. I want a hammock and work bench and then just Lyhon Cryhon to tear up things.

Until tomorrow
Bubs

I can't resist cutting this out and pasting it in.[2]

[1] For Dreiser's damaging of Markham's sculpture, see Dreiser to Markham, 4 May 1916, letter 300.

[2] The clipping reads:

Even the Smallest.

"Every creature is here for a purpose" announced the teacher. "Now what do we learn from the mosquito?"

"We learn from the mosquito," replied young Albert, "how easy it is to get stung."

315. Markham to Dreiser

Chicago to New York,

May 16, 1916

Theo Dear

Your today's letter was the most astonishing document of monopoly I ever saw. You say that if I claim the privileges for myself which you have claimed for yourself there is no point in our living together. I wonder do you realize how completely that statement gives you away. I know now that you are not faithful or your remonstrance against a little freedom for me would not be so decided. You say you do not want the woman you pick for your intimate day-by-day companion to be the plaything of others. Is that what it means if I have men friends? Then you must be a perfect toy, the way you answer to the whistle of various women. Or if we reverse it and they are your toys, I guess there can be no harm in my having a few. But I see that nothing like that can work.

You want me if I don't interfere with your having contact with various women. That is for your development. All I can reply is that if contact is necessary, what about my development? Either I don't need it, which in the same breath proves you don't need it, or I do, and you are claiming definitely that you wish to dwarf me in order to keep me yours. I think that the former however is right. I need nothing for my development that involves unfaithfulness. You need nothing for your development that involves unfaithfulness. But you intend to take it. You hang the value of your work on the degree of license you achieve for yourself and then label it with some names like development or growth or insight, personality, what not. Well, if you wish to leave me, go ahead. If my having the same privileges as you have cancels all reason for our living together, it certainly means that your having those privileges alone should cancel all reason for my living with you. That which is food for the male is food for the female, and if you propose to eat exquisite things at other women's tables and keep me on bread and milk I would be pretty dull if I didn't remonstrate, wouldn't I? You settle this thing to suit yourself, but don't think that I would do anything as long as we are together. I make a lot of noise because I don't see that you are entitled to do as you do and at the same time keep such strict bonds on me, but if only you weren't so free for yourself I would not care how tightly you held me. But you are free for yourself—it is your development, you say. If we were married and I were expected to run the house and look after the children and never see a man except when you invited one home to dinner, and you stayed down at the club when you felt like it—supposedly at the club—we could not be more conventionally mated than we are. You are always scorning the radicals so, but the difference between them and you is that they do as they please and let others do as they please, while you do as you please, complaining all the time of being thwarted and yet set about trying yourself to regulate every one with whom it pleases you to come in close contact.

I am through. I wonder will you trouble to read this letter. I have so often seen you sigh with irritation at the letters that came not

nearly so frequently as mine and lay them aside unread. Yet you would sooner lose me than those letters. I am of importance to you if I can be kept faithful and yet so much just female that I don't object if you are unfaithful. I wonder where we will end on this. Your wish to fix yourself now for next autumn still rankles. (Talk of being together) Only don't forget that if I should want any of the things you call self-development I would leave you before I would try to run them alongside of my love for you. Now you can decide on everything. As you always have done.

But, bub, I love you and I don't want us to separate. If you stick to me it means that you love me whether you claim to or not, but you do. And since you love me there can be no special privileges, Theo. I am entitled to any sort of development you are entitled to, whether I take it or not. If you don't see that you don't love me enough but simply keep me as a convenience, one of your group who are to be faithful to you alone. And I won't stand that last. If I am to be the star in your company you can be the star in my company—no more—though I will love no one else. If I may not have a company then you can give up yours, and be content with me alone. I have always been willing to be content with you alone. You can decide the thing for yourself. If we do have companies they need not be more than friends and we can tell each other of them. Or they can be as yours are now and always have been: love affairs. You seem to think that if I love you as I claim to I should be willing to make all sorts of sacrifices to keep you. But you're wrong there. I do not care to keep any one that is not equally anxious to keep me. The self-abnegation act isn't in my line. You can decide now what our course will be, and don't forget in your desire to fix things easy for yourself that I love you and will do as much to keep you happy as I can. Lovingly as always, if not more so.

Lyhon Cryhon Dreiser

After receiving this blistering reply, Dreiser wrote four letters on the same day to try to resolve the issue. The first—a curt dismissal of the relationship—was not sent and languishes among the letters

Dreiser received from Markham. The second was a brief letter which merely stated that he needed more time to compose his thoughts. The third, a long letter in an apparent attempt to defend himself, he tore up. He tried again with a final letter, sent it and the second letter together, and then requested their return, a request with which Markham did not comply.

316. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

165 W. 10th St

Thurs. May 18—1916

Cryhon:

If I could for any living woman I would for you, but I can't. You are a ranging, vigorous intelligence, each day growing more individual. Our paths are slowly, but surely, diverging. I see that. You will not believe perhaps that my deepest affection follows you wherever you go and whatever you do, but it does. On the long roads that we go alone my thoughts—loving thoughts—will always be with you. Goodbye and good luck. If I can serve you in any way let me know. And whatever disposition you want made of things here, say.

Bubs

317. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th St N.Y.C

Thurs. May 18—[1916]

Cryhon:

If I knew what to write you today other than what I wrote before I would, but I don't. Your last three letters confuse me a little. I need to think or not to answer at all. I am well and working from 10 A.M. to 6 P.M. and somedays longer—right here. I can and will give you a list of all the places I have been if need be. Personally I dislike this type of correspondence so much. It is dreadful. I will

write later in the day if I can straighten out what I have in my mind—or not at all.

Lover

Mencken is coming here tonight to dinner—we're going out.

318. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th

Thurs. May 18—[1916]

Cryhon:

I have just written you one long letter and torn it up. After all it isn't what I wanted to say. What I wanted to say was in the first letter to which you have so vigorously replied. But I'm tired of quarreling—and of letters that quarrel. I am not doing any thing that I should not want to do or am not entitled to do. I might send you a list of all my evenings out and may yet. What I want to say here is—I love you. Take it or leave it, just as you choose. What I said in my letter stands. I am not coming to Chicago if you want to fight. If you want to love me generously and whole heartedly all right. Without beds or bedding the cottage seems rather impossible it seems to me, though I much prefer the idea. Under the circumstances a studio at $20 in Chicago is next best. If you can find one and want to take it and will write me a love letter worthy of the name I will come. Otherwise I might as well stay here and I will. But what I said before I stand by because I know no other way out of it all for me. If I did—and could—I would change in a minute to suit you. I love you that much.

L.

Send these two letters back.

319. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th St

Fri. May 19—1916

Cryhon Mine:

It's a fine clear May day but I'm not going anywhere and you're a rude, cantankerous nut for saying so. As a matter of fact I am

making an extra-strenuous effort to get this travel book cleaned up and off my hands before I leave for Chicago should you decide to stay there. Your letter this morning seems to raise a slight doubt.

It seems to me the whole thing should resolve itself into one of expense. It is possible that I may be able to sublet this place—the Hersey's might take it at $20 or young Brewer. But if we don't rent it it stands up as a burden of $28 each month. That plus $25^{00} for a flat out there, railroad fares, etc, etc, make the thing a little troublesome from the money point of view and money is a serious consideration with me now. I have to pay for this typewriting which I figure will cost between fifty and sixty. I haven't but the one suit and I'll ruin it wearing it without change. There is a matter of $100 or more I shall owe on those English clothes of mine (Richards[1] should have paid it and didn't) which I ought to square up sometime. They're threatening to sue me—as is Richards, for an alleged claim of his. These things have to be thought about in staying out there.

By the way, Mencken, Wright[,] Marion Blum and little Burke were here last night.[2] He came down early to talk over his article and they arrived at ten. The party wasn't as gay as the last one, owing to your absence I'm sure. They all asked after you. We had beer. Mencken rallied as usual and Wright spouted whenever he got a chance. At 12 they departed and I went to bed.

I'm sorry in speaking of the cottage that I said I'd like to stay beyond your return date. I was thinking you had a long rehearsal somewhere in or near New York, but "for once in our lives" if I come out there I agree to return with you. That unfortunate spell will be broken.

Incidentally the people I have seen here since you have been away have been Mrs. Armstrong, once, at the Brevoort. We talked until 1 A.M. She is now at Annapolis, Md.—or went there at least; Lillian Rosenthal—two evenings at her home; Harold Hersey—one evening here, with some male friend of his; Clifford Hartridge twice—once here as I wrote and one evening at the Yale Club where he now lives. I took dinner with him and he gave me a two weeks guest card. Miss Little, once.[3] She is now secretary and general factotum of the Geo. H. Doran Co. One Saturday afternoon with Mr and Mrs. Samuels automobiling in Connecticut. We had

dinner at the Gotham the same evening. The two Sundays that have elapsed since you were here were so bad that I worked right here in the house all day and all evening. I have slept here every single night so far in spite of your jabs and have had none but general visitors Kemp, Mary Pyne, Hersey, Hartridge[,] Mencken, Mame, Cary, Barry,[4] Lengel, etc. I wouldn't bother to put down all this stuff save for what you have written.

But I'm tired of telling of this stuff. It's so fine a day I wish you were here that's all and we'd go for a walk, I'd like to run my hand under your dress and do a lot more beside. Your ass would get a fine beating if I could get at it now.

How is your medical case coming on. You say nothing so I presume your feeling better. I'm sorry about the trouble but you'll probably have forgotten all about it by the time this arrives. Much love and have a good time.

L—

[1] Grant Richards (1872–1948), English publisher. In 1911 Richards organized Dreiser's first trip to Europe, about which Dreiser wrote in *A Traveler at Forty* (1913).

[2] With Mencken were Marion Bloom (1891–1975), a writer who had a long-standing affair with Mencken beginning in 1914, Willard Huntington Wright, and Claire Burke.

[3] Nayan Little (1886–1949) worked as Dreiser's secretary and typist before taking a position at the George H. Doran publishing company.

[4] Perhaps the actor Griffen Barry.

320. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th St

May 20—1916

Cryhon:

Your letter today was really [word omitted]. Are you so lonely? In that case I fancy you'd better cut things and come back though it might be fun, if you could secure some place right near Chicago, cheap. I hate to think of you so unhappy, but will make it up to you

when I see you. Today is the first warm decent Saturday in I don't know when. I have the offer of seeing the George Cohan Review with Miss Little and Sinclair Lewis[1] and am going. Mame phones that she has had a terrific row with the ONeills and wants me to come over but I'm not going. Tomorrow when I get back from Westfield I'll write you a longer letter—much. For now, so long, but I wish you were here and that I could feel your nice body and here you talk. Write me another nice poem.

Lover

[1] Sinclair Lewis (1885–1951), novelist, at this time had just begun his literary career that would culminate in 1930 with the Nobel Prize for literature.

321. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th

May 21—1916

How is she today?

I went with Mame out to Westfield this A.M. and saw a peice of property which I think would make a dandy place if she could run it right and would probably make money. It was perfect weather—as warm and comforting as any May weather could be. I thought of you as we went out and came back and all the time I was there and what a time we would have just strolling on and on toward the long hills I saw in the distance. Westfield is just between Cranford where we canoed—and Fanwood where one night we had a steak in the woods and lay on the ground and watched the fire afterwards. You were so sweet—holding my head and loving me so. If you were to take this house with Mame or alone I believe you'd make a great go of it. You could do so much with it. As for her well I think she'll make a go of it too, in her way.

But oh me, a day like this without you out in the country is no day at all—sharp eyes. No one to tell me about any flowers or birds or make me see things which I never would see otherwise. I asked the man who was showing me around—a Mr. Rich—what certain

things were but he didn't know. Then we went up to his place finally and sat about with his wife for an hour or so talking things over and waiting for a train. Finally we left at two and arrived here at 3:30 only to find Lengel and his wife at the door with all the news of her voice and his stories and Shiel[1] etc. It appears that Shiel has paid you various high compliments which have finally cut through her skull.

But at 4:30 they went and so here I am. I have an invitation from Harris to come over to his place, which I won't accept and another from Hartridge which I just now got out of—and a third from the Samuels family which I am going to avoid. What I really am going to do is to hunt up Lee McCann—shes at 31 West 47—and talk with her if I may. She always appeals to me as really interesting.

The Cohan Revue is really an interesting show—one of the best I have seen in a long time.[2] It's nothing and yet something—girls, stars, burlesques of eight or nine shows in town and a court room scene dance in ragtime rhyme which is simply killing. If by any chance you should come back I am going to take you to see it. Somehow whenever I see a play which has anything at all in it which you might do I see you doing it and wish you were here. In this thing there was a dance with a tall dark girl dancing Destiny—and I felt as though you ought to be doing it. It was beautiful.

Aside from this there is nothing. I have been waiting to hear what you would decide on out there. If you think so, I would be just as well satisfied if you stayed until the fifteenth and then came on back here. Mame may have her house at Westfield by then and we could play around out there or at some of these week-end inns—like the one at Mountain View wasn't it—where the man wrote me to come. I wonder what your doing today and what thinking. I wish you had a dandy summer part here somewhere and we could play around Sunday and Mondays.

All my truly love.
Bubs

[1] George Shiel, who sent a telegram to Dreiser on 27 August 1927 saying only "congratulations to the big chief."

[2] *The Cohan Revue of 1916*, by George M. Cohan (1878–1942), entertainer, songwriter, and producer, played at the Astor Theatre and billed itself as "A Musical Crazy-Quilt, Patched Together, Threaded with Words and Music and Staged by Geo. M. Cohan."

322. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th St
N.Y.C

May 22nd 1916[1]

To the Ladie Cryhon:

I was thinking the other day that you weren't missing much of spring or anything else by not being in New York this month and yesterday and today confirms it. The first was cold and raw and gray—a vile day—and today it is heavy and groggy and damp and met with clouds so low they're beyond hope. Mrs. Daggett called up last night and wanted me to dine with her and Hartridge but I refused, for the present anyhow. Shes at the Pen & Brush until Saturday.[2] Instead I went to bed at 10:30. Sunday evening I spent with Lee McCann and she looks very bad to me, though she says shes getting better, a mere wraith. I never saw a person thinner, or more homely really and yet more alive and interesting. Her shrewd, inquisitive little eyes fairly blaze. I still like her very much. She asked after you and I gave her all the news. June 1 shes leaving for New Hampshire to go into some camp in the woods—and I certainly think she needs to. She looks as though she were in the last stages of consumption.

Your todays letter is a rather curious affair and carries with it a feeling of something being held in reserve. I could make a pretty accurate guess for I get things rather straight but I won't. I hope you are having a good time and that whatever you are doing you are building up something that will be of value to you artistically.

By the way I heard an interesting bit about your friend Roth the other night. Miss Littles sister is an actress of sorts—Crosby Little.[3] She or some friend of hers applied at the Shuberts for a job and ran into Roth.[4] He had a part in one of what appear to

be his two favorite shows The Blue Bird[5] and (now I forget the name but you considered it once) to offer. But only on condition. The lady had to—with him—or there was nothing doing and since she would [not], there was nothing doing. And so the story went on—he put the same proposition to two other friends of the same girl all within two weeks.

Query—If all had succumbed which one would have secured the place?

I have heard no more from Dixie Hines. Young Hersey is willing to take this place from June 1 or thereabouts to Sept 1—or later—providing he can have it for what he is paying now in Patchin place. Mrs. Lilgeback is still here. She comes Mondays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Yesterday I made her start washing the wood work as there is so little else to do. It is almost as good as a coat of paint,

There is no more news. I may get Mrs. Daggett to come down and cook a dinner for myself & Hartridge, thereby paying him back for his pale club feed. Is that a sacrilege? Tonight I am not feeling as scram as I might owing to not having had anything to eat since 8:30 A.M. but I'm going out soon to mail this and dine. Should like to have you here but only on condition that you want to be very much. I have the feeling that you are just on the verge of not caring for me at all any more—and so.

But we'll always be good friends—what?—or will we?

My love to you for the present anyhow.

L—

If you will look on page 319 of the June Century you will see a fairly humorous take off on The "Genius."[6]

[1] Mailed at noon on May 23.

[2] The Pen and Brush was an organization of women writers and artists founded in 1897 and located on 10th Street. Daggett was then living at the club.

[3] Crosby Little had a role in Eugene Walter's adaptation of John Fox's *The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come*, at the Belasco Theatre, in April 1916.

[4] Perhaps the actor Edmund Roth.

[5] *The Blue Bird* (1908), play by Maurice Maeterlinck, about two children's search for happiness, was a popular play performed by amateur as well as professional theater groups.

[6] Dreiser scrawled this sentence across the upper right corner of the first page and refers to the column "In Lighter Vein," by Stephen Leacock. *The "Genius"* is spoofed in humorous summary lists of places, characters, and events as "Our Interminable Novel: from Cradle to the Grave; or, a Thousand Pages for a Dollar" (*Century* 92 [1916]: 319).

323. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

May 25—1916

Lyhon Cryhon:

What fierce letters are these today—two really bitter attacks and full of complaints. What did I say about the letter from Bertha Knight?[1] Anything? Why should you assume that I think it a better letter than the one from Mr. Fuessle?[2] As a matter of fact I don't. It is a weaker, more self conscious letter. The other has dignity and force and pride. I felt that. But you must attack me for feeling that the Bertha Knight letter is better!

Again I haven't written. But you can let three days go by with a postal card—a remote letter before and two attacks today, but I must write every day—and just as you would have me. But I'm not going to write quarreling letters. Assume if you want to that all is over or that I am going to be a Mormon or that I don't want to see you anymore, but start from that basis and say either that you will not [be] having anything to do with me anymore or that you will be friends with me on some basis that meets the situation as you see it or feel it to be. I am a free agent. I must be. If I told myself fifteen million times a day that I would accept a given, limited order and wanted to, still my spirit would not let me accept it. I might try and try but it would not work. You had better leave me once and for all for I know that I cannot be made over into the thing you want me to be. I cannot make a father confessor out of anyone even in love.

You will say that I don't love. Very well then, I don't, but I cannot make myself over. I want to live and work and retain my own soul untrammeled. That I am willing to give much of myself to you is another matter. If you can't see it that way why rake me in every letter. I don't want to be and I won't be. I'm tired of hearing of my faults. Let them be or don't write. When I think of the ugly stories that follow on the heels of such moods as these I am glad you are not here. At least the rooms are silent and I do not have to argue. I meant to write another kind of letter and tell of the few things that have happened, little or nothing, but such letters as these make me not want to write at all. I have a lot to do and fighting this way merely throws me out of key. If I can think differently later in the day I will write differently. If not I won't.

L—

[1] DPUP does not include any letters from Bertha Knight, whom the Internet Broadway Database lists as a member of the chorus of *Chu Chin Chow* in 1917–18.

[2] Newton A. Fuessle (1883–1924) was a publicity writer for Detroit automobile companies and contributed to magazines before publishing the novels *The Flail* (1919), *Gold Shod* (1921), and *Jessup* (1923). In his letter to Dreiser on 9 May 1916, he praised *The "Genius"* and was "still in a daze from reading it. If, since Victor Hugo, there has been a writer with a bigger understanding of the drama of human life, I'll drop everything else and read him through. There's a cosmic wallop in your work that will make it last forever."

324. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th St

May 26—1916

Cryhon Dear:

I wrote a rather ugly letter yesterday but when I look over your letters again I cannot feel that I said too much—only that I might have said it differently. I'm sorry. I distinctly feel that we are slowly but surely drifting apart. There is too much rowing and it is based on a mutual suspicion which I am afraid is only too well justified.

Day to day re-adjustments apparently mean nothing and are really not worth while.

I could shut up this place and come out there but I don't think I will. In the first place I am not interested in Mr. Darrows apartment nor in him particularly.[1] He bores me a little and he has never shown me any particular courtesy except on this occasion and the courtesy is to you. I do not care to be made a mark of, in Chicago. In the next place, I am in the midst of forcing this travel book through for Octobers publication and it is no easy task. I am having trouble getting it typewritten and there has been all the revision of the original pen copy—now happily completed and all the revision of the type copy to do at once—and it should be done here I think where I can get at it quickly. Booth was down yesterday with a plan for the cover, title-page and paper which I think is not bad. He desires to make it a light chocolate brown with a darker chocolate for a back peice. Lettering to be orange, yellow or gold. He wants to talk to me next week as does Jones. It is possible that by the tenth or fifteenth or before I may get the typewriting done—I am deciding it now between two girls and if I could get it all in hand could edit it en route or anywhere, but is there any use of our trying to live together any longer? I do not want to fight! I do not care for constant criticism of my life. I may be the worst person in the world but so am I and I am perfectly willing to live alone. Only one other person in my life has ever quarreled with me so much and I really cannot stand it any longer. It is getting to be a horrible bore. As far as the summer is concerned make any plans you wish only don't quarrel with me about them—and don't criticize me for not doing this that or the other.

I went last night up to the Band box theatre to see The Sea Gull, by Tchekhof. It is a grand play very, but spoiled in my judgement by the acting in two critical places of Helen Westley and Florence Enright.[2] They had splendid chances—really remarkable scenes but failed utterly where you would have carried everything before you. I saw you once again in both parts. It is a play in which you should appear at some time or other. They are moving to Broadway—The Comedy Theatre—West 41st Street and they haven't a

decent actress in the cast. And apparently they still do not know enough to get one.

Incidentally the night before I went to see Blinn and Anglin in "A Woman of No Importance"—my standing room costing me a dollar.[3] The play is defective in theory though brilliantly executed (by Wilde). Margaret Anglin is a stick—fat and stagy. She rants like any Broadway actress. Blinn is no man to play an English Lord. In rough uncouth work he is good—fine—as a gentleman—nothing. They should have had the man we saw in The Song of Songs.[4] The work of one woman in this play Fannie - something Pitt, was simply splendid.[5] She played an old dowager countess of sixty of more with a something of style and color that is beyond description. I have never seen better acting in America. She is wonderful. I asked a man who stood by me if he knew anything about her. He said nothing, except that he believed she was between 50 and 60 years of age. You should remember her name.

Mrs Armstrong is back in town and has taken a house in East 77th St, near 5th. She is phoning regularly. Jones is away for a few days and the Samuels family is in Cleveland, Ohio. I saw them again the other night at dinner. Mame is not going to take the house at Westfield because she cannot get suitable terms and since Mrs. Ripley is leaving June 1—or thereabouts—and taking her furniture she is uncertain what is to become of her. Hersey is coming in here tomorrow afternoon to read over Sister Carrie clippings. I have had another letter from Miss Knight but do not expect to answer it. Mr. Williams called up and said he had been dropped from the Hoggson Co and was looking for work. A stenographer who used to work for me when I was Editing Smiths (1906) has just written to say that she is married, idle a part of the time and would like to copy one of my mss. If I can make reasonable terms I think I will let her help on "A Hoosier Holiday."

It is a beautiful day here and if I were not pushed by this mss I would love to go for a walk. I wish it were possible that we might be really happy together but I see no prospect of it. The vain of feeling in your mind against me is too strong. I'm sorry. At one time I thought that you would be one to take me as I was. I see

now so clearly that we cannot live happily because I cannot accept the terms which seem conditional with you. So Cryhon—but I'll write you as usual if you want me to. In my judgement we had best stay apart—for the present anyhow.

L—

[1] Likely the lawyer Clarence Darrow, a Hyman family friend. See Hyman to Dreiser, 27 May 1913, letter 94.

[2] *The Seagull* (1896), by the Russian playwright Anton Chekhov (1860–1904), received its first U.S. production by the Washington Square Players at the Bandbox Theatre from 20–31 May 1916. Helen Westley played the role of Madame Arkadina. Florence Enright (1883–1961) played the role of Masha. Enright made her debut in *Eugenically Speaking* in the inaugural performance of the Washington Square Players in 1915. For Dreiser's evaluation of this first performance, see Dreiser to Markham, 21 Feb. 1915, letter 217.

[3] *A Woman of No Importance* (1893), by Oscar Wilde (1854–1900), opened at the Fulton Theatre on 24 April 1916. Margaret Anglin (1876–1958), a Canadian actress who gained fame for her performances in a series of Greek plays after 1918. Holbrook Blinn (1872–1928), an American stage and film actor who also was one of the founders of the Princess Theater; he starred as the brutish McTeague in the first silent film adaptation of the Frank Norris novel, *Life's Whirlpool* (1916), now lost.

[4] *The Song of Songs* (1914), by Edward Sheldon (1886–1946), was based on the German novel *Das hohe Lied* (1908), by Hermann Sudermann, and opened at the Eltinge Theatre on 22 Dec. 1914.

[5] Fannie Addison Pitt (1844–1937), an English actress, played the role of Lady Hunstanton in *A Woman of No Importance*.

325. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th St

Sunday, May 28—1916

Lyhon Cryhon:

Is any word welcome from me? I'll assume so for the present, anyhow. It's such a fine Sunday that I cannot help thinking of you and the fine times we had walking on the canal—the hours of

lovely, poetic exaltation. Theres nothing like that to be had about Chicago, is there?

Last night, Mrs. Armstrong and I went to see Caliban at the Stadium.[1] She had two good seats given her and we had a fine veiw. It's not much of a spectacle or masque in my estimation but it appears to be drawing tremendous audiences—not even standing room being available for some. Speculators are dealing in tickets. Hedwig Reicher is in it—and papa—and Edith Wynne Matthison etc—all the brows. It was amusing in a way for all had to shout to be heard—even Edith Wynn and some of the voices sounded strained and harsh. It consisted of eight scenes from Shakespeares plays—preceded by and interlarded with a series of masques in which Prospero tries to awaken the spirit of Caliban by showing him these fine spiritual achievements. But while the dancing and the acting weren't very much—largely posing and shouting, the field, the lighting, the staging, the crowds were impressive—spectacular—something like a great circus. I sometimes think the very crudest machinery is interesting, if you have enough of it. Afterward I took her to her house and came down here.

I seem to have your stage future on the brain. I cannot get it out of my mind or heart and do not want to. All the time I was thinking how much more suited you were to the roles carried by Hedwig, Margaret Wycherley[2] and Edith Wynn and what a star you are someday sure to make. How comforted I will be in those days—as though I had succeeded, in all such art dreams myself. I shall never be truly at rest now spiritually until you are acclaimed far and wide.

Your spirit is so truly fine, Cryhon. You are so truly classic.

There is no other news. Yesterday I worked all day right here, and today am working again, and glad to do it. Hersey came in yesterday afternoon. He says he can't take this place because he can't sublet his own and he can't afford to take another. Our friend Adolph Wolff is nagging me for the $30 on the bronze. I'm sorry I haven't it to give him right now.

Yesterday I read over some of your letters and wished that feeling and comment did not run so high between us. It seems too

bad that this whole thing should go to smash and so soon. I wish sincerely sometimes that my temperament were a little different and perhaps it will be someday—when it is too late.

L—

[1] *Caliban of the Yellow Sands*, by Percy MacKaye (1875–1956), opened on 24 May 1916 at the Lewisohn Stadium of the City College of New York. Among its many cast members were Hedwig Reicher as Cleopatra, Emanuel Reicher as the Ghost of Caesar and the Ghost of Hamlet's father, and Edith Wynn Matthison as Miranda.

[2] Margaret Wycherly (1881–1956), noted actress of Broadway and later film and television, played the role of Juliet.

326. Markham to Dreiser

Chicago to New York,

May 29, 1916

Theo dear

I'm glad you don't want to come out here, for I don't want to stay here, and though I see no immediate prospect of our being together in New York I will always hope that we can be some time. Your attitude about the Darrow apartment is unutterably unfair, but suit yourself about that. I suppose you have so many fond ladies in New York that it is impossible to imagine friends of mine feeling us so much married that they can offer you courtesies through me. I'm doubtless not a good enough vehicle to suit you. Everything shows that I am not good enough in my way, though, and I guess we had better part. Then if I speak to a man you won't have the opportunity of saying I am making a mark of you. Of course your going off with people who refuse to receive me is not making a mark of me. That is your freedom. Sweetheart—do you realize that I have made just as much of an effort to take you as you are as you have made to take me as I am? Or do you feel that I am the only one should have to do that? Really, my wonder never ceases at the double standards that you think it your right to set. And the truth of it is that I want no other standard than the one

you have set me. It does not follow that because I have tried to enjoy the company of other men at times I had any basic desire for their company. If you only knew how every bit of socializing I have done away from you was only an effort to find in life some balance for the pain of your unfaithfulness. You talk of the terms which seem conditional with me. What are they, more than a little of the consideration you demand for yourself? It is all I have every asked. It is a lot to have defended, isn't it?

But what am I talking for, anyhow? You have always known what I wanted of you. The point is you resent ever having cared so much for me and also that caring involves a degree of mutual obligation which is offensive to one who must be free at any costs. If you will stop to think that you have put on me stronger bonds that I have ever put on you, you may realize that it is our willingness to love that has bound us and not we ourselves.

I am going to try to leave here on Saturday. If we are splitting it is only a place of spiritual torment. I must be where I can work. I shall not trouble you to meet me. I can telephone you after I reach town.

327. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

165 W. 10th St
N.Y.C

May 30—1916

Cryhon Dearest:

Two letters came yesterday morning which I tried to answer yesterday but couldn't. I was really too much put out by the last one to discuss the subject further. I had the misfortune to meet Alice Frank coming back from dinner and to submit to being interviewed by her for some paper. Result = a very bad time. In the course of the discussion she made the statement that because Isidora Duncan had never told her a lie in three years that she never told a lie to anyone—was in other words absolutely truthful. I laughed at this which seemed to put her out. One thing led

to another and I left confirmed in my original impression of her that she is merely a satellite—a creature willing to spend its life in seeming something that it is not. Her opinion of me, (that being without truth myself I could not see truth in anyone else), sounded so familiar that I began to wonder whether it had become a theme for general discussion in the dear village.

Your this mornings letter puts a somewhat different aspect on things. You know that you are welcome here—that there is no one I would rather live with if it could be done peaceably. Actually I have concluded that never anymore must I put myself in the position of having my movements controlled by a domestic arrangement however wonderful that may be for the simple reason that it does not accord with the way my mind works. I see that now clearly and once and for all. I love you. You command not only my physical but my spiritual respect but if I now lose you in preference to this other then you must go. Not that I am a libertine. I deny it. But there is something in connection with me which seems to smother and decay unless I feel absolutely free to come and go as I choose. You know I do not ask you to accept this situation. If it pains you greatly to do it I would prefer that you wouldn't. Living alone would be much better and if you desire your own freedom you must live alone for I would not want you to live with me, presenting the face of a singular affectional relationship and not maintaining it. I don't care to give anyone the opourtunity of supposing they are undermining a situation which I may seemingly be believing is intact. Alone you can do as you please. I should not mind nor feel that I had any right to. If I found things unsatisfactory to me later I could go my way, or you could go yours. There is no reason to suppose that we might not (would not) go on indefinitely. I feel always as though I do not want to lose you,—as though we should go on.

I am so sorry that your home conditions are not what they ought to be. With me coming to Chicago would depend on getting more money before or on the 15th. At present, after paying the rent Thursday I will have seventy dollars out of which will have to come before the 15th 25^{00} for typewriting, my living expenses and

the telephone bill which would leave me about $17—if there were no incidentals of any kind, on which to come to Chicago. If only I didn't have to pay for this typewriting I would save about $65, but most of it is given out now.

Under the circumstances, unless you feel interested in Chicago I would advise you to come back.[1] If you do I wish you would look for some cheap place in the country where we might go, just shutting this up. I have nothing on hand now save the writing of The Bulwark and the correcting of the typewritten and galley forms of "A Hoosier Holiday." And that can go on anywhere. Please don't think because I write this way that I don't care for you or that if your mood were different mine would not be. Love is a question of mood—not of rules or conditions. If the mood is with one all else can go. In my case, in so far as you are concerned, there is nothing to recapture—merely to clear away the obstacles. We can have lots of happy days and it would mean so much to have you in my arms again providing you are single to me. I liked your little poem. It has less of the lyric in it than some of the others but it is lyrical. I wish you would write me a whole book of them.

L.B.

Cecile Griel[2] (according to Alice Frank) was arrested two weeks ago and locked up in Jefferson Market and the Tombs for alleged malpractice. A girl, sent her by that little pigeon who runs the Twilight Club[3] was operated on and is dying. According to what I hear it may mean 10 years.

[1] According to the postmark, Dreiser mailed this letter the next morning, 31 May, at 7 A.M. Since Markham wouldn't receive the letter for two days, he also sent a telegram, dated 31 May at 12:35 A.M.: "IF YOU ARE UNHAPPY AND WANT TO RETURN DO SO I CANNOT POSSIBLY ARRANGE TO LEAVE BEFORE FIFTEENTH IF THEN THINK WE MIGHT DO AS WELL SOMEWHERE NEAR HERE NOTHING I HAVE SAID PRESUPPOSES LACK OF AFFECTION OR DESIRE TO KEEP YOU AWAY WRITE OR WIRE ME OF ARRIVAL."

[2] Cecile L. Greil (1873–1940) for a time was the Medical Director of the Manhattan Trade School for Girls. According to press reports, a

19-year-old woman, with the fictious name of Alice French, visited Dr. Greil on 16 May and paid $50 for an abortion. Her condition deteriorated and she was transferred to a hospital, and after the hospital notified police, Greil was arrested. Newspapers do not report on how the case was settled. In this and the following letter, Dreiser consistently misspells "Greil" as "Griel."

[3] The Twilight Club was established in 1883 "to cultivate good fellowship and enjoy rational recreation" by prominent writers and intellectuals who met in restaurants to discuss topical issues of the time. The "little pigeon" is John Francis Tucker, an attorney who served as President of the Twilight Club.

328. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

165 W. 10th St
N.Y.C—

May 31—1916

Cryhon:

The two letters which came this morning are such a revelation of you. I like your eccentricities and your characteristics so much that they hold me to you almost in spite of myself. Imagine bursting out of doors because father and sister are indulging in a dull past time and bursting into Byronic verse. Your delightful. The poem isn't as good as some of your others but it can be made into one. And that other different thing about the four leafed clover. Your almost too good to be true.

I'm not going to quarrel anymore. I've said my say. But I want you to be a lot happier than you are if it is humanly possible. You don't belong in that family—your too different, but then you really don't belong in any limited realm. It's your privilige and your duty to rise on wings and do splendid things and you will. Your such a fine, big, sixty horse power girl. Your sudden shifts and turns fairly make me want to burst out and applaud. I hope before you start that you let me know when you arrive and let me meet you and bring you here. Were surely not far enough apart for anything less are we?

Last night I went over to see Dr. Griel. She was in the dumps—all gone to peices really—in a dreadful nervous and melancholy state. I took her in hand and left her quite defiant. Evidently she is living with some Jew physician who seems fairly interesting—a typical Jew medic. She told me that Mr. Tucker (?) of the Twilight Club sent a girl to her not more than 18 years of age. She was three or four days overdue and frightened. She operated on her and sent her away. A few days later she came back feeling badly and with a temperature of 103. Evidently Griel lost her head for without any instructions as to how to act or what to say she sent her to the Lying in Hospital in 2nd Ave. There the medics seized on the girl, scared and pumped her and took an ante-mortem statement. She was so badly frightened that she told who and where Griel was. Then the officers came and arrested her and took her before the girl. When she saw Griel she tried to pretend she didn't know her—then said the doctors had made her say that she had been operated on and paid for it but that what she had said was not true. This was to help Griel. The girl then got well, but having signed an ante mortem statement the District Attorney decided to use it against Griel. Hence the trial.

This A.M. I sat in Jefferson Market from 9:30 to 12—waiting for her case to be called, but when I left she was still waiting. Charles Le Barbier[1] and Justus Sheffield are her lawyers. Tuckers wife was there with a lawyer, trying to get evidence on which to base a divorce. So far Tuckers name has not been divulged officially and it may not be. The girl was not present and said that she proposed not to testify. Griel was hoping that she would beat it to another state. But Griels mother was present—or had been—and was trying to expose Griel—or make trouble for her! How is that? And what has Griel done to her mother in times past. It's a great mess. The German papers, because of her Ancona[2] testimony, are down on her and young Virieck[3] shouts to heaven that she is a scoundrel. What a little rat he is, anyhow. I am trying to find out now before I finish this letter what disposition of the case was made in this court. I phoned just now and can tell you. It was postponed until next Tuesday.

How are you, Cryhon, physically? Worse, or better? I think we both need a rest in some out of the way place for awhile. Aside from tending to the typewriting of the Hoosier as it comes in I am working on "The Bulwark" and waiting for further word from Franklin. Sorry you dislike his scheme so much. Haven't you one to propose?

In spite of all this rowing I think of you right along and never feel as though you are very far away or ever would be. Perhaps you don't agree with me, but I can't help that, it's the way I feel. Yesterday being May Day—or rather Decoration Day—I joined a Rosenthal May party which went in autos to Sands Point (Long Island). It turned out grey and sprinkly and we all came back stopping at some road house—The Oceanside—for something to eat. I was back by eight and over at Griels. Since the thing didn't begin until 1:30 I worked there until 1.

Do you love me anymore? I am almost afraid to ask. But you must know how I really feel toward you.

L.B.

Griel asked after you. She has that Italian shawl waiting. I'll get it for you today or tomorrow.

I started a letter to you on the 29th recalling 3 years ago but got in such a state over it that I decided not to write at all.

[1] Charles E. Le Barbier (1859–1928), a former assistant district attorney in New York City, was one of the attorneys who helped try the Gonzalez v. Williams case before the Supreme Court in 1904 that led to Puerto Ricans attaining U.S. Citizenship in 1917.

[2] The liner *SS Ancona*, transporting emigrants between Italy and New York, was torpedoed by Germany off the coast of Tunisia on 8 November 1915. Greil described her survival in "Dr. Greil's Own Story of the Sinking of the Ancona," *New York Times*, 9 Jan. 1916, sec. 4: 1–3. The only American survivor of the sinking, Greil sued the Austrian government for $120,000, according to the *Brooklyn Times-Union*, 15 Feb. 1916: 1. Greil lectured frequently on her experiences for the two years following the sinking.

[3] George Sylvester Viereck.

329. Markham to Dreiser

CHICAGO:

MAY 31st. [1916]

Dearest—

Your wire, and the letter that arrived this morning, bore a welcome spirit. I imagine the wire forebodes a letter I will not like so much tomorrow, but I shall not look into the future. I am unutterably weary tonight. I have sat through more boresome speeches at the Whitman dinner than I ever would have thought I should martyrize myself to in a lifetime. Dr. F's talk was lovely. Clarence Darrow's next, Llewellyn Jones's fair, and then banality upon banality.[1] One old duffer got up and said he couldn't understand Whitman but that he thought if he spoke he might receive some of Whitman's divine spark, and then he launched forth into the single tax.[2] There were no less than fifteen speeches, and when we left they promised to flow freely for another hour.

All day I have rushed around, buying silks for mother, lunching Margery C-, visiting an afternoon away with Shirley, all the time toting with me a small girl of seventeen, a calculating little blue-eyed thing who is on parole to Dorothy.[3] I certainly think Dor has taken a good deal on her hands in assuming responsibility for this girl. I haven't a doubt that she will do anything it pleases her to do in order to get anything she wants. I rather admire her nerve. (It certainly took nerve to order the luncheon she did today when she was along with me only because she could not be left alone.) But what can you do with her? When I tell Dorothy how frankly calculating she is Dorothy naively asks do I think she'll go straight. Within the past two weeks she decided she could not get enough salary to live on—I don't blame her; it was seven or eight per—and took money from the office of the Hebrew Charities where she worked. Then she did not dare go back and went off with some man. They of course caught her. She is so superior to the normal crowd of delinquent girls it is a crime they let her associate with them for a moment. It is a rather good way to send her to the damnation bow-wows.

I hope you are having a happy time. I am no longer going to be made a mark of by your friends, so I hope you know whether you want me back or not. There was a time when I did not care about your having your other friends. I cared, but I had no idea of letting it interfere with my life. But you have had so much to say about being made a mark of when you have not endured one-tenth as much as I have endured that you have finally awakened me to a realization of what a mark I have been all this time. I do hope things will adjust themselves without our having to separate. I do love you, Bubs, with all my might. You should not have pointed out so definitely, Bubs, how much freer you required to be than you would let me be. Then this pride that you have awakened in me would still be dormant. You know you could get all the freedom for yourself and singleness of affection from the woman that you could want if she had no pride. But, oh sweet, I do want you to be happy—and yet at the same time I want happiness too. And if we cannot both find all the happiness we need in trying—I do not say making, but trying—to make the other happy, the union is not worth a damn, and the sooner we are free the better. But here I am getting intense. I trust everything will come out O.K. I expect to reach New York some time Monday afternoon.

Love, . . .

[1] A long-standing occasion, in Chicago and elsewhere, was to celebrate Walt Whitman's birth on 31 May 1819 with a dinner and various speeches. The celebration Markham refers to probably took place at Chicago's Fine Arts Building. "Dr. F": Dr. George Burman Foster. Llewellyn Jones (1884–1961) was the literary editor of the *Chicago Evening Post* from 1914 to 1932.

[2] The single tax was an economic theory promoted by Henry George (1839–1897) which proposed that to address income inequality, all land should be public and "renters" should be taxed according to the average value of surrounding land and exclude improvements, with the "renters" retaining the profits derived from the improvements.

[3] Margery Currey; "Shirley" is not identified but is probably the same person mentioned in Dreiser to Markham, 24 January 1914, letter 109; Dorothy Hyman.

At some point after her return to New York on 5 June, Markham moved in with her friend Augustin Duncan and his wife, Margherita. "That summer I had no idea of anything," she wrote to Swanberg, "nearly finished by Theo having found out where I was living and coming to the Duncans continually to beg me to come home. I was nearly destroyed, loving him as I did, and weeping until I was blistered down to my cheekbones" (29 Feb. 1964; Swanberg Papers). At the urging of Margherita, to distance herself from Dreiser's persistence, Markham then left for Provincetown to work with the Provincetown Players during its first season, when the company worked out its play selection and production methods, by the end of the summer deciding to establish the Provincetown Players as an official organization. She probably worked as a play reader or on costuming or scene decorating, which was infrequently credited. Newspaper reports noted that she was in Provincetown while awaiting rehearsals for a new play for Otis Skinner. She was scheduled to have a major part in an adaptation of Booth Tarkington's Mister Antonio, *due for production in September.*

The end of her affair with Dreiser was clearly traumatic—she had regarded their liaison as a marriage, though unsanctioned by church or law, and given her experience with her parents' unhappy marriage she neither needed nor wanted such sanction. Indeed, letters to Dreiser from their friends refer to Markham as "Mrs. Dreiser" or "your wife," and when the end came, she was unmoored. As she explained in a letter to Louis Sheaffer, "A great deal of me died then but it was not because of him, but because of those best parts of me that had died in having to give up a dream" (23 July 1962; Kennedy and Pettit, 129). Probably soon afterwards, as a way of dealing with her grief, she composed a cycle of ten poems, addressed to Dreiser, and now residing among his papers. These poems, which she typed and sewed into a fascicle, are remarkable in their honesty and painful emotion. One wonders at Dreiser's response upon receiving them, for the poem cycle (see Appendix 2) makes clear his culpability in squandering the love of a woman

who loved him passionately and devotedly while also conveying her sense of betrayal. Poem II begins,

Once upon a time a woman loved her husband.
He loved her in return, but he found other women's faces lovely. . . .
It almost choked her,
And she left him.

330. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th St

July 22nd 1916

Honey Cry:

How is Provincetown? Is it nice and cool by the sea? Sympathize with me here in the heat. Today is sicky warm.

After you left I felt very sorry. I always do. It's such a shame to part so and when I really think so much of you. I regret all our quarrels more than you ever guess I fear.

Thursday night I went around to Mames and played with a cute little four year old boy who lives there now. He's such a sweet little fellow—beat on the window and smiled the first time he saw me. Yesterday A.M. (Friday) Marion Bloom called up & said her sister[1] was in town and wanted to know if we would go with them to the night court! Her sister wanted to see it. I said you were in Provincetown but to come on at 8:30 or nine and I would go. So they came. Her sister is a very different type—much more practical and usual I think. She's fifth asst. Sec'y to somebody in Washington. Then as we were here Franklin Booth came in wanting to get that little picture that he made of our door here as the car was leaving for Indiana. I can't find it. Then we went to the French Pastry place—the four of us & had ice tea and ice cream and then to the night court—or rather we three did for Booth went on home. We weren't there more than forty minutes before Miss Washington Bloom, (I don't know what her first name is) laughed so heartily at the broad character of the testimony generally that we had to get

out. The officer came down and insisted that we go if we couldn't keep still and as we were ready to leave anyhow we went. Then I rode up as far as their house in 54th in the bus and came on back. At 5th & 10th where we took the bus I met Mrs. Brown[2] and your friend Mac—and two other whom I did not know, bustling down 5th Ave. They both bowed and sized up my companions wondering no doubt where you were. I don't suppose they know your gone. "The guilty flee whom no man pursueth."[3]

It's so warm here & I have a hard day ahead of me but I believe this work is most essential to me at this time.

Will you write me from Provincetown. I think such nice things of you all the time.

L.

Give my regards to Nordi and Margaret.[4]

[1] This letter records Dreiser's first meeting with Estelle Bloom Kubitz (1886–1954), who became Dreiser's lover in August. In addition to transcribing Markham's letters to Dreiser, she transcribed his Greenwich Village diaries for 1917–18, which record his interactions with her and many others. See Riggio, *Diaries*, 147–256.

[2] Lillian Fox Brown (1884–1973), who was married to Bob Brown, Dreiser's friend from his *Delineator* days. See Dreiser to Markham, 7 March 1915, n. 6, letter 239.

[3] "The wicked flee when no man pursueth: but the righteous are bold as a lion," *Proverbs* 28:1 (King James version).

[4] "Nordi" is Bror Nordfeldt, and "Margaret" is his wife.

331. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th St

July 27—1916

Cryhon:

Under separate wrapping I am sending the three kitchen and three bath towels and your hat. Your letter is so remote in its mood that I will not bother to answer it now. Will write later. Happy days.

Th.D

The "Genius" has been ordered withdrawn from publication by the censer. This ends any hope of revenue from that source. Charges "blasphemy & immorality."[1]

[1] Suppression of *The "Genius"* began in Cincinnati when a Baptist minister, John Herger, conveyed a congregant's concern that the book was full of "obscenity and blasphemy" to the secretary of the Western Society for the Suppression of Vice, one F. L. Rowe, who in turn alerted John Sumner, head of the New York branch. Sumner went to the offices of the John Lane Company and demanded that the firm either remove the offensive passages or withdraw the book. J. Jefferson Jones chose to withdraw the book, and that ended royalties for Dreiser. See Lingeman, *American Journey*, 130–31. Dreiser also wrote to Mencken on this day with a bit more amplification; see Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 244–45.

332. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10th St

Sept. 23—1916

Lyhon Dear:

How is Los Angeles and your Little Theatre.[1] Your first letter which arrived here a week ago didn't seem to contain much of an invitation to write, but I'd like to know how your getting on. As you fancied I expected some word when I got back and when I didn't I thought you had forsaken me entirely. It's all right now though and I'm glad you wrote me and that you had such a nice visit with your father.

Things are soon coming to a head in the matter of The "Genius" as well as some other things. The Authors League Protest has secured nearly 200 signatures already and when the rest are in Jones intends to publish it in the newspapers.[2] Then he is going into court and if he wins expects to print a large edition. If he loses, since the Gov. has refused to prosecute he proposes to supply it by mail, advertising it that way. The Hoosier Holiday will be out in two weeks. I'll send you a copy. May I?

You remember the 18 month agreement I had with Mrs. D.[3] It's up—was Aug 1—and I have a formal demand here for more money. I'm going to fight though & as soon as this "Genius" fight is over go to Reno for 7 months. She'll go into court on this but since I haven't anything & can prove it she can't get much. The comic part of it is is that she is well off whereas I have a bare living.

There's no other news to speak of. I recieved the enclosed folder which may interest you. It's blowing up cold here these days & soon I'll have to start the grate & if I go west I'll offer the studio to the Nordis.

Hope you have all the luck in the world. I think of you all the time and wonder what you are doing. Make a great strike and send me your notices. Since you are not here now I will surely go to Reno—or south. Write me.

L

Am sending Jean Christophe[4] to Dorothy.

[1] Markham had moved to Los Angeles to become part of the Los Angeles Little Theatre, founded by Aline Barnsdall, who had relocated the Player's Producing Company to LA. Barnsdall had planned to open with *Conscience*, her success in Chicago, but instead opened with *Nju, An Everyday Tragedy*, by the Russian Ossip Dymow, on 31 October 1916, with Markham playing the role of Marie, the nursemaid.

[2] As part of his effort to enlist Dreiser and the suppression of *The "Genius"* as a means to fight against censorship, Mencken called upon Harold Hersey, who was now assistant to the Eric Schuler, the executive secretary of the Author's League of America, suggesting that the League draft a protest. Through Mencken's efforts, the protest eventual accumulated 458 signatures of most of the leading writers in America and abroad (Lingeman, *American Journey*, 137). Despite the protest, the publisher conceded to the demands of the censor and withdrew the novel.

[3] See Dreiser to Markham, 17 Feb. 1915, n. 4, letter 213.

[4] *Jean-Christophe* (1904–1912), by Romain Rolland, is a novel in 10 volumes, translated into English by Gilbert Cannan, which Dreiser sent to Markham's sister, Dorothy Hyman.

333. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10

Friday, Sept. 29—[19]16

Honey Cryhon:

Nearly all the Anne Estelle Rice pictures in the basement have been rotted by damp & water![1] And I cannot find the portrait of myself by Nordfeldt. Have you any idea where that is—or where we put it last? Horace Halley was down here the other day wanting me to help get up an exhibit for her & that was what caused me to look into their condition. I am very much disturbed because I am afraid she will be greatly put out. In addition I cannot find any of your drawings! Did you take them?

It is very warm here—suffocating today though two days ago it was cold. I found a fire basket for a dollar with which I may fix up the front grate if I stay here. My feeling is (because of Mrs. D)—that I shall have to get out of the state. There is no news concerning The "Genius" save that so far 175 signatures to the protest have been secured & I suppose it will go to over 200. Winston Churchill, Irvin Cobb, Clarence Darrow & many others have signed. I understand David Belasco will sign today.[2]

By the way Gertie secured a place with David Warfield in his revival of "The Music Master."[3] She is to get a picture of herself and Warfield side by side & she is understudying the principal girl role.

Edith Jarmuth just called up & inquired after you. She wanted to get in on The Genius fight & asked for some protests to get signatures with. I am sending her some.

How are you? I hope your work is coming on to suit you. With me is not much satisfactory work now owing to all this row but I'm hoping to settle down soon. No word from the Government so all is well in that direction. As always.

L

[1] Rice had arranged to store her paintings with Dreiser when she returned to England. See Dreiser to Markham, 28 Feb. 1915, n. 1, letter 229; 25 September 1915, n. 3, letter 257.

[2] Winston Churchill (1871–1947), American author of *Richard Carvel* (1899), *The Crisis* (1901), *The Crossing* (1904), and other best sellers, not the British statesman of the same name. To avoid confusion with the established American author, the British Churchill included his middle initial "S" in his publications. Irvin S. Cobb (1876–1944), journalist, humorist, and short-story writer. In addition to his law practice, Clarence Darrow published the novels *Farmington* (1904), *An Eye for an Eye* (1905), and other non-fiction books. David Belasco (1853–1931) was an eminent theatrical producer, playwright, and director, famous for his realism on the stage.

[3] Gertrude Hopkins Nelson, the daughter of Dreiser's sister Emma, was an understudy for the character Helene Stanton in *The Music Master*, by Charles Klein, which opened at the Knickerbocker Theatre on 16 October 1916. David Warfield (1866–1951) played the lead role in *The Music Master* when it opened in 1904, for more than 1,000 appearances.

334. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

165 W. 10

Oct 25—1916

Honey Cry!

Goodness, goodness, such ructions over a career—and you so talented. If I had one half your ability along twenty lines I wouldn't worry over anything. I always think of you as supremely gifted in so many ways—but cursed with such a fineness in all of them that you will have to have special conditions created for you in order to show you off at your best. It may be that I'll have to create them for you—that I'll be fortunate enough so to do. In any tragedy that I do—if there is a part for you that you really want and that will do you any good you shall have it.

I'm terribly sorry to hear of your troubles there but why cry so much. Your young & your sure to get along. Various things are coming your way sure. I think there'll be a return to tragedy and Greek—or poetic things pretty soon in various fields. So your opourtunity is certain to come. Just now things are in a

preliminary or fumbling seeking state. Better come East if things don't turn out right & try your hand here again. For heaven's sake don't cry or give way to nerves. Your too gifted for that. Think how really talented you are and how truly attractive in your field. It's pathetic to think of you crying—but not justified in you and you know it—really.

My tragedy goes on apace.[1] Just finished act II and had it typewritten and now am on act III. It's all worked out in my mind before hand so I can't fail in this, anymore than I could on a novel. Have a plan for a second tragedy and expect to do my farce comedy too, soon.[2] Then comes the struggle of getting it produced.

Jones and I are about ready to break. He refuses to stand by me on The "Genius"—even to the extent of selling a few copies so Sumner will have a case against him. John B. Stanchfield[3] one of the most powerful & costly lawyers in the city has come to my rescue and offered to take the case for nothing—freeing Jones of any expense. I am getting endless publicity here & in England & mostly in my favor. I can win the Suit I think but my publisher at least ought to stick by me long enough to make people think he approves of me—and he won't. But I'll win anyhow, I believe.

Masters was here recently & looked me up—as loving as a cat. Wilkinson is back & is calling on me this evening. I saw Jack Powys a few weeks ago—he and his new girl—a queer half fed looking Flemish girl. Mencken was here Sunday night and Wright & Claire the Friday before—He bores me stiff. Mordell called once!! Also Waldo Frank.[4] There is in town now Mr & Mrs Gerard Grant Allen. He is the cousin of Grant Richards who played Santa Claus at Richards house in England. He's over here raising money for some war fund & incidentally trying to connect with the theatrical business as a producer. He and his wife are coming down here Friday evening for a few hours. I met her once on Fifth Ave. Shes a dreadful type realty—a cockney English Musical Hall actress I think, but he's always amusing & interesting.[5]

What else? Nothing much. My fight goes unevenly on. The publicity end of it has been enormous but since the book can't be sold

it's of no value to me—yet—and may never be. Next week I'll send you a copy of "A Hoosier Holiday". When the play comes out, if your not back here—I'll send you that. Will send you a typewritten copy as soon as I get it done for judgement. It's been a wonderful fall here cool & clear & yet not cold. Ed has made quite a hit in "Under Sentence".[6] His picture is all over the front of the theatre. Gertie is still with Warfield. Emma is moving to 120 W. 96th. Mame is finally getting settled at 135 W. 13th & expects to do well. She's going to call her restaurant "Mrs. Brennans Cozy Corner"!![7] Jack Powys is in Chicago. Marian has opened a lace store or studio at 60 Washington Sq.[8] She phones today wanting me to come over to see it & asked after you.

Outside of tears & disappointments how are you? What a tempestuous Kid you are. I was looking over your drawings the other day & thinking what a really splendid human being you are—and here you are having your eye lids lanced because of tears. Kind heaven! I'd like to lay you over my knees and give you something to cry for—something really worth while.

Aren't you going to behave? So much love to you.

L—

I'm sending the stencil designs & a copy of The Born Thief. Cut it yourself & say I did it, if you wish to. Why worry over a silly like Miss Barndell.[9]

[1] *The Hand of the Potter*, printed in 1918 but because of a potential production withheld and released on 20 September 1919, is a four-act tragedy about a deviant sex crime that affects an immigrant Jewish family in New York. For a more detailed discussion of the play, see Newlin, Rusch, and Davies, *Plays*, xxiii-xxxv.

[2] Nothing came of these plans.

[3] John B. Stanchfield (1855–1921) was a prominent New York attorney who was also the gubernatorial candidate in 1900, a senatorial candidate in in 1903 (losing both times), and thereafter active in state politics. He was also part of the successful defense team, with Dreiser's friend Clifford Hartridge, for Harry Thaw's insanity defense.

[4] Waldo Frank 1889–1967), journalist, radical activist, cultural historian, novelist, and associate editor of the short-lived *Seven Arts*.

[5] Dreiser means Jerrard Grant Allen (1878–1945), who married the actress and singer Violet Englefield (1881–1946) in 1913. For the Christmas celebrations with Jerrard that Dreiser describes here, see *A Traveler at Forty*, edited by Renate von Bardeleben (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 235–50.

[6] Dreiser's brother Edward had a role in *Under Sentence*, by Roi Cooper Megrue and Irvin S. Cobb, that opened on 3 October at the Harris theater and featured a young Edward G. Robinson in his second Broadway role.

[7] Dreiser's sister Mame's restaurant eventually became known as the Green Witch.

[8] Marian Powys had just opened the Devonshire Lace Shop.

[9] Aline Barnsdall.

335. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Nov. 21—1916

Cryhon Dear:

Do you really imagine for one second that I would wish other than happiness for you? So often I said to myself that I was in your way artistically—that I was modifying a courage which was all needed for a great art. You are an artist—a singing flame. Whatever you do—and I wish you all the joy in the world—please don't sink back into married mediocrity. If you do I shall have nothing to say but I shall certainly think many things. Actually I firmly believe that neither marriage nor any other thing can interfere with your ultimate dominance—I am not talking about mere success now. It might hinder you for awhile. On the other hand if Mr. Wright understands—it may help a great deal.[1]

"The Hand of the Potter" is quite done and I believe, good. I have thought of a play for you—a tragedy of course. The name that come to me at the moment is The Reformer.[2] But let that rest for the present. Yesterday I chanced to go to 59th Street seeking a book. It was evening and all that languor & life was about 59th St & Madison Avenue. . . . Let us not forget that, entirely.

If ever you are near me come and see me. Heaven only knows where my step will carry me but if you are near lets be friends.

Affectionately

L

I recieved the clippings. They cheered me a lot. I sent you "A Hoosier Holiday" inscribed—perhaps not just write under the circumstances. Be happy and follow your art—

[1] Elaine Hyman married landscape architect Frank Lloyd Wright, Jr. (1890–1978), known as Lloyd, on 18 November 1916. She had known the son of the famous architect during their Chicago childhood, and Lloyd Wright was also designing sets for Paramount. Through his design work, he met the designers for Barnsdall's theater and rekindled his friendship with Markham.

[2] No play by this name has survived.

336. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Dec 14—1916

Honey Kid:

Your letter causes me to wonder whether you are seriously unhappy and whether you feel that you have made a mistake. In so far as I am concerned you couldn't make any real mistakes—any which your art and temperament couldn't and wouldn't excuse and make of no real moment—any more than could a humming bird—or a bird of paradise. Like Jennie[1] you are seeking affection and you are entitled to find it—only I often wonder whether I was the one to attempt to provide it for you. I always felt that I could not always give you all you deserved in that way and that in a fashion I seemed to interfere with the natural free swing of your temperament and your development (I sometimes sit and wonder whether we are really separated at all—or ever will be.) You were inclined to subordinate yourself to me and my minor & negligible whims—and what a brute I was really.

I don't know whether I may talk to you freely or not—now that you are married but you must know that you are always the same to me—just Lyhon Cryhon—and that unless your new ties make a difference you will remain so. You will always be Lyhon Cryhon here—wonderful and desired wherever you are. I want you to be famous & happy—famous if you can be so—being happy—otherwise not, unless you want it anyhow.

Life with me here is just the same as it's been. I've just finished The Hand of the Potter and like it in a way—though I'm by no means sure it's as good as it should be. Am trying to begin on another—"The Reformer" but without success, so far. The Bulwark waits, but I'll do it soon. Saw Dixie Hines one day recently & he advised me to keep my plays out of Little Theatre.

Laughing Gas was tried out successfully I hear in Indianapolis Dec 2nd.[2] The trial of the Genius comes up either next week or, if postponed after Jan. 1.[3] I paid Adolph Wolff for that statue yesterday.

If you ever come back here and want to see me—or feel that you want to come back to me out of some storm wire me—or come on. I'll do the best I can. I would want to comfort you & make you happy as best I could, only I would want you to be tolerant of me too. I wonder—sometimes—whether with your temperament you should have married or should want to (it can become very inconvenient at times as I can testify) but you must judge of this—and of me & my opinions.

But enough of this. Always think of me, if you can, as you used to that is, as very close to you spiritually & every other way. I think of you a hundred times a day it seems and always as I did—as Lyhon Cryhon, the wild, gay, weeping, dreaming girl.

Luck—and Ill always be
Bubs-my-Lubs to you
and
L—

[1] Jennie, the main character in Dreiser's novel *Jennie Gerhardt* (1911).

[2] Dreiser's symbolic and expressionistic play *Laughing Gas* was first produced by Carl Bernhardt for the Little Theatre Society of Indiana.

Opening on 7 December 1916, it received mixed reviews, some very good. For discussion of this performance, see Newlin, Rusch, and Davies, *Plays*, 262–66; and Keith Newlin, "Expressionism Takes the Stage: Dreiser's 'Laughing Gas,'" *Journal of American Drama and Theatre*, vol. 4.1 (1992): 5–22.

[3] For years Dreiser would attempt to attain a legal ruling to force the publisher John Lane to distribute the novel after Lane withdrew it under pressure from the New York Society for the Suppression of Vice. There never was a ruling on the case, and in 1918 the case was dismissed by the courts.

Aftermath
1917–1944

"You will always be Lyhon Cryhon to me"
—Dreiser to Markham, letter 345

1917–1922

At first, all seemed well with Markham's acting career in Los Angeles during the fall of 1916. She found her roles in Aline Barnsdall's theater rewarding: as the Nurse in Osip Dymov's moody *Nju* in October and as the Sister in Zoe Atkins's farce *Papa* in November. In December she reprised her role as the streetwalker in Oren Taft's *Conscience*, as Dectora in Yeats's poetical drama *The Shadowy Waters*, and as the lead in D. H. Lawrence's realistic study of a failed marriage, *The Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd*. The Los Angeles Little Theater concluded its season in January 1917, with Markham playing the role of the Mother in a new version of *Everyman*, by California poet George Sterling. Thereafter the theater disbanded, with a number of the theater personnel,

How to cite this book chapter:
Newlin, K. (ed.) (2026). *The Dreiser–Markham Letters: The Correspondence of Theodore Dreiser and Kyra Markham, 1913–1944*. Pp. 607–666. Winchester: Winchester University Press. DOI: https://doi.org/10.21039/book5.e.
License: CC BY-NC-ND

including Markham, heading to New York for better opportunities. Despite positive reviews of the performances, Barnsdall was unable to focus on efficient management of the theater, apparently distracted by her pregnancy, the result of an affair with director Richard Ordynski. As Markham complained to her father-in-law, Frank Lloyd Wright,

> [Aline Barnsdall] really has no actual conception of what she wants to do with a theatre at all. She has vague illuminated moments, but the flashes that come in are eternally slipping away on close contact with people she puts in power to execute them. . . . And she wants so much to go on. Yet I scarcely believe I could endure the strain of a second season with her.[1]

But Markham's marriage to Lloyd Wright was failing. They had married quickly, without spending much time getting to know one another, the motive on Markham's part no doubt an effort to supplant Dreiser's still dominant influence. As Lloyd confessed to his father, "I am doing the rash thing of course, and dead broke at this moment and living on nerve. But that seems to be the scheme as it works out." And in a letter the following month, he described his impression of his new wife:

> Kirah is restless, ambitious and forceful, a good thing for us both. She is, however, prone to, or rather impressed by, the fact that the successful stage career of today (the majority of them) are made by the "Successes" selling their bodies and their souls to the "Successors." Perhaps she will get over it. I hope so.[2]

Much later, Markham described her marriage in a letter to H. L. Mencken: "I do not know if you are aware that after I left Dreiser I married the eldest son of Frank Lloyd Wright, who had been a childhood sweetheart. Our life together was almost as tumultuous as my life with Theo had been, with the one exception that Theo had been able to meet any emergency." And she later amplified that explanation to Dreiser biographer William Swanberg: "The

dirtiest trick I have ever played on anyone was marrying Lloyd Wright with the idea that my emotions had died forever with leaving Theo and that I could plan a life with a childhood sweetheart entirely mentally. At least it was not a wilful deception. Even that marriage might have succeeded if it had not been for his wonderful and terrible father."[3]

By April 1917, Markham was having second thoughts about remaining in her marriage and wrote to Dreiser, from California, complaining about the difficulties. "Im so sorry about your married troubles since it seems so ideal," he replied on 19 April, "but if you can't stand it you can't and your wise to cut it all. You're a free soul and deserve to be free" (letter 337). Dreiser was then involved with Estelle Bloom Kubitz and was juggling a dizzying array of paramours, putting into practice what he had once called being "a free agent" in a letter to Markham (25 May 1916, letter 323). By August Markham had returned to New York, outlined her troubles with Lloyd, and may have hoped to conceal her meetings with Dreiser from her husband. According to an entry in Dreiser's diary, "Kirah wants to meet me occasionally when she is with her husband and pretend not to have seen her before."[4] By October, Markham was vacillating between rejoining Lloyd, who had returned to Chicago, and remaining in New York. "What's the good of a freedom I don't want and can't use?" she asked Dreiser.[5] Dreiser's diary records nearly daily entries that document Markham's wavering commitment to her husband; she ultimately decided to separate, asked Dreiser for a job doing typewriting and, by 2 December, had moved in with her friends Ben and Molly Allen.[6] Four days later Lloyd had rejoined Markham in New York in an effort to retrieve their marriage and found work as a drafting engineer for the Standard Aircraft Company. Both later met with Dreiser in the company of Estelle (Dreiser's note: "He looks very interesting. . . . Bert [Estelle] accuses me of being embarrassed, which I was not").[7] A poem Markham wrote at the time captures her vacillating feelings:

Moods
Stars on a rainy night
Like candles newly lit—
Rain in the river bed
That the summer drought left dry—
Dreamings nor sad nor bright
Through my longing fancy flit
Of an old love that is dead,
And a new love that may die.[8]

Finally, on 22 February 1918, Markham left Lloyd for good and moved in with her *Lure* actor friend Lola May.[9]

While she was ending her marriage, Markham designed a Greenwich Village Ball for the Liberal Club and in February 1918 had the lead role in *The Silent Assertion*, by Butler Davenport, an aspiring playwright who opened his own theater (the Bramhall Playhouse) largely as a venue for his own plays. By January 1919 she had resumed work with the Provincetown Players, now in their third season at the Provincetown Playhouse on MacDougal Street. In addition to uncredited costume and design work, she had a role in *From Portland to Dover*, by Otto Liveright—and on the same bill was *The String of the Samisen*, by Rita Wellman, with the set designed by Lloyd Wright, in his only credited design for the Provincetown Players. This must have been an uncomfortable time for Markham, for one month before, in December 1918, the Players had staged Eugene O'Neill's *The Moon of the Caribbees*, which included Howard Scott in the role of Big Frank. Soon, Markham would be living with Scott.[10]

Not much is known about Scott's early life, for he took pains to obscure it. He was born in Virginia in 1890, one year before Markham's own birth. By all accounts he was a relentless self-promoter, given to fabricating tall tales about his exploits. He was billed as "the Bohemian engineer" and claimed university education in Berlin, engineering work in Europe and in America, and a professorship at Columbia University. None of this was true. A rigorous investigation by Allen Raymond for the *New York Herald Tribune* reveals that Scott fabricated his entire back story;

his engineering work consisted of overseeing a cement-pouring detail at Muscle Shoals "and that he had been accused by his associates there of both inefficiency and malicious mischief, or, in other words, of sabotage in war time."[11] At the time of his meeting Markham in Greenwich Village, Scott was a partner in the Duron Chemical Products Company, in Pompton Lakes, New Jersey, manufacturers of floor polish. His "job was to deliver the goods," according to Raymond. His real gift was for public speaking as well as self-promotion.

A regular habitué of the Liberal Club and Greenwich Village restaurants, he must have impressed Markham with his mere physical presence: tall, at six feet, five inches and 200 pounds, with rangy, rawboned good looks; and he affected a leather coat, a broad-brimmed hat, soft shirts, and a red neckerchief at a time when most men were considerably more buttoned-up.[12] At the time Scott was in the formative stages of working out the ideas of what would become Technocracy, a system of government that believed that engineers, with scientific and technical expertise, were better suited for designing and managing society. Markham and Scott lived together for six years, and in the midst of their arrangement a Los Angeles court proceeding granted the mismatched Wright couple a divorce on 2 February 1922. "I have only the friendliest feeling for you and am infinitely sorry for any pain I may have caused you," Markham wrote to her then-husband, under the name Elaine Wright. "We will be friends. This sounds sort of sick and squashy, but I think you will understand. I am writing to ask you if you will divorce me."[13]

While Markham continued her acting career in New York, Dreiser met a distant cousin, 25-year-old Helen Richardson, on 13 September 1919, and less than a month later, on 8 October, left with her on a leisurely trip to Los Angeles, where Helen hoped to pursue a film career. He would remain in Los Angeles until October 1922, where he supervised, at long distance, the production of *The Hand of the Potter* by the Provincetown Players in December 1921, completed volume 2 of his autobiography, *A Book About Myself*, and began work on *An American Tragedy*.

His correspondence with Markham was understandably guarded and distant at first, as each recovered from the pain of their failed romance. "Don't you think your foolish really, to suggest that I don't want to hear from you," he began a letter on 19 April 1917, and then proceeded to enumerate the many mementoes he kept to remind himself of her (letter 337). Markham's letters from 1917 to 1922 do not survive, but Dreiser's responses and his diary entries suggest they gradually established a distant though wary friendship. In July 1922, after enough time had passed to soften the pain, Markham wrote to learn what had become of her former lover. She was concerned that trying to work in California, with its temperate climate and what was already perceived as film work sell-out, would lead to "senility and softening of the brain. . . . I want to know when you are going to get out of it, or better still, if you have been able to work in it, what has been accomplished?" (6 July 1922, letter 344).

With that letter prompting an immediate response, wherein Dreiser enumerated his accomplishments, thereafter their correspondence would become relatively more frequent, respectful, and eventually friendly.

Notes

[1] Markham to Frank Lloyd Wright, 17 Feb. 1917; qtd. in Kathryn Smith, *Frank Lloyd Wright: Hollyhock House and Olive Hill* (New York: Rizzoli, 1992), 23. For Barnsdall's pregnancy and its consequences, see Norman M. and Dorothy K. Karasick, *The Oilman's Daughter: A Biography of Aline Barnsdall* (Encino, CA: Carleston Publishing, 1993), 55.

[2] Lloyd Wright to Frank Lloyd Wright, Oct. 1916, Dec. 1916 (qtd. in Kennedy and Pettit, 122). For Markham's expression of this perception to Dreiser, see Markham to Dreiser, 31 Jan. 1914, letter 127.

[3] Markham to Mencken, 17 July 1945 (Mencken Papers); Markham to Swanberg, 19 Jan. 1964 (Swanberg Papers). Still later Markham expanded that explanation to Swanberg: "[I] only learned later, from his mother and sister Frances, as well as from personal experience, that his father's scandals had completely poisoned his life. He, I suspect, married me to redeem a fallen woman and the fallen woman

neither considered herself too wicked nor was she in any way unwilling to try to make the marriage go. . . . Perhaps, if Father Wright had let us alone, we might have made a go of it but he was a Puritan of the first water himself, in spite of his notorious love affairs, and when his harsh treatment of Lloyd made me withdraw from him he filled Lloyd with such lies about me that Lloyd finally broke down and told me" (5 Nov. 1916; Swanberg Papers).

[4] 3 Aug. 1917. Six days later Dreiser records that he turned away to avoid meeting Kirah and Lloyd (9 Aug. 1917, Riggio, *American Diaries*, 171, 177).

[5] Diary entry for 16 Oct. 1917 (Riggio, *American Diaries*, 185).

[6] See diary entries for 19, 22, 24 Oct. and 2 Dec. 1917 (Riggio, *American Diaries*, 188, 191, 192, 227).

[7] See diary entries for 6, 26 Dec. 1917 (Riggio, *American Diaries*, 230, 239).

[8] Kirah Markham, "Moods," *Smart Set* 54.2 (Feb. 1918): 37.

[9] 22 Feb. 1918 (Riggio, *American Diaries*, 247).

[10] See Markham to Louis Sheaffer, 17 Aug. 1962 (Kennedy and Pettit, 132). Dreiser's diary for 14 Sept. 1919 reveals that he and Helen met with Markham and Scott in Hollywood (Riggio, *American Diaries*, 281).

[11] Allen Raymond, *What Is Technocracy?* (New York: Whittlesey House, 1933), 117.

[12] For Scott's physical appearance and his rambles in Greenwich Village, see Willam A. Akin, *Technology and the American Dream: The Technocrat Movement, 1900–1941* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977), 28–29.

[13] "Friendly Wife Loses Spouse," *Los Angeles Evening Post-Record*, 2 Feb. 1922: 4. While Markham refers to Scott as her "husband" in a letter to Mencken (7 July 1945; Mencken Papers) and as being "married to Howard Scott" in a letter to Helen Dreiser (27 Dec. 1952), in fact she is using the term "husband" loosely to refer to her non-sanctioned relationship, in much the same way she referred to Dreiser as her "lover-husband" (see, for example, Hyman to Dreiser, 20 May 1913, letter 83). In a letter to Swanberg, Markham describes her "complete contempt for the ritual" of marriage stemming from her parents' unhappy marriage: "when I found out that Theo's marriage to me was not even more sacred than that imposed by church and state I had done with it" (19 Jan. 1964; Swanberg Papers).

337. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

165 West 10 Street
New York City

April—19—1917

Honey Cryhon:

Don't you think your foolish really, to suggest that I don't want to hear from you. I'm always delighted when I get a letter from you and for weeks and weeks your pictures have been standing in a row on my mantle and four of your little drawings on the rear mantle and Nordis portrait of you in the rear room and your sketch of yourself in the red frame—and that youngish photo of you in the backroom—and four letter files full of your letters. What more do you want. You seem to run this place even at a distance. However you really know I want you to write me, only you want to hear me say it. Isn't that it?

Yes, I saw Nju and I thought that Miss Andrews, if that is her name, was very bad in the part—a flapper attempting to master a serious artistic role.[1] She imitated a Russian accent which half the time she forgot. For the best scene—that with the letters—she was entirely inadequate (or was in his picture?—the restaurant scene I mean.) Absolutely no emotional power. If she is a sample of Ordynskis[2] casting ability—with you at hand & ready to do the part I give up. He needs to recover his artistic sense—cut it loose from the domination of pink underwear. If he assigned you to the part of the nurse he is a fool.[3] That you should assay it is a testimony to your own generosity & highness. To me the whole play was miscast—the actors inadequate. The lover, to me—was a scream—the stage pictures not very satisfactory—entirely unsatisfactory—the restaurant scene in particular. However it proved an absolute failure here, when with fine actors it might have made a great stir. So much for so much.

As for my own play Arthur Hopkins[4] has accepted it and will produce it next fall. We are about to enter into a definite arrangement concerning it—the usual useless contract. He appears to be quite moved by it and has engaged Jack Barrymore to play the

boy. I have another play—The Bad Girl[5]—that I am trying to do but I am not getting along as fast as I might. If I ever get it done and it is accepted and I can control the casting of it and you like the part—but so many ifs are scarcely worth discussing are they. I hope someday to think of just [the thing][6] for you—to write a part around you. When I do it is yours wherever you are or whatever you think of me. I want to do it for you—and for myself.

Now as to other things. Only a few people have read The Hand of the Potter so far—Ed, Arthur Hopkins, Jack Barrymore, Hutchins Hapgood, Mencken, Frank Shay, Jones (of the Lane Co—who refused to publish it), Yewdale and my lawyer—Joseph S. Auerbach and Messers Stanchfield & Levy.[7] All but Mencken like it very much. Mencken froths at the mouth in opposition. Frank Shay weeps tears of enthusiasm. So there you are. I offered to send you a copy but you never mentioned it—so—

I have practically broken with the Lane Co and am seeking a new publisher. I never make any money through them and Jones came to look on me as a beggar or dependant—finally writing me a superior letter which I never answered. I have The Bulwark also a book of short stories and a book of poems which I will issue one of these hours. A new edition of Sister Carrie which is being called for is being brought out by Frank Shay.[8] I thought I'd let him see what he can do. Also, if he succeeds—I'll let him produce The Hand of the Potter—about the time the play goes on. It's so grim & terrible I don't expect to make a dollar—not one.

Wright & Claire Burke split up but are slowly getting together again. Claire Burke went off and lived with an actor. Wilkinson was in here yesterday & asked after you. Said his wife had just given birth to a girl and would write you soon. Jack Powys is on the coast. Floyd Dell & Marjorie Jones seem to be hobnobbing together once more. Met them this A.M. in the little French restaurant at 11th St. Mencken & Miss Bloom still hang together. She has an apartment in 19th Street near Eighth Ave with her sister.[9] I see all sorts of people you know from time to time but on the street only. I never go visiting or so rarely it's not worth mentioning. I've been writing articles & short stories and selling them to

the Cosmopolitan & Hearsts—hence my ability just at the present to tell Jones to go to:

Im so sorry about your married troubles since it seems so ideal—but if you can't stand it you can't and your wise to cut it all.[10] You're a free soul and deserve to be free. Please rise very high on your wings. Whatever I can do to help I will. And now don't say I don't ever write you or that I don't want to hear from you. When you come East I want to hear much.

Bubs—

Are you as slender as ever? Or are you getting stout (Horrors!)
Do you read many plays?
Hopkins says he thinks he will follow The Hand of the Potter with an evening of four or three of the 1 act plays.[11] I'll get all your books together when you come.
Jig Cooke & Ida Rau, running the Provincetown Players threw out the Nordfeldts upon whom they were sore. There is feeling over that of course.[12]

[1] After its production in Los Angeles, *Nju, An Everyday Tragedy* opened at the Bandbox Theatre in New York City on 22 March 1917. Ann Andrews (1890–1986), in her professional debut, played the lead, Nju, in both productions. See Dreiser to Markham, 23 Sept. 1916, n. 1, letter 332.

[2] The Polish stage and film director Richard Ordynski (1878–1953), who had worked with Max Reinhardt in Berlin but fled wartime conditions to direct plays for Aline Barnsdall's Los Angeles Little Theater before breaking with her and relocating to New York. The reviews of the play tended to agree with Dreiser's negative assessment, and the play closed after one month.

[3] Markham played the role of Marie, the nurse, in the Los Angeles production, but she did not perform in the New York staging.

[4] While Arthur Hopkins paid Dreiser $1000 for the rights to the play, Dreiser believed Mencken's negative opinion of the play influenced Hopkins's decision not to produce it. See also Dreiser to Markham, 23 Feb, 1915, n. 4, letter 220.

[5] Dreiser never completed a play with this title.

[6] Dreiser inscribed the word "think" but seems to have meant to write "the thing."

[7] Ed: his brother Edward Dresser, who as an actor offered his perception from a performing standpoint. Persons not previously identified are Merton S. Yewdale, at the time an editor with the John Lane Company; Joseph S. Auerbach (1855–1944), the attorney who argued Dreiser's case against the suppression of *The "Genius"*; John B. Stanchfield and Louis Levy were the heads of the firm that represented Dreiser in *The "Genius"* case. Given his experience with the novel, Dreiser sought advice from them and Joseph Auerbach on the legal ramifications of producing *The Hand of the Potter*, with its depiction of child rape and murder. On Levy's response, see Dreiser to Mencken, 21 Dec. 1916 (Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 285–288).

[8] Frank Shay printed the novel but was drafted into the Army before he was able to bind and distribute it. In 1917 Boni and Liveright published the novel, using the gatherings from Shay's printing.

[9] Dreiser refers to the sisters Marion Bloom, who was Mencken's lover, and Estelle Bloom Kubitz, who was his, although probably unknown by Markham. (In a letter to Swanberg, Markham wrote, "I never heard of Estelle Kubitz" [8 Feb. 1964; Swanberg Papers].) See Dreiser to Markham, 22 July 1916, n. 1, letter 330. For a more detailed account, see Dreiser's diary entries for 1917–18 (Riggio, *American Diaries*, 149–256).

[10] Markham's marriage was marked by discord. In a diary entry for 20 May 1917, Dreiser noted, "Kirah in California wanting to come back—and I not wanting her" (Riggio, *American Diarie*s, 151).

[11] Dreiser refers to his *Plays of the Natural and Supernatural* (1916).

[12] In its initial founding, members of the Provincetown Players made decisions concerning play selection, acting roles, and the like on egalitarian principles, but the arrangement soon led to friction between George Cram Cook, the company's president, and Bror Nordfeldt, its leading set designer. During the meeting of 21 March 1917, matters exploded, with the members voting to ask Nordfeldt to resign. Margaret Nordfeldt, who was a member of the executive committee and the secretary-treasurer, also resigned (Jeffery Kennedy, *Staging America: The Artistic Legacy of the Provincetown Players* [Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2023], 238.)

338. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

R.F.D. 10
Westminster, Maryland
c/o H. Baile Smith

July 3rd 1917

Dearest Cryhon:

It was fine to get your letter, which just now came here—along with one from Maurice Browne. I'm up here working in the woods and had not intended to return to N.Y. before Aug. 1, but I may get there earlier.[1] Of course I'll see you. Did you get my letter about my conversation with Browne—a month or so ago. He wanted you to come back to him. Said he could pay as much as the Washington Sq. Players & would feature you. If you haven't seen him, do.

What a picture you give of father-in-law.[2] I should like to meet him sometime? What you doing—writing any—you should. I think of you every day—wonder how you are and if you are doing all that you should. Write me here.

Lover as ever,
Bubs

[1] To escape New York distractions, Dreiser spent the month of June and most of July with Estelle Bloom Kubitz at a farm owned by her sister, Goldie (1881–1950), and her husband, Harry Baile Smith (1874–1947), where he worked on drafts of *The Bulwark* and *Newspaper Days*.

[2] Markham later corresponded with H. L. Mencken about a "poetic version of the Frank Lloyd Wright story" that she had prepared in which Wright represented "an artist who is afraid that his own children may trespass on his own ascendency" and that attitude led to "his own self-destruction and the destruction of his own children." In a second letter, written after she had dusted off the draft, she thought that "much of it is vicious" and was too focused on her bad relations with her then mother-in-law. She explained that the story was in poetic form because it "is too horrible to write in prose" but that it had "all the eerie quality of Wuthering Heights and [was] as unromantic and stark as Dreiser" (17 July, 5 Aug. 1945; Mencken Papers).

In his replies, Mencken was encouraging though he doubted the verse form was a good idea (21 July, 7 Aug. 1945; Mencken Papers). Nothing more apparently came of the idea.

339. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Aug 27—1917

Lyhon Dear

My feeling at present is that it would be best if we did not meet. I feel very sorry about Sunday but my condition is and has been such that I do not feel capable of advising or taking on the least additional strain. I am run down and worried and involved, for the present anyhow in conditions which make it inconvenient. If I can do anything indirectly though I will only be too glad—although it seems that I have been but little help to you in the past. Let me know where to send the mirror—and one of these days when I am in better shape I will be glad to see and talk with you if you still want to see me.

Bubs

340. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

Aug 30—1917

Cryhon:

I don't know how you can think I didn't appreciate the two handkerchiefs or that the thought that came with them didn't touch me deeply. I wish you hadn't written your second letter. Please don't be so cross.

You don't know anything about my circumstances at the moment or what I may have to contend with. I want to send the mirror right away but when are you there—what floor is it and care of whom? I'm looking for your books now.

Theo

Have you heard of the Poetry Theatre League—366–5th Ave? Alter Brody—same address—who is the leading spirit has been urging me to help in some way.[1] I have written him about you. It seems a wonderful idea to me and you are just the person.

[1] Alter Brody (1895–1979) was a Russian-born poet who immigrated to New York City in 1903 to escape pogroms against Jews. He published his first book of poems, *A Family Album and Other Poems* in 1918, with an introduction by Louis Untermeyer. At the time of this letter, Brody had just founded the short-lived Poetry Theatre League with the aim of providing a venue for the public recitation of poetry, aided with costumes, scenery, and music. Hedwig Reicher was the artistic director. Although newspapers announced a benefit performance for October 1917, nothing apparently came of the plan.

341. Dreiser to Markham

165 West 10 Street
New York City

March 4—1918

Cryhon:

I bet you think I purposely failed to wait or came behind the scenes—but I could only stay for three acts.[1] The thing began late and I had a ton of coal due here, as well as an engagement which compelled me to hurry & I haven't your address.

The play I didn't like at all—and the audience irritated me beyond words. Your work on the other hand was excellent—quite effective, considering the dreadful platitudes you had to utter. I like you so much better than the wife. Mr. Davenport should have been born 50 years ago in England. My what a story his work would have made here, then.

But in America, at this writing! Impossible. It is miles behind the day. How are you, honey? I do so wish someone would see you in an appropriate role.

Theo.

[1] According to his diary, on 27 February Dreiser saw *The Silent Assertion*, by (Benjamin) Butler Davenport (1871–1958) at the Bramhall

Playhouse, which Davenport opened in 1915 in a remodeled church at 138 East 27th Street, partly as a venue for staging his own plays. *The Silent Assertion* opened its initial run on 8 December 1917; by the time Dreiser saw the play in a revival that began in February, Markham had replaced the female lead.

342. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10

[after August 16, 1918]

Cryhon:

I think this is excellent—beautifully done.[1] Why wouldn't a magazine like Smart Set want this—or Vanity Fair? I like the opening so much.

T.

Am mailing you a copy of "Free & Other Stories."[2]

[1] Markham may have enclosed the manuscript of her poem "Love," which appeared in *Smart Set* 57.2 (Oct. 1918): 63:

LOVE
By Kirah Markham

Love, take my hand,
I cannot see the way.
Behind me where I stand
Lies yesterday.
Before me where I stray
Stretches an unknown land.
I cannot see the way,
Love, take my hand.

Love, be my eyes for me,
Mine are so blind.
I would go trustingly
With humankind.
I fain would seek to bind
Wounds that my heart can see.
But oh my eyes are blind.
Love, be my eyes for me!

[2] *Free and Other Stories* was published on 16 August 1918 by Boni and Liveright.

343. Dreiser to Markham

165 W. 10

Aug 29 [1918]

Dear Cryhon:

Mailed you today a rough copy of The Hand of the Potter. That is the paper jacket you see there. The cover is different. Owing to a proposed Stage Production it may not be published for some time, but I'd like your opinion.[1] If you see anything to help the stage version let me know. May want to borrow this copy back as I haven't another.

T.

[1] Dreiser had extensively revised the fourth act of the play after he had received page proofs from Boni and Liveright. The copy he sent to Markham was the second set of proofs, which he and the publisher were now delaying because the actor and producer Charles D. Coburn (1877–1961) asked Dreiser to hold up publication until after he had staged the play (see Coburn to Dreiser, 21 Aug., 29 Aug. 1918; 3 Feb. 1919, DPUP). But the play Coburn was currently producing and starring in, *The Better 'Ole*, became a smash hit, running for 353 performances over two seasons, and eventually Dreiser looked elsewhere. *The Hand of the Potter* was finally staged in December 1921 by the Provincetown Players.

344. Markham to Dreiser

[H]

61 Morton St.
N.Y. City

July 6th—'22

My Dear Theo—

I have heard from various sources that my name is anathema to you, but as no one knows better than I the bitterness of certain of your moods and the sweetness of others I intend to trust to luck that his letter will find you in the latter.

I am just concerned about your work and what you are going to do with yourself,[1] and have been trying not to obey this impulse for months, fearing you might consider it an intrusion. I have

fretted about "The Bulwark" until I decided that if I did inquire about it, admitting in any way the qualms I had for the progress or lack of progress you last reported some eighteen months ago the worst you could say to me would be "go to hell!" And I have received those instructions before and have very little scruple about reciprocating, hence I ask—how is it coming along?

The truth is, I would like to know how you expect to do anything in the way of real work or of any real value in that lowsy atmosphere out there? Don't for a moment think I mean the studios in particular. From what I know of them I should consider the Lasky studio crowd just about your speed, if not a little slow for you. What I mean is the actual atmosphere, climactic, barometric, etc. in which you have to work when there is any time given to working. Haven't you gotten on to it yet that everyone who stays in California any longer than he has to is signing his application for a prolonged cremation by sun rays instead of fire? I never met a writer or a painter or anything else while I was in California that had not gone soft as mush by virtue, or rather, curse, of that ever sunny climate, and I'd be ready to bet that your doing the same and don't even know it. Your eternal decisions to come east that I have heard from one person after another that you never live up to or down to, whichever way you see it, prove my case. People are saying you are done, finished, but I know that you are only finished at fifty if you choose to be. Only your decision as to whether you are or not would rest much more today on whether you are sufficiently appreciated or not than it did when you wrote "Sister Carrie." When you did that you did it with no expectation of appreciation but merely for the satisfaction of the work in itself. That is why it is simpler and more unself-conscious, if not so powerful as the later books. These latter years you are inclined to take the attitude that the poor old world is a little unworthy of you and therefore why should you struggle?

The trouble is, you see, that almost anyone will agree with you. No one would pretend, who really believed in a growing American literature, that you had ever had a square deal. But it ends there. If you have any illusions that society owed you a better living because you are a better artist than, say, Harold McGrath,[2] the only answer is that there is more money in stock-broking than Harold McGrath

makes. If you are going to be embittered because the work you enjoy doing more than any other does not pay you enough you can only decide what work is more remunerative that you would enjoy doing.

But this is all beside the point. The real reason for this letter is that I have a deep rooted conviction that senility and softening of the brain will come to any one over twelve years of age who stays in that decadent state and I want to know when you are going to get out of it, or better still, if you have been able to work in it, what has been accomplished?

Sincerely
Kirah

[1] In September 1919 Dreiser met Helen Richardson (1894–1955), a distant cousin, and one month later they moved to Los Angeles, where Helen soon found minor roles in movies. In 1944, they would marry. What may have prompted this renewal of contact is a meeting with Mencken. As Mencken reported in a letter to Dreiser, "I had dinner with Kirah in New York last week, along with Scott, a German and a Frenchman. She is still an excellent cook, and looks younger than ever. The day before she got news of the death of her mother'" (29 June [1922]; Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 478).

[2] Harold McGrath (1871–1932), best-selling novelist, screenwriter, and short story writer, who was the first significant writer to be commissioned to write original screenplays; a number of his novels and stories were also adapted to film.

345. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]
[TLS]

P.O. BOX 181
Los Angeles,
Cal.

July 13, 1922.

Dear Cryhon:

No one better than you knows that there are no such things as bitter moods in my mind in connection with you. And you know

that no one would dare speak of you to me except in terms of friendly understanding. You know that all too well. The dreadful moods you are thinking of would be more likely to follow any such attempt. Any one who tells you anything else lies.

As for California, what you say is true, but not so true for me as some. You know how I crave sunshine. And it does not seem to enervate me. I think I have felt better here than in most places,—certainly than I felt in New York. And when I left there in 1919 I was rather run down. Out here I picked up not a little. As for being through at fifty,—well, words won't help to counteract that save words in book form. Since coming here I have done several things. 1. Dramatized the "Genius" as you will see, presently, I hope. And a fine play it makes.[1] But it was hard work. Took me nearly five months. 2. Completed volume two of a History of Myself, which same volume,—entitled A Book About Myself, is even now being set up by Boni and Liveright and will be published this fall.[2] It has, for me at least, the quality of a novel and I believe you will like it. Wait and see. 3. Have completed, lying here, awaiting its day a second book of short stories which I hold to be my best in that line.[3] I judge by their effect on others,—not on myself. And I am not trying them on California moving picture people. 4. (This is between you and me. You must not give my title away.) A Gallery of Women. It contains some fifteen intimate studies of interesting women, grave and gay. Will you object if Lyhon Cryhon makes one of the most colorful of them all.[4] The Bulwark I never finished. It is half done. But I can do it now and have just contracted with Dodd-Mead to finish it.[5] Another book, Mirage, is much farther along.[6] That comes next unless I finish the Bulwark forthwith. 5. I have completed, a book of pictures of American Life. It contains some eighteen studies. One, on New York, I sold to Hearsts. Another, "Hollywood, Now," I sold to McCalls. I have a lot of letters about it. Fall River was sold to the Atlantic long ago and so on.[7]

No, Cryhon, I am not sour on life. Why should I be? In some ways I have not had a square deal. In other ways few men have had more. Or, so I feel. I am in good health. I work about five hours

a day. I read some and I enjoy all that this summerland can give one, nearly. At various times, for one reason and another, I have thought of returning to N.Y. Because of The Genius,—the play, I would like to return this fall. I want to try to stage it. And I may. (Do I hear you saying "Bluff"? Not at all.) Tell me about rents in your region and what chance one has of obtaining a floor or one very big room. I would like to see you again. Indeed I would. Jack[8] came along and told me just little bits about you,—all complimentary you may be sure. And Mencken wrote me that he had dinner with you and that you treated him royally. Will you cook me a nice dinner and promise not to lecture me, much, if I come back.

I liked your letter, Cryhon. I respect the spirit that prompted and informs it. You are a big, wise, sane girl, with a wonderful grip on the facts of life and you know that I know that that is so and that I respect you as much as I like you. Only <u>like</u> isn't the word really and you know that too. You will always be Lyhon Cryhon to me.

Theo

[1] Dreiser had recently completed a draft of a dramatic adaptation of his novel, but the project never went beyond this initial stage.

[2] *A Book about Myself*, later called *Newspaper Days*, was published on 15 December 1922.

[3] Dreiser's second collection of stories, *Chains*, would be published in 1927.

[4] Dreiser did not place "Lyhon Cryhon" in *A Gallery of Women* (1929). After revisions, the mostly accurate sketch of his relations with Markham would appear as Sidonie in "This Madness: The Book of Sidonie" in the June and July 1929 issues of *Hearst's International-Cosmopolitan*.

[5] Dreiser had been at work on the novel, in fits and starts, since 1914 and had been issued contracts for its publication by John Lane and Boni and Liveright, and later by Simon and Schuster and Putnam's. When John Lane closed its New York office, it assigned its Dreiser titles, including *The Bulwark*, to Dodd-Mead, though Boni and Liveright would dispute the assignment (Swanberg, *Dreiser*, 259). *The Bulwark* was eventually published, posthumously, by Doubleday in 1946.

[6] "Mirage" was Dreiser's working title for what became *An American Tragedy*. He had completed about 20 chapters at this point.

[7] Dreiser never gathered these articles into book form. "Hollywood Now" appeared in *McCall's* 48 (Sept. 1921: 8, 18, 54). "Fall River" remains in manuscript (folder 12032, DPUP).
[8] John Cowper Powys.

346. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]
[TLS]

P.O. BOX 181
Lost Angeles,
Cal.

Aug. 7, 1922.

Dear Cryhon:

No, the study of you won't be anything like the other thing.[1] These are broad-gauge and intensive, things out of which I would prefer to make novels if I only had time. You can guess how I am working when I have done nine and have not even begun on the really important ones. Of all done thus far I see only three that I would like to use. Practicing on the piano, as it were.

Whenever you talk of Howards studies and inventions I feel that writing is a silly business.[2] Artificial anthracite. And a new petroleum series. That makes a book seem rather thin. And yet all one can do is do what he can do, like a potatoe bug or a fiddler crab. It may be poor stuff but if you haven't anything else in you what are you going to do.

Do you remember how I use to encourage you with your drawings. And how I always longed to see you get a decent shot at the stage. This is the day of hard little snipes who are called upon to do little more than pose about. And the swill that is published in the magazines,—without a spark of real mood.

Yes, I saw the Gold Shod and liked it. I might have known by my interest in it that there was a person back of it.[3]

And, yes, I'll come across with a novel, soon, now. I have done about all of the other things that I want to do.

And then the hammers.

T.D

[1] Dreiser is explaining that his planned depiction of Markham in *A Gallery of Women* would not be like his portrayal of Stephanie Platow in *The Titan*, a character that was loosely (and not altogether flatteringly) based on Markham.
[2] Howard Scott (1890–1970), with whom Markham was now living.
[3] *Gold Shod* (1921), by Newton Fuessle (1883–1924), is a novel about a business man trying to reconcile his career with his ambitions to be a musician. In its advertising, Boni and Liveright quoted Burton Rascoe's review of the manuscript: "the most powerful novel dealing with certain phases of American business and social life since Dreiser's two great books, 'The Genius' and 'The Financier.'"

347. Markham to Dreiser

58 Morton St.

Dec. 28th '22.

Dear Theo—

I have finished my play[1] & I would be very grateful if you could give me time on it before I take it to be finally typed to either let me read it to you, or read it yourself. I don't quite consider it finished until you have looked it over, and I do want to get it out of the way. Will you let me know when I may bring it over?

Affectionately
Kirah

[1] The Dreiser Papers includes a play by Markham entitled "Sisters," but it's not clear whether this is the play referred to (folders 14547–49, DPUP).

1925–1929

In early 1925 Markham left Howard Scott. Tiring of the acting life, she began looking for other outlets. She wrote plays and returned to her interest in art. In August 1925 she moved to Boca Raton, Florida, where she joined the art staff of the Mizner Development

Corporation, founded by Addison Mizner, then in the midst of transforming a farming community into one of the foremost resort towns of the period. Her job was to design posters for the development. "I like it so much better than designing for the theater," she told an interviewer, "for building a great resort like Boca Raton is so much more important than building a play, however good."[1] This August 1925 interview marks the first public record of the spelling change of her name to "Kyra," as if to celebrate the casting off of Scott and the new direction of her career.

She joined a touring company of the Broadway comedy hit *Not Herbert*, by Howard Irving Young, playing during the fall of 1926 in Providence, RI, Hartford, CT, Worcester, MA, and the Bronx, NY. Markham also began illustrating books, with one handsome example being her cover and interior illustrations for *Romantic . . . I Call It*, a comedic book by heiress Ethel Harriman (1897–1953), published by Boni and Liveright in 1926, the first of many illustrations for the publishing firm.

On 10 December 1927 she married David Stoner Gaither, a set designer for Broadway theater. Born in 1897 in Pittsburgh, he had studied drama and set design at the Carnegie Institute of Technology, under the direction of Thomas Wood Stevens, who had been Markham's teacher when she studied drama as Elaine Hyman at the Art Institute in Chicago. Both soon began acting in plays and designing sets for the Roberson–Smith Players, a theatrical stock company formed by tent show impresario Grover (George) Roberson and Chester Smith, who operated stock companies in eight cities in New York, Pennsylvania, Indiana, and Kentucky.

In March 1928 Dreiser revived the memoir of his time with Markham that he had begun in 1922. He wrote to Markham, concerned that "it might be rejected with bitterness—perhaps denied in toto" (3 March 1928, letter 355). By November he had completed "Sidonie" and sent it to her for comment. Markham was appalled by what she considered to be cruelty in Dreiser's depiction of her father. Dreiser asked her to "soften" the

portrayal, and "Sidonie" appeared as the concluding segment of "This Madness: An Honest Novel about Love" in the June and July 1929 issues of *Hearst's International-Cosmopolitan*. If Markham wrote to Dreiser after the sketch's publication, such a letter does not survive, but she was deeply wounded by the portrayal, especially his depiction of the end of their relationship. To Mencken, she wrote,

> Did you ever read "The Madness"? Theo claimed that I died of a broken heart even though I went on living. Something in me did die,—I have never been the same since,—but it was not for love of him even though I left him while I still loved him. The part of me that died was something he could never understand and I could never explain. He was kinder to me in that story than he ever was to anyone, but that does not mean he understood.[2]

By "died of a broken heart," Markham refers to the close of the sketch, where she doesn't literally die but figuratively cannot move on from her love for Theo. Dreiser has her "tap-tap-tapping at my window" late one evening while he is in his apartment with another woman, unable to avoid returning to him despite his rejection of her. "After looking out in such a way as to be sure of Sidonie without her seeing me," Dreiser writes, "I drew back. That upward, querying, seeking look. I could not wound her by letting her in. But neither could I go out to her without saying why she might not come in. She would know."[3]

And, as she clarified to Eugene O'Neill biographer Louis Shaeffer, "In a story about me Dreiser actually wrote that I died of a broken heart when I left him. A great deal of me died then but it was not because of him, but because of those best parts of me that had died in having to give up a dream."[4] But she was also offended by the packaging of the sketch, explaining in a letter to W. A. Swanberg, "I have forgiven Theo his writing autobiographical stuff that was, in the case of 'The Titan', so utterly destructive for me, but I have never forgiven Will [Lengel, editor of *Cosmopolitan*] for permitting a cover to appear on the issue that contained the story

about me to have a girl looking slyly over the top of a book as though she was reading something dirty."[5]

Notes

[1] "Celebrity Joins Boca Raton Staff," *Palm Beach Post*, 16 Aug. 1925: 17.
[2] 17 July 1945 (Mencken Papers).
[3] "This Madness [Sidonie]," *Hearst's International-Cosmopolitan*, 87 (July 1929): 186.
[4] Markham to Shaeffer, 23 July 1962 (Kennedy and Pettit, 129). See also Markham's comment to Helen Dreiser: "Quite possibly Theo gave you the impression that I had died when I left him; he said as much in print" (Markham to Helen Dreiser, 27 Feb. 1952; DPUP).
[5] Markham to Swanberg, 18 Dec. 1963 (Swanberg Papers).



348. Dreiser to Markham

Theodore Dreiser

April 24—1925

Dear Kirah:

I note the address & telephone number. And I'm glad your by yourself.[1] I'm living out in the sub-urbs but have a writing office—not so far from you.[2] I'll call you up & tell you more when I see you.—Come for tea if I may. Your so much of an individual that you ought to be by yourself. Your spirit will grow stronger that way.

These spring days thrill me like youth itself.

T.D.

[1] Markham had left Howard Scott earlier that year.
[2] To avoid Manhattan distractions while completing *An American Tragedy*, Dreiser had moved to Brooklyn. His writing office was Room 1516 of the Guardian Life Building on Union Square (see Dreiser to Mencken, 31 March 1925; Riggio, *D-M Letters*, 530).

349. Markham to Dreiser

[H]

428 Lafayette St.
N.Y. City

[before June 15, 1926]

Dear Theo—

I have not heard my telephone jangling overtime from your calls since the day I met you in the Plaza and was told that I had been forgiven, but trusting that there is no malice of forethought but merely a persistence of more charming engagements I am writing to ask you to call me about something that I think is really important to you. (Of course if you did not pride yourself on being a man of mystery I could telephone instead of procrastinating about writing letters which I hate, but even old loves may not penetrate the privacy of your residence.) (Listen to him hold forth now on the malicious and persistent criticism I have to offer!) Find it if you can! There is nothing here but good humored teasing. If you resent it you are merely admitting that the darts aimed in play struck a vulnerable spot,—the hill[1] of Achilles so to speak. In fact, Achilles is not half important enough a guy to provide a simile, only we weren't informed of the weaknesses of the total and complete gods.

Enough of that! If you are not too mad at me to read further I will confess to having started this in all seriousness and proceed with the subject.

I find I am completely out of stationary so will have to proceed on scratch paper.

I don't know whether you have ever heard of Katherine Stewart[2] or not. Probably not, your fields in the past have been so far apart. Her scenario work was so far above the others that Jeannie MacPherson[3] and her ilk were scared and plain politics have forced her out of the Lasky organization. So much has been said in the papers about the impossibility of making the hero of the "Tragedy" a sympathetic figure without changes that Katherine has become panicy and asked me for an introduction.

It can be as you wish. If you want to meet her here over one of my dinners with her husband who is a darling (and the rising young architect of the day,) I will be chef. If you prefer to avoid contact with my vicious tongue I will give her a letter of introduction. Or, if you are afraid I might discover where you reside I will give you her address and clear my skirts of the whole affair. Had I not once helped you to retain this privacy of yours I might accept your publishing house address without teasing. As it is—to quote one of your letters this winter,)—I persist in "bitter and continuous criticism." Katherine can, I believe be of great value to you.

Sincerely
Kyra

[1] Markham means "heel."

[2] Katherine Stewart (1867–1949), stage and film actress. Film rights to Dreiser's novel *An American Tragedy* (1925) had been sold to Famous Players-Lasky corporation (which soon became Paramount) in March 1926, and the studio was then assigning people to prepare the novel for production. Like many seasoned actresses, Stewart also did scenario work for the studios.

[3] Jeannie MacPherson (1886–1946) was a film actress who also wrote and directed; she wrote the scenario for the 1923 Paramount film *The Ten Commandments*, among many others.

350. Dreiser to Markham

June 15—1926

Dear Kirah:

I am leaving N.Y. next Tuesday for two months and I'm packing.[1] I would like to meet Katharine Stewart of course—1st because you want me to, next if anything can possibly come of it. But let me explain. So far I have not been consulted as to this movie other than to be asked to interview one director. (Malcolm St. Clair) But since then I hear he has been eliminated in so far as this picture is concerned. A new man is being considered—Monte Blue.[2] But

I am assured that nothing definite is here either. Furthermore no work will be done on this picture before November next—no start made. Whether I am to be consulted then remains to be seen. I understand also that Patrick Kearney—who is making the Play from the Tragedy is about to be asked to prepare the scenario.[3] He is very sensitive, artistic & intelligent. And strong for the book as it stands. With these few remarks I say—if I can arrange an hour or two Thursday or Friday I will call you—Spring 0947—and we will arrange.

T.D.

If you really try someone[4] you will write me a faultless letter. But you still have one to go.

[1] On 22 June, Dreiser and Helen embarked for Europe, where Dreiser met with publishers, toured Scandinavia, and researched Yerkes's career in London for *The Stoic* (Lingeman, *American Journey*, 278–79).

[2] The studio was having difficulty finding a director willing to undertake the production of Dreiser's controversial novel, with its sympathetic portrayal of Clyde Griffiths, a murderer. The famed director D. W. Griffith (1875–1948), who had filmed *The Birth of a Nation* in 1915, had initially been announced in the extensive press coverage of the planned production, but he stepped down. Both Malcolm St. Clair (1897–1952) and Monta Bell (1891–1958) were announced as directors by the press, but nothing came of these plans After the studio rejected a collaboration between famed Soviet director Sergei Eisenstein (1898–1948) and writer Ivor Montagu (1904–1984), the novel received its first production in 1931 with Josef von Sternberg (1894–1969) as director and Samuel Hoffenstein (1890–1947) as writer.

[3] Patrick Kearney (1893–1933) was an American playwright whose first produced play was *A Man's Man* (1925); his script for the play became part of the basis for the 1931 film adaptation.

[4] Dreiser probably meant to write "sometime."

351. Markham to Dreiser

[TLS]

Hotel Richmond,
70 West 46th Street.
New York City.

Nov. 6th, 1926.

My Dear Mr. Dreiser:

A great many years ago you asked me to watch second hand book shops for a copy of "With the Procession" by Henry B. Fuller.[1] I found one in Hartford, Connecticut a few weeks ago and purchased it for you.

If you will be so kind as to inform me what you are willing to pay for such a book I will very gladly turn it over to you.[2]

Very Sincerely Yours
Kyra Markham

[1] See Dreiser to Markham, 11 March 1915, letter 245.
[2] Dreiser wrote at the bottom of the page, "50^{00} sent—Nov. 13—1926."

352. Dreiser to Markham

61 W. 48th St
N.Y. City

Nov. 13—1926

Dear Kirah:

Your letter has been with me for days—but also I have been in bed with grippe and bronchitis & could do nothing. I do not need the books now as several years ago I picked up two copies. Just the same I am enclosing a check for fifty for you—just to show that I appreciate your good intentions. By the way I sent 10^{00}—addressed to you at 244 Riverside Drive. You wrote me you know about having to stand at my play.[1] Did you get that? I do not know that I deserve the ponderous—"My dear Mr. Dreiser"—or the "very sincerely yours"—but Perhaps you think that is necessary to get an answer. It is not, of course, but if you insist so—well—

T.D.

[1] Kearney's dramatic adaptation of *An American Tragedy* opened at the Longacre Theatre on 11 October 1926 and played until April 1927.

353. Dreiser to Markham

200 W. 57th St

Theodore Dreiser

Feb. 2nd 1927

Dear Cryhon:

Forgive me for not answering before. I have been sick—a heart attack—after a fashion. And pressed by many matters. You are right about all who have come forward. I think everyone I have ever known has already reached me with one proposition or another. But this is not to reflect on you at all. I send you one hundred now. And let me know something about your hotel bill. I read an article in the World which pictured you as connected with Fox & doing splendidly.[1] How newspapers lie.

T.D

I hope you are not too unhappy, honey.

[1] *The New York World* has not been digitized after 1922, but other newspaper articles reveal that Markham had worked at various studios in a variety of capacities. See, for an example, "Another Old Proverb Is Disproved. Jill of Many Trades Good at All!" *Holyoke Daily Transcript and Telegram*, 1 Jan. 1927: 3.

354. Dreiser to Markham

Theodore Dreiser

April 20—1927

Dear Kirah:

I like this wild poemlet ever so much. It has everything—lyric sorrow and joy;—hope even. Things like this—a few collected—would make a reputation.

As for asking me to dinner—in the main it is a useless proceeding. I go out so much less than people imagine—and for reasons

of mood as much as anything. Yet some morning or afternoon or evening I may unexpectedly ring your doorbell—if you have one. So if you lock anyone out you must imagine it was me.

T.D

355. Dreiser to Markham

Theodore Dreiser

March 3—1928

Dear Kyra:

I did begin a study of you a long time ago—and last year in the spring added to it.[1] Later and when I was working on it—I received word of a violent letter written Sherwood Anderson which charged me with having stolen everything I had ever written.[2] While not troubling about such a liberal interpretation of my deeds or misdeeds I did feel that should I venture to comment on you it might be rejected with bitterness—perhaps denied in toto. In consequence I dropped it and there it rests. Truly I have been not a little puzzled. This friendly letter leaves me still a little puzzled. Would you have me do a study?

No Mrs. Dreiser was not with me.[3] No one was with me in Russia except government appointees. Helen came to London and returned with me from there but the mention was not intended.

And I received the marriage notice.[4] You must believe that I responded with a thousend wishes for your happiness. But I did not know you were in New York. Something about the notice suggested Chicago. If I did do a portrait of you I would live over one of the lonliest periods of my life. You know that.

Theo

[1] Dreiser refers to the sketch he intended for *A Gallery of Woman* but would instead publish as part of the "This Madness" series, "The Book of Sidonie." See Dreiser to Markham, 13 July 1922, letter 345.

[2] Sherwood Anderson (1876–1914), novelist and short story writer best known for *Winesburg, Ohio* (1919). Dreiser met Anderson in Chicago during his research for *The Titan*, and they became good friends, with Dreiser helping Anderson find a publisher for his

first novel, *Windy McPherson's Son* (1916). Dreiser alludes here to a minor scandal in September 1926 when *New York World* columnist Franklin P. Adams noted that Dreiser's poem "The Beautiful," which had just appeared in *Vanity F*air, was similar to Anderson's story "Tandy," accused Dreiser of plagiarism, and reprinted passages in columns of deadly parallel. Deiser was in Europe and could not be reached, but Anderson replied to reporters, "Mr. Dreiser is not the kind of man who needs to take lines from me or anyone else. It is one of those accidents that occur" (qtd. in Swanberg, *Dreiser*, 314). At the time of the scandal, Markham wrote to Anderson: "I don't know whether you really believed your defense of Dreiser or not but I think it was darned nice of you to do it. Just the same, great guy though he is, I am certain that any plagiarism he has done occured in a state of complete consciousness." She then summarized Dreiser's use of her work in *The Titan* and *The Spring Recital* before concluding, "He is a Cowperwood of literature. All material is legitimate for his pen if he can get away with it" (Markham to Anderson, 9 Sept. 1926; Sherwood Anderson Papers, Newberry Library).

[3] At the invitation of the Russian government to mark the tenth anniversary of the October revolution, Dreiser toured Russia from November 1927 to January 1928.

[4] Markham married David Stoner Gaither (1897–1957) on 10 December 1927, in Manhattan.

356. Dreiser to Markham

Theodore Dreiser

Sept 20—1928

Dear Kirah:

I agree that that sculpture looks something like me. The one you did is better, though. But what are you doing in Reading?[1] It seems so—well, remote—for you. And I'm always troubled when I find your ascribing some as yet unsuspected ill to me. It tends to make me out the darkest of your experiences. Yet if I were to picture that period it would for me require a really brilliant palette. I recall nothing of more color or beauty.

Always
T.D

[1] Markham had moved to Reading, Pennsylvania, where she acted in productions by the Roberson-Smith Players, with sets designed by her husband.

357. Dreiser to Markham

Theodore Dreiser

Nov. 2nd 1928

Dear Kirah:

A lovely picture—done so clearly and with such genuine feeling. You have always been able to express yourself in so many ways. Curiously I was just getting out this paper to write you when your Hungry Bill picture was laid on my desk. After so long, and because I really could not let it alone, I have drawn a picture of you—about 26,000 words.[1] To guide myself I have laid it in Chicago & here, but intend to change the western city to Cleveland or St. Louis or Kansas City. Other things—in so sharp a condensation had to be crowded or slurred but there is enough reality—and certainly enough unreality—for who can really draw anyone. I should like you to see it. In spite of this & that I think you might like it. I love it and hold it close to my heart.

T.D.

[1] Dreiser refers to the manuscript of what would become "The Book of Sidonie."

358. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

200 West 57th St
NY

Nov 6—1928

Dear Kirah:

Here is Sidonie—or yourself & myself in one study. I meant to call it Stephanie but decided because of the other, not too.[1] As it reads now it is laid in Chicago and New York. Maurice Browne and the Chicago Little Theatre are mentioned. In short the thing

has the undisguised natural flow of our contact. But these things—especially names & places might be changed unless you feel differently. Personally I should prefer to present it as it is. If you feel that it should be more disguised I will see what I can do. Am open to suggestion, criticism—even abuse. But I question once you read this whether you will feel like abusing me.

Personally I always feel that no one ever really knows anyone else. We observe—exteriorly certain deeds & expressions. But what else? You & I lived together nearly three years. During that time we each imagined we sensed certain things in regard to each other. But did we? And if we did not how are we to do more than paint a seeming portrait from a purely personal view point—not accurate but as we saw it—or thought I did. And so with this comment I leave it to you. The critical part, if there is any, may be due to mis-apprehension. The truthfulness, if there is any, may be indiscreet. But the affection & admiration are not to be concealed. And they are there.

T.D.

I would have sent the sketch had I been here yesterday—(Monday). Have only now returned from Greenwich. And would come to Reading but again visits & trips have to be shuffled like cards here. Some come up unwanted and are sometimes are forced on me. Others wanted are delayed. But I'll see about Reading after you read this, not before.

[1] See Dreiser to Markham, 7 Aug. 1922, n. 1, letter 346.

359. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

Theodore Dreiser

Nov. 10—1928

Cryhon Dear—

Don't cry. Once you pleaded to be buried in the same grave with me.[1] Isn't it a little warmer to live in the same book—as long as such books last?[2]

I didn't mean to be cruel to your father. You know what writing is. You get in the swing of what seems reality—and painter wise you brush as close as you can. Soften it for me. Your realistic soul will keep it true enough I know.

Sure I'll come to Reading one of these days. I walked through there in the Spring of 1927—walked all the way from Elizabeth N.J. to Roanoke, Va. And alone. You'll believe that when I say I averaged 25 to 32 miles per day—550 miles.

Give my regards to your husband. Tell him to be kind to dumb brutes. That'll fix things for me when I get there.

T.

Can you revise it soon for me?

[1] See Dreiser to Markham, 7 March 1915, letter 239; and Markham to Dreiser, 9 March 1915, letter 243.

[2] Markham was upset over some of the depictions in "Sidonie," made some revisions, and returned the sketch to Dreiser. An extant manuscript (folder 12776, typescript D; DPUP), which may not be the one referred to in this letter, reveals minor changes in Markham's hand but no substantive rewriting—some alterations of capitals, deletion of "And" at the beginning of some sentences, and the like. Dreiser adopted none of these changes.

360. Dreiser to Markham

200 W. 57th

Nov. 14—[1928]

Dear Kirah:

The best I can do is come out Saturday morning and return Monday afternoon or toward evening. I'm loaded with work & it's hard to make the grade. Is that ok. Next—I will bring the photo you want. Thanks for revising the copy. I'll go over it again & see what I can do. The study has been much praised by several here—so far. I'll be happy to come.

T.D

361. Dreiser to Markham

Theodore Dreiser

Nov. 26—1928

Dear Kirah & David:

I have thought of the boat & the market—and the drive—and of being in Reading of a Sunday morning & eating so delightful a breakfast. It is given a sense of how simple & essential all living should be. And how creative. . . . But you know that man at the station grossly misinformed me. The train did not go to New York at all but to Philadelphia where it arrived at 1 A.M. Then instead of arriving in N.Y. at 2^{15} I left at 1.07 & arrived at Jersey City—(Communipaw) at 3^{30}. No train boat. So at 4^{10} I was at Liberty Street. At 4^{40} at my apartment door—almost in time to see the dawn. But I read a book & studied sleepy people. Now exactly what satisfaction could the agent take in misinforming me?

The pencil came. I find it very satisfactory. And here is $\$1^{00}$. Please find it. It looks as though I shall close with the Cosmopolitan for the publication of three more studies.[1] If so, Sidonie—somewhat cut but not spiritually changed will be among them. Thanksgiving joy & peace.

T.

[1] The "The Madness" series of sketches, based on Dreiser's recollections of Lillian Rosenthal ("Aglaia"), Anna P. Tatum ("Elizabeth"), and Markham ("Sidonie"), appeared in *Hearst's International-Cosmopolitan* in six parts from February to July 1929.

362. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

Theodore Dreiser

Dec 30—1928

Dear Kirah:

Thanks so very much for the Venus of the Sun & Moon.[1] I am delighted to have it. I was away when it came & they stored it in the office here. But it was brought up yesterday and now I am thinking of taking it up in the country to be hung over a fireplace one

of these days when I am a little less rushed. I shall try to think of something for you. This must be my Painting week—or Xmas for I received one from Jerome Blum[2]—an exquisite south sea thing and another from Katherine Dudley[3]—a negro harmony. Besides, at last, I have a portrait that is one—by Weyman Adams[4]—and I am to get that presently. It is going to Knoedlers first.[5]

I think of you two so much & wish you the best of everything. Esherick[6] was in here one day & said you two had been down to his place. Also that you had been offered something with that Crossroads Theatre over near Media.[7] Did you decide to take it?

Things are very well with me. I have a slight touch of flu—and an embarassment of labor—but since work is what I crave I am certainly best off when embarassed that way. All of the dreams of the two of you for 1929.

T.D.

Maurice Browne & some other man have a play on here—Wings Over Europe.[8] The general opinion is that it is fair. I haven't seen it.[9]

[1] A painting by Markham, not located. In a letter to H. L. Mencken, Markham explains the ironic context of the gift: "When Dreiser visited us and wanted to buy a painting of mine David informed him it was not for sale but sent it to him as a Christmas present. Perhaps he got a greater kick at the gesture than it was worth, but no one could deny the kick and one entire week-end with us Theo had behaved awfully shoddily" (16 Sept. 1939; Mencken Papers).

[2] Dreiser had visited Blum's studio in 1913 and Blum had done a portrait of Markham (see Dreiser to Markham, 25 March 1914, letter 169). The next month, Dreiser contributed a foreword to the "Catalogue of an Exhibition of Paintings by Jerome Blum" at the Anderson Galleries in New York, 28 Jan. – 9 Feb. 1929. Dreiser later made a point of visiting the artist when Blum went through periods of depression that hospitalized him.

[3] Katherine Dudley, portrait painter and illustrator. Her sister, Dorothy Dudley, wrote the first biography of Dreiser, *Forgotten Frontiers: Dreiser and the Land of the Free* (1932).

[4] Wayman Adams (1883–1959), nicknamed "Lightning" for the speed of his portraiture, is best known for his portraits of such luminaries as Booth Tarkington, James Whitcomb Riley, Calvin Coolidge,

Warren Harding, and Herbert Hoover. Photographs of his two portraits of Dreiser are at DPUP, Ms. Coll. 30: Volume 441, Items 9, 10.

[5] M. Knoedler & Co., a New York City art dealership founded in 1846, with a specialty in supplying Old Masters to affluent collectors.

[6] Wharton Esherick (1887–1970), a sculptor who focused on furniture, wood block prints, and architectural interiors. He began as a major figure in the Arts and Crafts movement before evolving to focus on form, influenced by Cubism and German Expressionism. He did wood and metal work for Dreiser's country home, Iroki, at Mt. Kisco, New York, including a set of wrought-iron andirons; and he supervised the construction of two thatched-roof cabins on the property. Dreiser first met Esherick in August 1924 at the Hedgerow Theatre in Media, PA, where Markham was performing. She introduced the two men, and she and Dreiser stayed overnight at Esherick's home in Malvern, PA.

[7] Dreiser probably refers to the Hedgerow Theatre, founded in 1923 by Provincetown Players member Jasper Deeter. In 1924 Markham acted in two productions at Hedgerow, and Wharton Esherick would design sets for some of its productions.

[8] *Wings over Europe*, written by Robert Nichols and Maurice Browne, opened in New York on 10 December 1928 at the Martin Beck Theatre.

[9] The sentences are scrawled across the upper left corner.

363. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

Theodore Dreiser

April 18, 1929

Dear Kirah:

Why the inquiry—almost ironic. We all have so much to do—you know that. I have thought frequently since I read that story of yours that if you were to do a series of such fabulous commentaries on <u>now</u>, how interesting it would be.[1] I suppose I should have said that before this. The magazine I was thinking of was The Dial. But there is also Rejections published by Doubleday Page at Garden City and Caravan—or The Caravan.[2] Address unknown. My personal answer to the absence or want of anything was work—It

still is—my only solvent. I can suffer or wish but not when I am creatively tasking or seeking to create. If I could only give you the gift of concentration. The resulting condensation would be so much. But as for writing—I can only occasionally do that.[3]

T.D.

Sidonie—in cut form soon begins in the Cosmo.
The check is what I meant to send you Xmas.[4]

[1] At this time, Markham was tiring of acting and was seeking new creative outlets: she tried writing poetry, fiction, and plays before turning to book illustration and finally, by 1934, settling upon art, a form that occupied her remaining years.

[2] *The Dial* was a well-known arts and literary magazine that ceased publication in July 1929. *The American Caravan* (whose titled varied: *The New Caravan*, *The New American Caravan*) was a yearbook of short stories edited by Van Wyck Brooks, Alfred Kreymborg, Lewis Mumford, and Paul Rosenfeld and was published for the years 1927–1936 by the Macauley Co. in New York. *Rejections of 1927* and *Rejections of 1928* was a short-lived annual edited by Charles H. Baker Jr. that contained, as its title suggests, stories that had been rejected by magazines.

[3] Dreiser may mean that he has only limited time to write to Markham—or so she interpreted the sentence. See Markham to Dreiser, 22 Nov. 1930, letter 365.

[4] "Sidonie" appeared in the June and July 1929 issues of *Hearst's International-Cosmopolitan*. The check was payment for making editorial suggestions for "Sidonie."

1930–1944

Not reflected in their correspondence was a painful event for Markham: on 3 July 1930, she had a son, Harry Eugene Gaither, but he lived only three days, dying of complications of intestinal volvulus. Later, she would undergo radium treatment for cancer of the uterus. As Markham later explained to W. A. Swanberg, "My delivery was too difficult for him. I was thirty-nine and by the time my doctor discovered that a Caesarian would be necessary my

pulse had begun to go down, so that was out. Doctor Rongy . . . did everything he could to save us both . . . and was almost as shocked as I was when the baby went with hemmorage of the brain."[1]

By 1930 Markham had given up acting to focus on a career as an artist, mostly in lithographs but also in oil painting. Her style began as realism and moved into social realism, sometimes with elements of the fantastic. She scrabbled for work during the Depression years wherever she could find it, including murals for a notorious speakeasy in 1930 (see letters in Nov. 1930). She began to exhibit lithographs at expeditions, winning the Philadelphia Print Club's prestigious Mary S. Collins Prize in 1935 for *Elin and Maria*, which depicts a sleeping woman and small dog, without any indication which is "Elin" and which "Maria" (see fig. 26).

The *Philadelphia Inquirer* wrote: "The distinction of the print is doubtless embodied in the remarkable rendering of the voluminous robe, in which the woman, her body spread prone upon the floor, and proceeding away from the eye of the beholder, the head hardly visible, has been enveloped. This robe has been drawn upon the lithographic stone with a sense of plastic modeling and shading of the texture's folds, comparable to that famous instance in oil, Albrecht Durer's painting of St. Paul, in his four apostles, or 'temperaments,' in Munich."[2]

Beginning in 1936 she found work as an artist for the Federal Art Project, and as a result many of her lithographs executed under the New Deal agency's sponsorship survive in museum and university collections throughout the country. Her mural *The Dictators' Band* decorated the Famous Door, a New York jazz club, and a photograph of it was widely distributed by newspapers in December 1937. The mural portrays as members of a jazz band the Duke of Windsor, Josef Stalin, George Bernard Shaw, Benito Mussolini, Franklin D. Roosevelt, Adolf Hitler, and Albert Einstein, though it's unclear why she selected these specific figures.

Markham also solicited Dreiser's aid in applying for a fellowship at the prestigious MacDowell Colony, a financially supported retreat for artists, and she finally achieved more stable employment as an artist-in-residence at the Cherry Lane School, a progressive coeducational boarding school in Darien, CT, where her

husband David also headed the Fine Arts program. During these years of change, Dreiser and Markham maintained an occasional, though friendly, correspondence, with Dreiser's final letter, on 17 July 1944, expressing regret that he had not been able to visit her during his recent journey to New York from California to accept an Award of Merit Medal for Literature from the American Academy of Arts and Letters.

In 1946 Markham and Gaither moved to a small farm in Halifax, Vermont, where she continued painting and exhibiting. David Gaither died of cancer in 1957, and then on 13 October 1959 Markham was seriously injured in an automobile accident, and she remained in the hospital until 18 November, when she moved into her brother's home in Manhattan, and then in January into her sister's home in Greenwich Village, where she recuperated from a severely broken leg and rib injuries. By May 1960, she had returned to Halifax. Unwilling to remain in Vermont without David, in September she relocated to Petionville, Haiti, near Port-au-Prince, attracted by the cheaper cost of living and a climate that was kinder to the arthritis she developed after her accident. Markham continued her painting, now focusing on local subjects, created a salon for local writers, ex-pats, and visitors, and in 1965 mounted an exhibit of her Haitian paintings at the Haitian American Institute. She spent her remaining years responding to queries by Dreiser biographer William Swanberg and Eugene O'Neill biographer Louis Shaeffer, with whom she developed friendships reflected in an extensive correspondence. She suffered a stroke in 1966. Kyra Markham died of metastatic lung cancer in Petionville, Haiti, on 13 May 1967 at age 76.

Notes

[1] Markham to Swanberg, 15 April 1964 (Swanberg Papers). See also the death certificate for baby Harry, #17094, Historical Vital Records, New York City, https://a860-historicalvitalrecords.nyc.gov/.

[2] C. H. Bonte, "7th Annual Exhibit of American Lithographs," *Philadelphia Inquirer*, 20 Jan. 1935: 60.

364. Dreiser to Markham

Theodore Dreiser

Nov. 11—1930

Dear Kirah:

Thanks for the note about your work in Belle Livingstons Place.[1] I'm going over. She wrote me a nice letter and I wanted to respond forthwith—but here is her letter and yours and I haven't been there. And Id like to go so much. She really creates a vital agreeable world of her own. Many a night when absolutely weary of so many things I have thought—now I am going there. Yet I haven't. But I am going—maybe Friday of this week.

How are you, dear—As vivid as ever? You'll never really change. I feel it.

T.

[1] An undated postcard illustrated by Markham includes the note, "you may be interested to know that I have just done the golf room, ping-pong room and auditorium of Belle Livingston's new place. K.M." Belle Livingston (1875–1957) was a former showgirl who during Prohibition presided over a number of speakeasies, which she called "salons," the most notable of which was the 58th Steet Country Club in Manhattan. In a letter of 25 October 1930 (DPUP), Livingston invited Dreiser to the 58th Street "house," invited him to be among the initial 300 sponsors, and promised "diversion for everyone." Livingston was much in the news because of raids by Federal agents, and she served 30 days in prison in January 1931.

365. Markham to Dreiser

[H]

428 West 57th Street
New York City

Nov. 22nd '30

Dear Theo—

It was astonishing to recieve your note when I did, for at approximately the time you were writing it I was trying to get you on the

telephone—merely to learn that the number I have now belongs to a milliner's shop.

I wanted to ask you about Belle and I have written note after note in answer to yours which I have torn up because, when I analysed them down, they did not show the loyalty to her, as a courageous figure and a fascinating personality, which I actually feel. Perhaps it is malice, perhaps it is jealousy, but all over town I hear that I will never collect on my work. I think I will. I think if Belle ever thought for a moment that I had failed her on one count I would have a hell of a time collecting, but I do think that if one has stuck by her she is grateful and loyal. I do not know. Everything you said in your note about her is true. But aside from that I have found that those people whose brains are perpetually soaked in liquor—no matter how interesting they may be—lose all ethical values. She said something to me the other day which cut me to the quick and which no one undulled and otherwise as understanding as she is could have said. I laid it to brandy and go on liking her. But enough about Belle!

A year and a half ago you wrote me that you could not write to me any more.[1] I accepted that but was glad to recieve your note.

Isn't it possible for something fine and lasting to grow out of the two of those three years we spent together which were so grand? I resent the resentments that grow out of estrangement. They are far worse than those which actually occurred when parting. Howard Scott is so resentful of my having left him that he has turned into an actual cad whereas he was only partially such before. Yet he is pathetic and therefore not worthy of real hate. I have never met anyone yet that I could hate. They have not enough to deprive me of. But I resent the foolish foibles of the world which rob me of those I love, no matter what they have done to me.

Ben Allen is an instance, your Ben! For eight years he and Molly were my closest friends and when Ben could not make me leave Howard he switched his allegiance to Howard—and could not make Howard leave me. But indirectly he made me see the light and I made the necessary step and all it amounted to in Ben's life was that I was doing for him what he had not the courage to do for himself. Molly left him with another man simultaneously.

I have never left one man for another. My skirts were clean of each relationship before a new one began. Most successful courtesans see a better bid in the offing before they reject what they have. I wish I could attain to such a viewpoint. But the other night I think it patched up my relations with Ben—although I joined his dumb club on Wednesday and resigned from it the following Thursday week. I want no enmities in my life, but I insist on values.

I hear that you give magnificent parties where one falls over footmen every time one turns around. Don't ask me to them.—Not that you have ever shown any inclination that way. But if you want to talk to me I am usually here—or if not my maid will take a message. And I would like to retain better last memories of you than I can through your visit to Reading.

Ever Affectionately
Kyra

[1] See Dreiser to Markham 18 April 1929, letter 363.

366. Dreiser to Markham

Theodore Dreiser

Dec. 4—1930

Dear Kyra: (I like Kirah better)

Sure, this studio is open to you. Ordinarily (unless there is a set affair) people of various fields drift in here on Tuesdays & Fridays at 5. Sometimes quite large groups. Other days at 5—(from 5 to 6) I reserve for necessary or requested talks—quite often business matters. Your letter was interesting to me—the part about Belle Livingston curious. It is rediculous to assume that mentally or emotionally you would ever pass out of my life. Haven't I set my hand & seal to Sidonie? What more.

T.D

Did you do all the Livingston decorations? I hear much praise of them.

367. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

San Antonio, Texas

June 10—1932

Kyra Dear: The description of the place you want to buy & your reasons for wanting to buy it—your entire aesthetic & poetic approach to life make my inability to help you now painful. Like everyone else I have gone through drastic things—the total elimination of five sixths of all I thought I was putting safely aside. Just now to save expenses & be able to concentrate—(eliminate a perfect swarm of people using up my time) I am out here in the West writing. Have been here in San Antonio—a half Mexican & Negro place—over a month, but am leaving tomorrow—Saturday for El Paso Texas, where I hope to concentrate for another month. It is The Stoic I am writing on & it should be done by August first. I've let other things put it aside for a long time—(you were with me when I wrote The Titan) but now I have to complete it.[1] I'm sorry your having a close time. But since 1929 I have had to adopt all of my relatives & only now am finding it impossible to go with their allowances at the same rate because of the reduction in my own means.[2] I keep wondering if things are going to get better. Here as elsewhere conditions are bad—schools on part time, stores closing—the most amazing types of people begging—people who never would have begged before anywhere. 11 of the largest movie houses in this state have closed for want of patrons. But enough of that. There are things to do—remedies as I see them—but the American People will never apply them. This year taxes are going to drive us crazy. But if I get another break & you are still broke I will see if I can't find a little spot for you.

Love from

T.D.

If you write me address me care E. Light,[3] Room 709—1860 Broadway, N.Y.C. All mail forwarded.

[1] Although Dreiser had made progress on this long-neglected novel, he became distracted by political activity, and it would be published posthumously in 1947.

[2] Dreiser had been helping to support his siblings (particularly his sisters Mame and Sylvia and his brother Rome) with monthly allowances. For years Rome (1860–1940) had not been seen, and the family thought he was dead until Dreiser discovered him in a Chicago flophouse in 1926 and began to support him. Rome moved to New York and joined his siblings there.

[3] Evelyn Light (1904–58), Dreiser's secretary from February 1931 to June 1934.

368. Dreiser to Markham

Theodore Dreiser

Feb. 5—1935

Dear Kirah:

I think your lithograph, Elaine and Maria is beautiful.[1] Very. I feel you should exhibit a group of these. Why not the Rehn Gallery in New York?[2] Why not apply to the Guggenheim Foundation for an award—and refer to me? I'll be glad to testify and persuade. Meanwhile the enclosed 10^{00} is nothing more than a tribute to your aesthetic earnestness and its achievements—including Elaine and Maria.

I'm sorry about the Nordfeldt Portrait of you. But if it's gone it's gone.[3]

Someday when your coming to town come & see me. But give me previous notice. I'd like to take you to lunch or dinner.

Just now—far from well.

Affectionately
T.D

[1] The lithograph *Elin and Maria* (1934), which features a sleeping woman and a small dog, is at the Philadelphia Museum of Art (accession number 1949-45-24). It won the Mary S. Collins prize at the Philadelphia Print Club's annual exhibition, in January 1935.

[2] Rehn Galleries in New York City, founded by Frank K. M. Rehn (1886–1956) in 1918 and closed in 1981, specialized in representing American painters, although occasionally it displayed and sold other art forms.

[3] Markham had lost track of Nordfeldt's portrait of her that she had left in Dreiser's apartment when they separated in 1916.

369. Dreiser to Markham

[TLS]

Theodore Dreiser
232 S. Westmoreland Ave.,
Los Angeles,

June 4, 1935.

Dear Kyra:

I note that you are back in your favorite neighborhood.[1] Because of Bronchitis, I have had to come out here, and am settled and working.

I think you waste at least some of your time, on people who can only deter you. I know that we are not brass or stone, and require contacts, but your gifts, or any one of them, require concentration, even a certain amount of lonely concentration. I know it is hard, but that is the price.

I certainly wish you luck in your work, and am satisfied that if you persist, you will have it. When I next return to New York, I will look you up.

As ever,
T.D

TD/GT.

[1] Markham had moved to 35 Morton Street in Greenwich Village.

370. Markham to Dreiser

[H]

35 Morton St.
New York City.

Sept. 20th '35.

Dear Theo—

I wonder where you are and, what is more important, how you are?

This is just to let you know my new address which will hold, I hope, for years, after October 1st. I have found the most marvelous old dump of a place at no 6 East 14th St. It is a duplex and at first I did not know what to do with the lower floor—there was so much to be done in the studio—but it will be very useful in time when we can fix it up. On the top floor I have a skylit studio 22 x 32 with a kitchenette and dressing-room and bath off. It is terrible now. I am writing during a rest period from stripping five layers of paper off the walls and here and there the paper is all that holds the plaster on and great gaps appear. David is sending in a man from the shop to help tomorrow and helps, or rather does most of it, himself evenings. But it is going to be divine when it is done. And it is so cheap that if we can't keep it we had better quit.

I was full of orders up to August. Then things slumped off again. I would have welcomed the rest if anyone paid any money for anything but you work for almost nothing these days. David's new business is coming along however and he hopes soon to give me all the commercial work I want to take on and the rest of my time can go to creative work.

In August I started a canvas from memory of the Farmers Markets over in Allentown and Reading and it is miles ahead of any thing I have ever done before.

Let me know when you come home and please come and see me, the new house and the new canvas—

Affectionately
Kyra

P.S. I have never had one call from F & F.

371. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

4922 Rosewood Ave.
Los Angeles.

Oct. 7—1935

Kirah Dear:

It was nice—very—to get your letter and when I'm next in New York I'll stop in. I know how wretched the place looks. But I also

know how charming it will be after you play with it awhile. But when it is beautiful as it will be, I hope you can keep it. Never show it to the landlord. He will raise the rent, because instantly he will realize that he can sell what you have done for more money.

I got quite sick last winter and had to leave. For awhile I thought I was going to have a breakdown. Went to bed & stayed there for weeks. Then in May I came out here. Later Helen came & we have been living in one of those floral bungalows that make the town. Slowly I picked up, took up my work and now am normal again. I don't feel that I owe it all to L.A. I got better at Mt. Kisco. And getting out of N.Y. helped. But I'll be back—for a time anyhow. This pleasant land of drowsy head helps everyone for a time, I think. Besides it's not so hicky as it once was. 2,400,000 people make a city, regardless. There are great avenues and the old business heart is something of a back number. New centres have sprung up. Hollywood Bowl is a second rate street. And Hollywood itself is no longer smart. Instead cheap. The smart areas are elsewhere. And the movies do not dominate the atmosphere. They are important. But so is oil, the fruit industry, the shipping business, the aeroplane factories and other such things. You wouldn't know it. The L.A. of 1914–19 is dimly imbedded in a huge world that seems to be looking south to Mexico and west across the Pacific. 40 hours to Chicago by train makes everything less remote. But I'll be seeing you one of these days. Regards to David & luck to both of you.

T.D

Howard Scott is in town. He spoke at the Bowl yesterday to about 9000 people & is touring the west coast. He was here last night for dinner & we sat around & talked. He is something like a rock that changes little and as positive & defiant as ever.[1]

[1] Newspapers widely covered Scott's talk on Technocracy, the beginning of a national tour to promote the effect of technological progress on the economic structure of society. Scott influenced Dreiser's thinking by impressing him with the significance of technology in promoting a more equitable society. See "Epic Technologists Must Plan" (1936), *Political Writings*, ed. Jude Davies [Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1911], 202–03).

372. Markham to Dreiser

[TLS]

Six East Fourteenth St.
New York City.

Jan. 22nd, '36

Dear Theo:

Forgive the long delay in answering your nice letter. Also forgive the typewriter. I have arthrytis in my right hand and it is so hard to write. I have not written because I was feeling so wretched that I could not burden my friends with my state of mind but now that I am physically better I can open up again.

There is not a great deal to tell and yet what there is is nice. I am one of the non-relief artists to be put on the lithography project,[1] which is nice. It gives me an assured income and requires of me only one stone a month. However, I am putting much more time in on the work as I am almost promised a one man show at the Museum of the City of New York. I am concentrating on theatre stuff. I have not been given a stone as yet but have six beautiful drawings and expect to have many more in the next few weeks.

The possible exhibit will come through Miss Seymour, daughter of old William Seymour. The Seymour family are presenting his dramatic library to Princeton and I am doing the bookplate for that.[2]

One Saturday night about six weeks ago David and I had achieved an early retirement and were sound asleep when the doorbell rang. David didn't hear it and I called and called until he finally woke and went down and answered it. We didn't know whether it was two or three or what in the morning and were terribly startled. As it was it was only one but a fine hour to go calling. There stood Howard.[3] I suppose because he had seen you he had to come and see us right away but David gave him the telephone number and sent him on his way. His feelings are probably hurt for we have never heard a word from him since. But I can't help it, I see no excuse for such a performance.

David's new business is growing so fast and he is working so hard that fixing the new place has been at a standstill since the first of December. The studio is lovely and fairly liveable, although we

have not solved the heating problem as yet. But the dressing room and the downstairs room are still scarcely touched. Dee will have four booths at the retail, liquor show, is doing a large model of part of the Metropolitan with sound and motion of a performance of "Valkyrie" going on, this for RCA Victor, and I don't know how many other orders.

Do you remember the Farmers' Market in Reading? I have finished a swell painting of it. Whitney Museum is looking at it. I am sure they won't buy it but they will have to begin to take me seriously for it is far and away beyond anything I have ever done before.

I must get back to the drawing board now but I[4]—Here my machine went on the blink! I do hope you will forgive my long silence and let me hear from you soon. And above all, I hope California sunshine has done you heaps of good. Best to Helen.

Love
Kyra

[1] At this time, Markham was employed by the Federal Art Project (1935–1943), a division of the Works Progress Administration, which funded American artists and artisans who created a broad range of paintings, murals, posters, and sculpture, among other forms. A number of her WPA-funded lithographs are part of the collections of the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and the Krannert Art Museum of the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, among others.

[2] May Davenport Seymour (1883–1967), a former actress and curator of the theatre collection of the Museum of the City of New York, was the daughter of William Seymour (1855–1933), a prominent actor, stage manager, and director. In November 1936 she completed the donation of her father's papers to Princeton University. To commemorate the donation, May Seymour contracted with Markham to design a bookplate for the program and the books in the collection: a proscenium stage surrounded by a border depicting the names of some of the theatres associated with Seymour's career. See "Seymour Collection Given Princeton," *New York American*, 30 Nov. 1936: 3.

[3] Howard Scott.

[4] At this point, the letter continues in handwriting.

373. Dreiser to Markham

[TLS]

Theodore Dreiser
Mount Kisco, New York

February 11, 1936

Dear Kyra,

I am sorry to hear of your arthritis and wish I knew of some cure that I could offer, but I never heard of one.

I am glad that you are settled in some place where you can work, and that you have been on the lithography project. You know how much I admire the things that you showed me. If you are improving on them in any way you must be nearing real recognition.

I have to laugh at what you say about Scott. It is so like him. I am sorry you had to turn him away even though it will effect no improvement of any kind. One of these week ends when I am in New York I will give you a ring and come down and see how you are.

Regards from Helen and myself.
T.D

TD/hb

374. Dreiser to Markham

Theodore Dreiser
Mt. Kisco.

Monday [after February 11, 1936]

Kirah Dear:

I am hard up here at Mt. Kisco, sick in bed & cannot be down before next Tuesday. I'm sorry. But [such] are the fortunes of life. I'll see you next Tuesday if I'm on my feet. I like your courage. And I think you can get an exhibit. I will see, anyhow. As for Guggenheim you do not mention that.[1] Perhaps you have reasons of your own.

All attempts at killing me with any kindness—if there ever were any have so far failed. When I reach 80—maybe I'll succumb. We'll see.

Thanks for the promise of the litho. I'll frame it.

Affectionately
T.D

[1] See Dreiser to Markham, 5 Feb. 1935, letter 368.

During the early years of the Great Depression, members of the Artists' Union, founded in 1933, were instrumental in demanding that the federal government provide relief to help artists survive. In large part due to their lobbying efforts, the Federal Art Project was founded as a key unit of the WPA, with more than 10,000 artists receiving support. While the WPA programs were intended to provide temporary relief, most of the associated artists envisioned a more permanent arrangement and lobbied for a cabinet-level Department of the Fine Arts. During November 1936, the WPA planned to cut one-fifth of the personnel supported by the Federal Art Project. Artists rallied to demonstrate against the cuts and on 1 December 1936 occupied the FAP offices in New York, resulting in the arrests of 219 artists "following a riotous demonstration" ("219 Arrested in Relief Riot at Art Project," New York American, *2 Dec. 1936: 1). Markham's letters to Dreiser in November and December 1936 concern her involvement.*

375. Markham to Dreiser

[H]
[before November 21, 1936]

Dear Theo—

You wrote me in the spring that you would be coming in to see my work and I have looked for you for a long time.

However, this note is about something infinitely more important than just me. The artists on WPA were planning an open forum

for Sunday night on "shall the artist survive?" The administration has withdrawn and rebestowed it's sponsership several times over and finally it is definitely going through. The meeting will be held Sunday night at Daly's Theatre in 63rd St.

But it has been a terrific battle. Many people are going to be laid off and the administration apparently does not want the situation brought before the public.

Will you attend the meeting? Or if you cannot will you send a telegram? Your presence would be a great help but the telegram would, too, if you cannot come.

Hope you are well and happy and my greetings to Helen.[1]

Affectionately
Kyra

[1] Penciled at the bottom of the page is Dreiser's dictated response: "Please transmit to the group of artists on WPA art assembly. My best wishes for success in making clear to the public that artists are essential contributors to our national cultural life and are therefore entitled to the continued support of the government as long as that support is necessary. I am very sorry that I cannot attend this meeting which interests me very much. The world greatly needs the artist, but seldom understands that he must live. Sent Nov. 21—1936."

376. Markham to Dreiser

[H]

6 East 14th St.
New York City.

Dec. 11th '36.

Dear Theo—

As I am not a member of the Artist's Union it was at least ten days after the open forum before I learned of your telegram. Thank you so much. It was a grand one.

Artists on the federal art project are probably going to have some time on the air and I again have been delegated to ask you to speak, probably with Mayor La Guardia.[1]

The immediate need is for the continuation of the present projects but the greater one is or a permanent Department of Art in Washington. However, for the moment, the present programme, if possible expanded and without curtailments is the important issue. Hope you will see fit to say "yes."

Best to you both, and thanks.
Kyra

P.S. Do let me hear from you!

[1] Fiorella La Guardia (1882–1947) was mayor of New York City from 1934 to 1946. He was a supporter of the Art Project and left for Washington, D.C., after the arrests of the artists protesting cuts to the program to lobby for continued support of the WPA.

377. Markham to Dreiser

[H]

no 6 East 14th St.
New York City.

April 6th '37

My Dear Theo—

I have been admonished that if I want to get into the MacDowell Colony this summer I must get other artists to write in for me to the Admissions Committee, MacDowell Colony, Peterborough, New Hampshire.[1] Would you be so good as to write one for me? I do desperately need a change. I feel sort of burnt out and whereas I work awfully hard I have to drive myself to do it and seem to be awfully uninspired.

The members of the Graphic Arts of WPA met at my studio yesterday but I was not there as my mother-in-law needed me and I am coming in from Jersey today. So I did not hear what was going to happen about your broadcast and am eager to know.[2]

Your suit with Liveright and what they expected of you seemed just too outrageous, at least what I saw.[3] I am such a very bad newspaper reader, depending principally on news commentaries

over the air to give me their various viewpoints on what is going on in the outside world while I go on painting or drawing.

But I do hope the case comes out satisfactory to you.

There is little news. I just seem to work. I am being well exhibited these days as a print maker. Paintings do not get by juries quite so often. But nothing sells. Maybe I have still to be known better. I suppose every artist has to believe that will come in time or they couldn't go on digging up money for artists supplies.

Well, no more of this, but a letter, pray, if you believe in me and I know you do.

Gratefully and Affectionately
Kyra

[1] After the death of piano composer Edward Alexander MacDowell (1861–1908), his widow, the pianist Marian Nevins MacDowell, established the MacDowell Colony (simplified to "MacDowell" in 1920), a residential retreat for composers, artists, and writers at the MacDowell farm in Peterborough, New Hampshire. Markham's name does not appear among the list of MacDowell artists.

[2] Markham may be asking about Dreiser's plans to adapt his work for radio. Later that year, in October, newspapers widely reported that *A Gallery of Women* was being adapted into 13 half-hour programs. Nothing appears to have come of this plan. For a summary of the plan, see "Theodore Dreiser Signed by Kass-Tohrner for Radio," *Radio Daily*, 18 Oct. 1937: 1.

[3] Markham likely saw a news report similar to that published in the *New York American*: "Dreiser Suits Postponed," 7 Aug. 1937: 20. The Liveright Publishing Corp. had sued Dreiser to recover unearned advances for *The Stoic*. When the case was resolved in June, Dreiser lost and was ordered to pay $9,812 in unearned advances and an additional $2,977 for the costs of books and magazines the firm had delivered to Dreiser; Dreiser's countersuit was also dismissed. See "Dreiser Ordered to Repay Royalty," *New York Times*, 30 June 1937: 21. See also Swanberg, *Dreiser*, 442.

378. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

Theodore Dreiser
1015 N. Kings Road
Hollywood, Calif
46

April 22nd—'44

Kirah Dear:

So glad to hear from you. And so glad you have such a lovely rural nook to dwell in and sketch and paint and poetize as you always have and always will.[1] Spiritually you bubble—always—like a sourceful spring which you are. As for me, well it's true that I haven't finished a novel,—worse luck but I doubt you have seen all of my productions—Moods, Accented and Declaimed which I prize highly, also. Also Thoreau, The Color of a Great City; Chains, America is Worth Saving (suppressed after publication), Epitaph and some short stories and articles.[2] What threw me off the fictional track was philosophy—my desire to analyze this living experience for myself. And because of the intense interest for me I spent five years gathering data. After that I wrote 8 articles or chapters and Published them all in various magazines and now have several more which when put into book form will make a fairly arresting volume I think.

However—let that be as it will. I still feel quite fit and May 10th next am leaving here for N.Y. in order to recieve the award.[3] For perhaps a week or more after that I'll be at the Commodore and am hoping I'll get to see you—either at the hotel or at Overbrook Lane. Anyhow I'll write you on my arrival—probably on May 13. Shortly after I have to go to Philadelphia—& very likely Baltimore but I'll be back in N.Y. before I leave for out here and hope to see more of you and David to whom I extend my regards. I have often thought of my interesting visit to both of you at Reading.

Love & best wishes—
T.D.

[1] Markham had moved to a log house on a wooded lot at 5 Overbrook Lane, in Darien, Connecticut, where she was Artist-in-Residence at Cherry Lane School, a progressive co-educational boarding school founded in 1915 and closed, by fire, in 1972. Her husband, David Gaither, was head of the Fine Arts Program.

[2] Like Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*, Dreiser's collection of poetry evolved and changed with each printing as he added and deleted poems. The edition referred to here is entitled *Moods, Philosophic and Emotional, Cadenced and Declaimed*, with an introduction by Sulasmith Ish-Kishor, published in 1935 by Simon and Schuster. The poetry collection was originally published in 1926 with the title *Moods, Cadenced and Declaimed* and then was expanded in 1928, with fifteen illustrations and symbols by Hugh Gray Lieber, both published by Boni and Liveright. The other works mentioned are

The Living Thoughts of Thoreau (Longmans, Green, 1939), part of the Living Thoughts library; Dreiser contributed a 32-page introduction to selections of Thoreau's writing made by his secretary, Harriet Bissell.

The Color of a Great City, with illustrations by C. B. Falls (Boni and Liveright, 1923), a collection of Dreiser's sketches of New York City.

Chains, Lesser Novels and Stories (Boni and Liveright, 1927).

America Is Worth Saving (Modern Age, 1941). After Hitler attacked Russia in June, Dreiser refused to allow the America First Committee, an isolationist group, to distribute off-prints of an anti-British chapter of the book. After the bombing of Pearl Harbor in December, the debate about America's entry into the war was over. The book was not well received, but historical events, not censorship, seem to be what "suppressed" the book.

The poem *Epitaph* was published in 1930 in a limited edition by Heron Press before being collected in the 1935 edition of *Moods*.

[3] The American Academy of Arts and Letters presented Dreiser with its Award of Merit Medal on 19 May 1944.

379. Dreiser to Markham

[Publ. *LTW*]

1015 North Kings Road
Hollywood—46
Calif

July 17—44

Kirah Dear: I was so sorry not to have had time enough to visit you at Overbrook lane. But my round trip ticket, which it took me five weeks of waiting to get, expired—(the New York end of it) on June 5 and I found that I could not get an extension. And because of that I had to give up trips to Philadelphia, Baltimore and Paoli Pa to say nothing of a half dozen visits to relations and friends in New York proper. One of the worst and saddest things that happened five days after I returned was the death of my sister Mame who had been suffering for some time with kidney troubles, and that disarranged my entire program.[1] There was so much to attend to. I meant to write you while I was there but every minute was taken up with something—business trips which I had to make or writers & publishers whom I had to receive. And although I have been back quite all of all of this time I'm still not caught up with my letters of explanation and apology this one to you being still ahead of six others that I have still to write.

But I did so want to see your place as well as you and your husband for I have thought of you both times a plenty,—our more recent as well as our old time contacts. And I hope that generally you are all right—healthy and hopeful which is about the best one can be. Personally I am quite able physically—no sickness to speak of and still fairly constructive—so naturally I feel grateful and should, I think.

Do you ever come west? If so will you keep the above address in mind and notify me beforehand of your coming. I'd so much like to see you and go over as many interesting scenes as possible. Life and—or—time slips by so. And these days—before one knows it—a year has gone. I try to think that life—personality—is indestructible and sometimes think that I can prove it—via energy which is indestructible and of which in toto we are composed. Thus the

cell as molecule is something arranged & used by energy—since it is composed of atoms. But atoms are composed of electrons and electrons of ions—and there you are back to eternal energy. Hence the soul is what? Energy or what else, for all is energy,—eternal creative energy. And so a job may be waiting for us. Let's hope so.

Love & all good wishes to both of you. Write when you can. Maybe we'll meet next year, for I have a feeling that I am to be called back to N.Y. for a brief period. If so I'll be seeing you.

D—

[1] Shortly after receiving this letter, Markham wrote to H. L. Mencken to explain that she had delayed writing while awaiting news from "the Indiana playboy," whom she had expected to be visiting. News of Mame's death prompted Markham to ask Mencken, "Did you ever know his sister, Mame? She was one of the sweetest and dumbest women I ever knew. I went to see her after Theo and I had split. She cried so much over the situation that I never went back again. After all, it had been harder on me than on her" (5 Aug. 1944; Mencken Papers).

APPENDIX I

Annotated List of Omitted Correspondence

List of postcards from Dreiser with location, subject of photograph, and message

1. 11 Aug. 1915. Delaware Water Gap, PA: View of river. Passed here at 7:45 enroute to Scranton. The hotel life here is attractive. We came through Patterson, Rockaway[,] Dover, Hopatcong & Hackettstown. Guess who I was thinking all the way. So much love to my Kiddie.
2. 11 Aug. 1915. Delaware Water Gap, PA: The Kittinny Inn. Here's where we had dinner last night—late. Thought of you all day. Do wish you were along. Write me at Carmel.
3. 12 Aug. 1915. Wilkes Barre, PA: Mine scene. Rode all day in rain, in the mountains. Beautiful. This is a fairly characteristic suggestion out of Wilkesbarre. Hope to write a note tonight. The air makes me sleepy.
4. 13 Aug 1915. Wilkes Barre, PA: Stanton Breaker in operation. Another view. Do wish you were along. How goes the time with you. I hope you have luck in your stage hunt. Someday we will come over here auto-ing. I want you to see it.

5. 13 Aug. 1915. Nicholson, PA: Tunkhannock Viaduct. A wonderful bridge—2375 feet long—240 feet high. It's like something out of old Rome—the arches in the baths of Caracalla. I miss my wild Kiddie.
6. 13 Aug. 1915. Nicholson, PA: Nicholson Bridge. This is Nicholson, Pa—the same bridge as in the other picture—only from a distance. It is 10 A.M. & we are near Binghampton. Stayed last night at Factoryville. Hows my girl. Were having a great ride.
7. 13 Aug. 1915. Binghampton, NC: Riverside Drive. We passed through here—Binghampton at 4 today. We're heading for Oswego. That name seems appropriate. Doesn't it. Love to my Kiddie.
8. 13 Aug. 1915. Oswego, NY: River front. Franklin & I are out on a bridge over this river making a photo. I'm afraid you'll get tired of postals soon. We're off for Elmira in a few minutes. I think of you all the time. Regards to Edgar L—if you see him.
9. 14 Aug. 1915. Elmira, NY: Fitches Bridge. Stopped at Chemung last night. Wanted to write but was too tired. Breakfasted here this A.M. Expect to make Buffalo by evening or before. No accidents or troubles of any kind. A beautiful route. Booth talks of getting a bigger car & all of us going to Spain. Love to my kid.
10. 14 Aug. 1915. Corning, NY: Clock tower. Write me c/o Gen. Delivery Ft Wayne Indiana. I'll inquire there. Hope your having a good time in some day. Today is fine. Clear weather & a lovely country.
11. 14 Aug. 1915. Warsaw, NY: Crystal Brook. We ran from Chemung N.Y. to here, where we are going to stop for the night. This scene is just outside the town. Good roads all the way & we fairly tore up lonely aisles of trees and between great hills. I see you mostly sitting up in bed as you so often do, scratching your forhead. Sweetie!
12. 14 Aug. 1915. Warsaw, NY: Main Street. This is the heart of Warsaw N.Y. Only tonight this street is filled with people (country folks) & the middle of it is lined with autos. The most tumbledown of all the cars is marked "For Hire." X marks our hotel. We eat, buy Postal Cards & cruise around the one block to watch the people while Franklin tells stories of Indianans. So much love to my Kiddie.
13. 15 Aug. 1915. Buffalo, NY: Electric Bldg. 3 P.M. Aren't you getting tired of cards from yours truffly. Franklin is sitting by a grimy

factory inlet making a sketch just now. A license to go through Canada costs $20 so were off to Erie Pa along the Erie shore. Bright, hot, not a cloud. I wish Crygorn were here to.

14. 15 Aug. 1915. Erie, PA: Public Steamboat Landing. Erie hasn't much to show. This is as good as any. We stopped here last night. Just starting for Cleveland now. Love to my Kid.
15. 16 Aug. 1915. Conneaut, OH: Huett Electric Ore Unloader. This seems rather interesting. We're in Ohio now and nearing Ashtabula. Still perfect weather. Speed, the chauffeur is repairing a tire over the way. Prohibition out here everywhere. Hows my girl?
16. 16 Aug. 1915. Geneva-on-the-Lake, OH: Historical oak tree. Is this rather good for a photo. We're just passing this place. Will make Cleveland tonight. Don't these cards show I think of my Kid. Should be in Ft Wayne Ind. tomorrow night. Do juice love me.
17. 17 Aug. 1915. Cleveland, OH: Steamer approaching Jack Knife Bridge in harbor. 8 A.M. We're running through Cleveland now. Spent last night at Painsville. Expect to reach Ft. Wayne Ind. tonight. Then I'll get your letter. Hows my honey-girl. I wish you were along.
18. 17 Aug. 1915. Elyria, OH: East Broad Street Bridge. On our way to Sandusky. You & I ought to cruise around in this world out here sometime by trolley. It's interesting. How is Edgar Lee—Love to Crygorn.
19. 17 Aug. 1915. Vermillion, OH: Light House on Erie's shore. How is this for a lake view. We are still cruising along lake Erie. It seems to me I am writing you every few minutes—not that I don't want to. Love to Honey Girl.
20. 17 Aug. 1915. Cedar Point, OH: Boardwalk and bathing beach. Hows this for Ohio. The lake here is beautiful—quite wonderful—surf like the Jersey coast but no tide. Sometime we must follow the Erie shore on a train. It will pay us. Love to my Kiddie.
21. 17 Aug. 1915. Sandusky, OH: Memorial Lighthouse. Just another near Sandusky. Did the dog come?
22. 18 Aug. 1915. Fremont, OH: Home of the late ex-president Hayes. We're nearing the Indiana line. Will reach Warsaw tonight. Staid in Sandusky last night. It's warm & bright. Rained yesterday morning. This is the true middle west atmosphere. Love to my girl.

23. 18 Aug. 1915. Napoleon, OH: Washington St. looking east. This is fifty miles west of Fremont. We're all feeling fine. Ride as a rule from 8 A.M. to 8 P.M. or so. Much love.
24. 19 Aug. 1915. Defiance, OH: Clinton Street. Still cruising on Kiddie. Every few miles we strike a perfectly wonderful stretch of road—solid concrete and as smooth as a table. In about two hours I'll be inquiring for a letter at Ft. Wayne.
25. 19 Aug. 1915. Fort Wayne, IN: Fort Wayne in 1794. Got your letter here & so glad. Sorry your lonely & for Edgar Lees sick tummy. Will do Warsaw & Silver lake today & be in Carmel tomorrow. Expect to wind up whole thing this day week. It's delightful but I can see how one would get a little tired of motoring after a while—particularly of an extended tour.
26. 19 Aug. 1915. Warsaw, IN: Buffalo Street. Well here we are in Warsaw, at last. Things are changed considerably especially the people though I have found a few. Our old house has been utterly spoiled & the old high school is soon to be torn down. We are going to Silver lake yet tonight & then on to Manchester, Ind. Tomorrow we will be in Carmel.
27. 20 Aug. 1915. Peru, IN: Concrete Bridge and City Power Plant. This is over the Wabash at Peru, Ind. Passing through here 12 noon.
28. 20 Aug. 1915. Between Huntington and Wabash, IN: Vine covers trees "On the Banks of the Wabash." We're coming south now toward Carmel. Note the title on this one. I dreamed of you last night. In a few hours I get another letter or two, won't I. The towns out here amuse me & the people. We ought to build a summer place at Warsaw.
29. 24 Aug. 1915. Sullivan, IN: Courthouse. Went through Sullivan (me old home town) at noon today. I don't think it has grown a thousand in 30 years. The picture cards were the worst ever. Will tell you about it when I see you. Hows my Cryhon. Hot & clear down here.
30. 24 Aug. 1915. Vincennes, IN: St. Francis Xavier Cathedral, Parsonage and Old Historic Library. Here is one of the nicest views in Vincennes. Apparently this place hasn't grown 5,000 in 30 years. It's as slow and sleepy as any old town could be & right on the Wabash.

31. 26 Aug. 1915. French Lick, IN: Scene at Pluto Spring. This is my birthday and so were over here to celebrate—or at least I'd like you to think that. As a matter of fact it just now occurred to me. Wish you were here and will be glad to get back. As a matter of fact I'm homesick. [Dreiser dated the card "Aug. 27"—his birthday, but the card is postmarked "Aug. 26, 8 AM."]
32. 26 Aug. 1915. Bedford, IN: Ingalls Stone Mill. This is the place where the famous Indiana limestone comes from—a town of 10,000—40 miles north of French Lick & 25 miles south of Bloomington. I'll be over there in an hour. May get home by Friday night or sure Saturday. Hows my kid?
33. 27 Aug. 1915. Indianapolis, IN: telegram: ARRIVE SATURDAY PENNSYLVANIA ONE FORTY FIVE GET GENIUS PROOFS FROM JONES.
34. 29 Jan. 1916. Savannah, GA: Colonial Park. Arrived safely enough. Not even a cloud on the sea. Present address—for a week anyhow—320 East Liberty Street—Savannah.
35. 2 Feb. 1916. Tybee Beach, GA: Bathing at Tybee Beach. This is no doubt the way Tybee looks in Summer.
36. 9 Feb. 1916. Savannah, GA: Post Office and U.S. Court House. Here is where I get your letters.

Omitted Undated Letters

37. Monday [1914–1916]. Asks Markham to "give this boy the chapters."
38. Dreiser's brief response to an unnamed manuscript by Markham: "The justification for this is its portrayal of mental or spiritual being encased in a grotesque material body."

APPENDIX 2

"KM to TD" Poem Cycle

Sometime after Dreiser and Markham agreed to separate early in the summer of 1916, Markham was motivated to compose the following cycle of poems, which she typed out and sewed together as a fascicle and presented to Dreiser. The date and method of delivery are unknown, as is Dreiser's reaction to receiving it. That he preserved it suggests the poems mattered to him, even though they do not portray his part in the affair favorably. He also preserved two other versions of poem I, both titled "To My Love" and signed "Kirah Markham." One is pasted in a scrapbook kept by Markham (folder 14140); the other is held loosely, in the same folder as the poem cycle (folder 14546).

K.M. to Th.D.

I.

My love is fierce and strong,
The lamps of his eyes are almost hidden beneath their shadowing
eves.

In mood he is often sombre—
Then too, he is often contentious,
And when contentious his voice rises to a high nasal whine.
He rocks when he walks,
But there is always rythm.
He rocks when he sits,
And folds his handkerchief,
And sings,—
And there is always rythm.
Tenderness comes to him rarely,
But when it comes it is wistful in its beauty;
In his soul is the flight of pigeons,
In his eyes are the stars.

II.

Once on a time a woman loved her husband.
He loved her in return, but he found other women's faces lovely.
In the pain of childbirth she bore him two daughters,
But no travail could free her of the pain of his unfaithfulness.
It almost choked her,
And she left him.
Now in her loneliness she seeks out other men,
Even as lonely women sought her husband,
And she has taken you from me, oh my husband!

III.

The elevator boy has my gold ring;
He stole it and a heavy box of pennies
While we were romping.
Romping in the fields!
How strange it seems to have once romped in the fields!
The elevator boy has my gold ring.
We long since spent a million times the pennies.
But none can move the iron ring round my heart.

IV.

You are like the weather-vane on Jefferson Market Court.
Beneath are pain and anguish and unending sorrow,
But in each wind that blows you think is happiness.
Lola calls you east,
Ella calls you west,
Nina calls you north,
I call you south, my heart,
South is the warmth of my love.
Only where one loves, beloved, can one's happiness lie.
But you spin like the weather vane on Jefferson Market Court.

V.

Those were bright days!
Gathering strawberries in scarlet clusters,
Thick on a long green stem.
Berry-red stains on our kissing mouths,
Berry-red passion in our hearts,
Under the hot June sun!

VI.

I read your letters—
How I loathed to do it!
And you—oh now I know you are bitter toward me!
And yet it was not greater proof
Of infidelity I wanted.
I did not need that did I want to leave you.

I wanted reassurance;
I wanted to believe in you.
(And you made it so hard for me!)
Knowing you wanted the favor of lenience
You fought me for it, calling it your right.

I did not get my reassurance;
I did not get my love-right to believe in you.
But oh, I love you still!

VII.

Even as I sit and write
Verses to you whom I love
You are sitting at your desk
Writing verses to another.

VIII.

It was not lack of love that made me leave you.
I once built worlds of dreams about our life,
Building a home where only love should bide,
Peopling it with the faces of kind friends,
Filling its halls with voices of our children.
Oh the sweet pain of such too perfect dreams!
I do not blame you that you could not love so,
But oh, I yearn for what I dreamed of you!
It was not lack of love that made me leave you.

IX.

The young men come daily to my chamber,
I lie aweary, aweary on my couch.
I do not want their adoration.
Aweary, aweary is my heart,
Their little words beat idly on its door.
I fain would love them,
All of them,
One of them,
But always aweary, aweary is my heart.
I deck myself in robes of festival,

Paint black my eyes to hide the marks of tears.
But you, oh my beloved, never come unto my chamber!

X.

You who have said that fame is all that counts,
But that you care no more for fame—
You wrote me once in a beloved letter
That life held no more for you but my growth,
But watching my fame spread.

And I cared nought for fame.
All I have asked of life was for your love.
Was that too much?
It was a prize,
A jewel of great worth,
The rose window in the chapel of my heart.
But how could I want else,
Dreaming I had your love?

Now I sit lone,
Building my dreams of fame,
Piling up incense before new, false gods
To fill the empty chapel in my heart.

Index

Illustrations are shown by a page reference in *italics*.

A

Abelard, Peter, 136
Adachi Kinnosuke, 89
Adams, Wayman, 643
Aisen, Maurice, 319, 464
Allen, Ben, 553, 609, 649–50
Allen, Jerrard Grant, 601
Allen, Molly, 609, 649–50
Altgeld, John P., 313
American Diaries, xxvi
American Laborer, An, 275, 292, 297, 611
American People's Theater, 359
American Tragedy, An, xvi, 631n2, 633–4, 633n2, 636n1
Ames, Winthrop, 240
Amick, Robert, 274, 362, 364, 416, 422, 427, 544
Anderson, Margaret, xxx
Anderson, Mary, 17
Anderson, Sherwood, xxx, 637
Andrews, Ann, 614
Anglin, Margaret, 582
Argenteuil, Heloise d,' 136
Armstrong, Paul, 453
Armstrong, Rella Abell, 454n3, 572, 582, 584
Arnold, Matthew, 101
Art (magazine), 105
Audrey (film), *532*
Auerbach, Joseph S., 615
Authors League of America, 385, 386

B

Bad Girl, The, 615
Bagot, William King, 517

Balzac, Honore De
Pere Goriot, 385
Band Box Theatre, 379, 388–9, 581
Barnsdall, Aline, 353, 374n1, 472, 607, 608
Barnum, Gertrude, 267
Barrett Browning, Elizabeth, 136
Barry, Griffen, 544, 574
Barrymore, Jack, 130, 614–15, 615
Bayne, Beverley, 506
Belasco Theatre, 468, 497n1
Bell-Gausky, Mdm, 328
Benson, Allen, 129, 223, 224
Bernhardt, Sarah, 100, 156, 225n2
Benrimo, J. Harry, 452
Bigelow, Lillian, 456
Bigelow, Poultney, 331–4, 337, 345, 346–7, 348–52, 422, 448, 456, 558
Billy the Oysterman, 464
Bissell, Arthur, 373, 395, 423
Bjørnson, Bjørnstjerne
When the Young Vine Blooms, 359, 395n3, 449n6
Blair, John, 394, 398
Blinn, Holbrook, 582
Bloom, Marion, 572, 595–6, 615
Blossom, Henry M.,
Checkers, 441
Blue, Monte, 633
Blue Sphere, The, 212, 357, 534
Blum, Jerome, 316, 319, 643
Boas, Klaus Heinrich, 464
Bogardus, Edgar, 252, 375
Bondman, The (film), 517
Boni, Albert, 381n2, 389
Boni, Charles, 391n6
Book About Myself, A, 611, 625
Booth, Franklin, 148, 170, 218, 219, 345, 376, 380, 408, 416, 422, 427, 498, 565, 595
illustrations for *A Hoosier Holiday*, 560, 581
road trip to Carmel, Indiana, 356–7, 381n3, 445–55
Booth, Susan Wright, 448
"Born Thief, The" ("The Prince Who Was a Thief"), 517, 602
Boston, 24, 25, 27, 30–2, 36, 39, 41–2, 43, 103, 146
Botticelli, Sandro, 80n1
Boy Scout movement, 531n4, 541, 544
Boyd, Frederick Sumner, 289
Bradley Hotel, Chicago, 280, 283–4, 285, 310, 362
Braslau, Sophie, 410, 417, 434
Brennan, Austin, 296
Brennan, Mame (Mary Frances)
death, 665
during the Depression, 651
Dreiser's meetings with, 422, 447, 458, 459, 512, 523, 544, 551, 553, 595
Dreiser's time at her Staten Island home, 211, 214, 216, 292, 314, 318–19, 321, 328, 336
house at Westfield, 546, 574, 575, 582
house in New York, 372, 376, 383, 426, 429–30, 513, 515
management of a summer house, 546
and Markham, 446, 513, 521, 539, 666n1
New York house, 546
and the O'Neills, 534–5, 575

photograph, *192*
restaurant, 602
Brevoort Hotel, 121, 138, 171, 229, 245, 515, 553, 572
Brieux, Eugene, 128
Brinkman, Florence, 170
Broadhurst, George, 406
Brody, Atler, 620
Brown, Lillian Fox, 596
Brown, Robert Carlton "Bob," 427
Browne, Maurice (Don), xvii, 361, 618, 643
as director of the Chicago Little Theatre, 3, 27, 42, 60, 75, 131n2, *183*, 495
disapproval of the Dreiser-Markham affair, 115, 159, 161, 241, 392, 404
friendship with Markham, xxiv, 5, 361, 373, 400
lecture, 394
Browning, Robert, 136
Bulwark, The, xvi, xxvii, xxviii, 108, 250, 275, 356, 400, 469, 492, 505, 506, 510, 517, 519, 528, 533, 555, 588, 623, 625
Burke, Claire, 530, 531n3, 572, 601, 615
Bushman, Francis X., 506
Bustanoby's Restaurant, 343
Butcher, Fanny, xxvii, xxx
Buzzell, Francis, 239, 310, 362, 377, 380, 382, 383–4, 390, 408, 565

C

Caine, Hall, 517
Campbell, Louise, xxvii–xxviii
Carmen (Bizet), 39, 235
Carmen, Bliss, 162, 166
Carr, Michael Carmichael, 350
Cary, Augusta, 6
Cary, Lucian, xxx, 6, 73, 539, 567, 574
Century Company, 52, 105, 160, 214, 216, 295, 314
Chambers, Robert W., 355, 415
Chapman, Frederic, 316
Charpentier, Gustave
Louise, 231
Chekhov, Anton, 359
The Seagull, 581
Chesterton, Cecil, 388, 401, 405, 420
Cheston, Dorothea, 551
Cheyney, Mabel, 323
Chicago
bohemian artist crowd, xxx, xxxiii, 5
Dreiser's plans to join Markham in, 220, 222, 223, 227, 230, 237, 242, 243, 249, 254, 255–6, 260, 293, 298, 303, 304, 306, 307–9, 310
Markham and Dreiser's search for rooms, 261, 263, 264, 267, 280–1, 283–4, 285, 306
Markham at her father's in Chicago, 543, 548–9, 552, 553, 555
Markham at the Bradley Hotel, 280, 283–4, 285
Markham in *Conscience*, 354–5
Markham missing Dreiser whilst in Chicago (1915), 354–5, 362, 363, 374, 375–6, 378, 413–14, 417–18

Chicago (*Continued*)
Markham's hopes for a future with Dreiser in Chicago, 548–9, 550–1, 554, 555, 558–9, 571–2
Markham's return to Chicago (1916), 470–1
Whitman dinner, 592
Chicago Literary Review, xxiv
Chicago Little Theatre, xxx
acting company, *183*
cast members' disagreement with Browne, 60, 75
Dreiser's interest in, 2, 3
female members, 4
founding of, 131n2
the Fuller Sisters, 171–2
influence of, 2–3
Markham's visit to, 241, 252
Mrs Havelock Ellis' plays, 375, 379
Nordfeldt's sets, 92n2, 97
puppet shows, 373
in St. Louis, 25, 28, 30, 35, 36, 37, 39, *185*
touring, xxiv, 19, 24
The Trojan Women production, xxiv, 1, 3–4, 24, 34, 66, 92n2, 130, *182*
Churchill, Winston, 599
Clark, Marguerite, 240
Coates, Joseph Horner, 326, 329
Cobb, Irvine, 599
Comstock, Anthony, 308
Comstock, Ray, 170
Conrad, Joseph, 222
Conscience (Taft)
Markham in, xv, *191*, 353–4, 362, 367, 373, 384, 392, 395, 396–7, 400, 407, 410, 414, 415, 417, 418, 419, 421–2, 426, 432–3, 436, 468, 607
Markham's reviews, 353–4, 421–2, 425, 431, 444, 445
Cook, George Cram (Jig), 6, 376, 380, 389, 400, 409, 616
Cook, Mollie, 6
Cooper, Pearl, 434
Cotton, Arthur, 380
Cowan, Percy, 364
Crabbe, George, 477n3
Craig, Edward, 3
Crane, Stephen, 355
George's Mother, 441
Crist & Herrick, 333, 340, 366, 409, 421, 475, 490
Crowley, Aleister, 423–4, 457n3
"Cryhon," term, xxix
Cubism, 48–9, 97
Cumberland Hotel, 171
Currey, Margery, xvii, 5, 6, 321, 548 *see also* Dell, Margery
Cushman's Bakery, 386
Cutting, Winifred, 379

D

Daggett, Mabel Potter, 522, 558, 577, 578
Daly, Arnold, 495
Dante, 136
Darrach, Dr, 416
Darrow, Clarence, 175, 236n2, 323, 581, 585, 592, 599
Davenport, Butler, 610, 620
Davidson, John, 565
Dawn, xxvii, 316, 322
Dawn, Hazel, 521
Dawson, Nell P., 525n9

Dell, Floyd
amateur stage productions at the Liberal Club, 357–8
Chicago's bohemian artist crowd, 5
as a critic, 9–10, 426
divorce, 125–6, 139, 158
Dreiser's friendship with, xvii, xxvii, 81, 446, 447, 494
as editor of *Friday Literary Review*, 1, 9, 13
editorship of *The Masses*, 259
Enigma: A Domestic Conversation, 358
friendship with Markham, 467–8
with George Foster, 57n2
infidelities, 6, 125–6, 139
introduces Dreiser to the Chicago Little Theatre, 1
Legend: A Romance, 358
Markham's affair with, xxiv, 5–6, 7, 9–11, 12–13, 55, 68–9, 72–3, 76–7, 210
My Lady's Mirror, 358
in New York, 13
The Perfect Husband, 357
plays, 462, 464
portrait, *181*
relationship with Marjorie Jones, 13, 34n1, 99n2, 127n1, 135, 139, 240–1, 464, 467, 494, 615
review of *A Traveler at Forty*, 277–8
review of *The "Genius*," 64, 73
Women as World Builders, 53n2
Dell, Margery, 32–3, 125–6, 139, 158, 234 *see also* Currey, Margery
Dial, The, 644
Dickens, Charles, 20
Dillman, Willard, 485n3, 499
Dodge, B. W., 47n2, 476
Don Quixote (film), 514
Doran, George H., 237, 260, 292, 294, 295, 314
Dorr, Dorothy, 246
Doty, Douglas Z., 267, 292, 295, 302
Doubleday Page & Co, 242, 248
Dreiser, Cacilia Sylvia, 422, 447
Dreiser, Edward Minerod, 235 *see also* Dresser, Edward
Dreiser, Rome, 652n2
Dreiser, Sara White
divorce negotiations, xxx–xxxi, 112n1, 356, 369, 383, 392, 396, 406–7, 427, 437
marriage to Dreiser, 22n2
as "thin pry," 223, 224n2
3609 Broadway flat, 12, 66, 124, 209, 215n1
Dreiser, Theodore *see also individual works*
age difference with Markham, 9, 144, 538–9
appearance, xxvii, xxviii
on the artistic life, 208, 264–5
attractiveness to women, xxvii–xxviii, 420
Award of Merit Medal, 663
belief in emotional and mental telepathy, 279n1
at the Bigelows, 331–4, 337, 345, 346–7, 348–52, 456
carbuncles, 310–11, 312, 313–14
cohabitation with Markham, xxvi, 44, 45, 91, 97, 103, 106, 107, 150

Dreiser, Theodore (*Continued*)
concerns over knowledge of their affair, 98, 109–10, 123
considers children with Markham, xvi, xxvi, 209, 276, 278, 283, 355, 385, 408
contemplation of marriage with Markham, 95–6, 106, 114, 164
correspondence with other women, 467, 469, 470, 487, 524, 526–8, 536–8, 539–40, 562–3, 568–70
daily routines, xxvi, 28, 36, 59, 60, 67, 93, 94, 96, 107, 335–6, 369–70
decorating the West 10th Street apartment, 335–6, 338, 340, 376, 384
descriptions of nature, xxv–xxvi, 48, 51, 58, 60–1
descriptions of New York, 38, 46–7, 51, 52, 58, 61, 62, 74–5, 77–8, 79, 81, 95, 113, 163–4, 167, 173, 291, 323
divorce negotiations with Sara, xxx–xxxi, 112n1, 356, 369, 383, 392, 396, 406–7, 427, 437
Dreiser and Markham's planned meeting in Boston, 24, 25, 27, 30–2, 36, 39, 41–2, 43, 103, 146
end of relationship with Markham, xxiv–xxv, xxxi–xxxii, 468, 571–2, 579–81, 580–2, 584–5, 587–8, 594
expectations of fidelity from Markham, 10, 55, 69, 82, 103, 104, 139, 148, 210, 254, 257–8, 562–3, 568–9
financial struggles, xvi, xvii, xxvi–xxvii, 209, 216, 219, 225, 272, 274, 275–6, 286, 292–4, 303, 308, 354–5, 356, 364, 366, 383, 396, 403–4, 427–8, 430, 491, 541–2, 587–8
as a "free agent," 579–80, 593, 609
friendship with Dell, xvii, xxvii, 81, 446, 447, 494
on the Hymans, 6–7, 264
ill health, 269, 272, 280, 281, 285, 286, 294, 298, 380, 424, 440, 443, 458, 513, 548, 550, 556, 636, 655
inclusion of comic newspaper clippings, 58n1, 59n1, 61n3, 63n2, 65n4, 66n4, 70n5, 72n3, 74n6, 76n3, 85n5, 88n4, 91n7, 92n3, 95n3, 97n3, 99n6, 104n3, 109n5, 112n2, 115n3, 119n5, 124n1, 129n3, 137n8, 141n5, 143n7, 145n3, 149n3, 151n3, 154n9, 157n3, 161n6, 165n2, 168n2, 174n4, 230n6, 568n2
infidelities, xxiv, xxvi, xxxi–xxxii, 213n 1, 323, 467–8, 527, 586, 609
interest in handwriting, 56, 85–7
jealousy and insecurity, xxiv, xxv, 9, 10, 26, 62, 68–9, 72–3, 77, 81–3, 88, 91, 117–18, 163, 209–10, 229, 232, 257–9, 260, 261–2, 266, 268, 269–70
jury service, 167, 534

lack of letters from Markham, 18, 19, 58, 60, 93, 127–8, 304–5, 330, 334, 387, 477, 478, 479–80, 499
lease on 3609 Broadway apartment, 12, 66, 67, 124, 215n1
letter to Markham [6 May 1913], 112–13, 114n1, *186*
letter to Markham [14 May 1916], *194*, 470–1, 562–4
letter-writing by, xvi, xxvi–xxvii, xxxii, xxxiv, xxxvii, 12, 60, 68, 210, 521, 523
loneliness, xxxi, 9, 26, 28, 29, 40, 56, 58, 128, 143, 210, 218, 247–8, 299, 301–2, 303, 419–20, 427, 429, 533
long-term future with Markham, 140, 209, 239, 384
in Los Angeles, 611, 623–4, 625–6, 655
"mad world" expression, 20, 69–70
at Mame Dreiser's Staten Island home, 211, 214, 216, 292, 314, 318–19, 321, 328, 336
Markham's bas-relief of, 525n4, 539
marriage to Sara White, xxx–xxxi, 22n2, 66, 112n1, 124, 406–7
meeting with Markham, xxiii, xxiv, 1–2
Metropolitan Museum of Art, 305
Mirror Films venture, 506
missing Markham, 567–8
missing Markham while she's on tour, 218, 219, 224, 225, 232
missing Markham whilst in Chicago, 354–5, 364–5
neuralgia in his shoulder, 221, 224
offer from B.W. Dodge, 47n2
one-act plays, 69, 79, 170, 212, 357, 358, 369, 439
Ouija boards, 481, 493
passionate love for Markham, xxv, xxix–xxx, 8–9, 17, 18, 19–21, 22, 33, 47–8, 50, 51, 73, 78, 83–4, 93–4, 102–5, 113–14, 150–1, 166–7, 265–6, 274–5, 296
personal philosophy, 39–40
in Philadelphia, 322–3, 324, 326, 328, 330
on physical beauty, 241–2
physical exercise, 458, 462
pictures of Markham, 144–5, 316
portraits/photographs, *176, 187, 190, 193, 196*, 599
post-relationship feelings for Markham, 619, 624–5, 626, 649
pursuit of Markham, 7–8
as a Reicher playwright, 359
research on contemporary realist novels, 355–6, 385, 390, 392–3, 396, 400, 405, 412, 415, 426–7, 429, 441
road trip to Carmel, Indiana, 356–7, 381n3, 445–55
in Savannah, 468, 473–86, 488–514, 488–542
sexual attraction to Markham, 53–4, 96, 98, 156–7, 168, 214, 221, 235, 287, 494, 564
social life in New York, 52, 56, 69, 79, 88–90, 96, 99–100, 106, 117, 128–9, 142, 148, 152, 154, 156, 221–2, 228–9,

Dreiser, Theodore (*Continued*)
239, 248, 259, 267, 299, 341, 362, 363–4, 376, 380, 404–5, 410, 419–21, 434, 556, 572, 573–4, 576, 577, 581–2, 584, 591, 595–6, 601
social life in New York and Markham's exclusion from, 467, 468–9, 470, 487
social life in Savannah, 500–1
strained relationship with Markham, 460–1, 464, 467, 470–1, 474–5, 478, 480–2, 501–3, 504, 509–10, 519, 520, 521–2, 523–4, 526, 527–8, 541, 542, 552–3, 553
at the theatre, 389–90, 391–2, 394–5
in Washington, 543
on writers and their muses, 136
writing at 3609 Broadway apartment, 209, 219, 223
writing/working, 25, 28, 33, 35, 37–8, 40, 46, 48, 54, 58, 69, 73–4, 79, 98, 108, 111–12, 116, 119, 148, 151–2, 158, 209, 217, 220, 221, 223, 232, 322–3, 376, 384, 501, 510, 517, 519
Dresser, Edward, 447, 615
Drey, Anne Estelle, 341, 362, 364, 376, 391–2, 409, 412, 423, 424, 463n3 *see also* Rice, Anne Estelle
pictures under Dreiser's care, *196*, 410n1, 462, 464, 599
Dudley, Katherine, 643
Duer, Caroline
"Nocturne," 85n4
Duncan, Augustin, 365n1, 393n3, 460, 495, 594
Duncan, Isadora, 363, 376, 412, 586
Duncan, Margherita, 594
Duneka, Frederick, 211, 290, 295, 308

E

Eastman, Max, 389, 390n1, 438
Eddy, Mary Baker, 51n1
Elliott, Maxine, 56, 208
Ellsworth, William Webster, 52, 292, 295
Elman, Mischa, 412
"Elyhon," term, xxix, 8, 17
Enright, Florence, 581
Erlanger, Abraham Lincoln, 395, 398, 400
Esherick, Wharton, 643
Evans, George, 430
Experimental Theater Company, xxv

F

Falls, Charles Buckle, 259
Famous Players Film Company, The, 521
Fanny's First Play (Shaw), 246
Federal Art Project, 646, 657n1, 659, 660
Ficke, Arthur Davison, xxx, 10, 12, 81, 126, 135, 158, 238, 421, 467
film industry, xvi, 505–6, 507n4, 517, 521, 523, 532–3
Financier, The, xxvii, 80, 100, 160, 274, 275, 295, 330, 376, 427, 496
reviews, 101, 105
Fine Arts Theatre, 240, 353–4

Fireside Club, 531
First World War, 358
Flagg, James Montgomery, 18n5
Flaubert, Gustave
  Madame Bovary, 368
Fort, Charles, 456
Foster, George Burman, 55, 97, 118, 123, 153
Fox, George, 451
Frank, Alice, 522, 538, 586–7, 588
Frank, Waldo, 601
Frederick, Pauline, 532, 535
Freie Bühne, 358
Freie Volksbühne, 359
French, Percy W., 462
Frenssen, Gustav, 439–40, 465n1
Friedman, I. K.
  By Bread Alone, 441
Fuessle, Newton A., 579
Fuller, H. B., 355
  The Cliff-Dwellers, 441
  With the Procession, 441, 635
Fulta, Ludwig, 353
Futurism, 48

G

Gaither, David Stoner, xxv, *198*, 629, 637, 641, 643, 646–7, 654, 656–7, 665
Gaither, Harry Eugene, 645–6
Gallery of Women, A, 143n7, 476, 625, 628n1, 637, 662n2
Gallup, Patrick Henry, 376
Gallup's Restaurant, 386, 408, 429
Garland, Hamlin, 355
  Main-Travelled Roads, 441
"Genius," The, xxvii
  in bookstores, 477, 496
  Dell's review, 10, 64, 73
  dramatization, 625, 626
  format, 521, 528
  John Lane to publish, 356, 357, 372, 496, 521, 528, 558
  Markham to copy, 232–3, 252
  obscenity charges, xvi, 112n1, 310n1, 597, 598, 599, 601–2, 605, 617n7
  possible publishers for, 250, 275, 330, 341–2
  proofs, 349, 451, 455n1
  reviews, 73, 108, *190*, 494, 524n3, 525n9
  serialisation of, 429
  spoof of, 578
George Cohan Review, 575, 576
George H. Doran Co., 217, 562, 572
"Geralda Lyle," 6, 7
Gilmore, William H., 395
Girl in the Coffin, The, 69, 70n3, 80n3, 105, 170, 212, 326, 357, 358, 381n2, 522, 560, 561
  Reicher's production, 358, 359, 360, 363n4, 395, 412
Glaspell, Susan, 376n4, 400
Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 136
Gollomb, Joseph, 408
Gomez, Doris, 423, 424, 437, 456
Goodrich, Elizabeth, 4, 28, 39, 90, 123, 140, 159, 161, 169, *183*, 373 *see also* Reckitt, Elizabeth Goodrich
Goodwin, Nat, 506
Gould, Joe (the "Village Christ"), 386

Gouled, Felix, 53, 128–9, 143
Gouled, Marie Heilbron, 53, 56, 71, 75, 112, 117, 128–9, 143, 165
Greil, Cecile L., 223, 225, 588, 590, 591
Grigsby, Emilie, 211, 314

H

Hale, Ralph. T., 330, 364, 395, 400, 458
Halley, Horace, 599
Halsey, (William) Forrest, 427
Hammond, Percy, 354
Hand of the Potter, The, xvi, 1–2, 601, 603, 605, 611, 614–15, 616, 622
Hapgood, Hutchins, 615
  An Anarchist Woman, 473
  The Spirit of Labor, 474
Hapgood, Norman, 303
Hardy, Thomas, xvi, 118
Harper's
  possible publication of *The "Genius,"* 528
  publication of *The Financier*, 427
  publication of *The Titan*, 223, 227, 231, 237, 239, 242, 244, 250, 251, 254, 260, 265, 266–7, 269, 272–3, 274, 278, 281–2, 284, 286–7, 288–9, 290
  rejection of *The Titan*, 210–11, 294–5, 297, 300, 302, 308, 318
Harper's Weekly, 369
Harriman, Ethel, 629
  Romantic–I Call It, 204
Harriman, Raymond Lee, 300
Harris, Frank, 426, 576
Hartridge, Catharine Honoria McIntire, 500, 535, 541
Hartridge, Clifford Wayne, 484, 489, 506, 553, 572, 574, 576, 577, 578
Hartridge, Walter, 489, 490, 500, 535
Harvey, Rupert, 484
Hatton, Fanny, 420
Hauptmann, Gerhardt
  Elga, 358, 359, 362, 364, 388, 391–2, 394–5, 398
  The Weavers, xv, 360, 393, 449n6
Havelock Ellis, Mrs, 375, 379
Hecht, Ben, 323
Heinsberg, Emma, 338, 340
Hell's Hinges (film), 532
Henley, William Ernest, 245n3
Henry, Arthur, 221
Henry, O., 405
Herberman, Josephine O'Neill, 228, 534, 575
Herberman, (Mary) Carmel O'Neill, 228, 229, 285, 345, 348, 420, 534, 575
Herrick, Charles E., 334n2, 355
Hersey, Harold, 521, 528, 534, 550, 553, 572, 574, 578, 582, 584
Hinckley, Theodore Ballou, 23
Hines, Dixie (George Wilmer), 448, 452, 489, 495, 497n2, 515, 523, 539, 555, 558, 578, 605
Hitchcock, Ripley, 244, 250, 262, 267

Hoffe, Monckton
Panthea, 212
Hoggson, William J., 506
Holladay, Paula, 379, 384, 389, 409, 420, 424, 437
Holley, Horace, 410n1, 463n3, 465
Holt, Edwin, 263
Holzheimer, Jeanette ("Nettie"), 132–3
Holzheimer, Max, 132–3, 375, 379, 452
Hoosier Holiday, A, xvi
Booth's illustrations, 560, 581
copy to Markham, 602, 603
John Lane Co.'s publication, 458, 555, 556, 560, 564–5
Markham's cover, 559–60, 565
preparations for publication, 544, 562, 565, 572, 581, 582, 588, 591, 597
road trip to Carmel, Indiana, 356–7, 381n3, 445–55
writing of in Savannah, xxvii, 357, 468, 474, 498, 500, 505
Hopkins, Arthur, 395, 614, 615, 616
Hopp, Julius, 360
Hopper, (William) DeWolf, 514
Hopwood, Avery, 395
Hotel Arlington, 515, 517
Hotel Breslin, 129
Howells, W. D., 18n5, 355
Hoyns, Henry, 259, 267
Huffaker, Lucy, 389
Hume, Edna, 410, 420
Huneker, James Gibbons, 415
Hyman, Arabelle (Belle), xxiv, 4
Chicago apartment, 362
disapproval of the Markham-Dreiser affair, xxiv, xxvii, xxxiii, 7, 13, 110, 122–3, 124, 160, 223–4, 258, 334, 547, 558–9
possible move to New York, 162, 167
relationship with Markham, 7, 134–5, 165, 255, 262, 264, 271–2, 273, 275, 336, 340, 344, 346, 393, 534
suicide, 7
unhappy marriage, xxx, 115, 116n1, 262–3, 271–2, 334, 339
Hyman, Berg & Co., 4, 132–3, 137–8
Hyman, Dorothy, xxiv, xxxiii, 4, 45, 47, 107, 120, 143, 272, 275, 335, 336, 550, 555, 592, 598, 647
Hyman, Elaine *see* Markham, Kyra (Elaine Hyman)
Hyman, Fannie, 371–2, 399
Hyman, Frank Sigmund, 371
Hyman, Harry Sigmund, 4
boarding house, 371
burglaries at Hyman, Berg & Co., 132–3, 137–8
business and financial troubles, 271–2, 273, 282, 306
disapproval of the Markham-Dreiser affair, xxiv, xxxiii, 7, 110, 160, 230–1, 334, 559
Dreiser's depictions of in "Sidonie," 629, 641
introduction to Dell, 6
introduction to Dreiser, 6–7
Markham's move to New York, 116

Hyman, Harry Sigmund (*Continued*)
Markham's time spent with, 375, 376, 379, 394, 543, 548–9
unhappy marriage, xxx, 115, 116n1, 262–3, 271–2, 334, 339
Wisconsin cottage, 146, 350, 352
Hyman, Robert, 4, 37, 115, 120, 137, 169, 171, 272, 371–2, 506, 647

I

In the Dark, 212, 357, 369, 534
Ireland, Alleyne, 346–7, 348–9

J

Jack's Restaurant, 299
Jacobs-Bond, Carrie, 158n2
James, Henry
What Maisie Knew, 412
James, William, 355, 528
Jarmuth, Edith DeLong, 142, 152, 214, 217, 225, 289, 319, 326, 341, 458, 515, 599
Jenison, Madge, 221, 229, 232, 456, 517
Jennie Gerhardt, 99, 102, 238, 252, 275, 288, 295, 323
John Lane Co.
advances to Dreiser, 362, 400
Dreiser's break with, 615
Dreiser's indebtedness, 497n5
publication of *A Hoosier Holiday*, 458, 555, 556, 560, 564–5
publication of *The "Genius,"* 356, 357, 372, 496, 521, 528, 558
publication of *The Titan*, 211, 314, 316, 330, 356, 496
Johnson, Arthur (Jack), 101, 130, 153
Johnson, Martyn, 120
Johnson, Owen, 76
Jones, Ellis, 129, 458, 523
Jones, J. Jefferson, 314, 447, 476, 528, 539, 550, 555, 601, 615
Jones, Llewellyn, 592
Jones, Marjorie
affair with Dell, 13, 34n1, 99n2, 127n1, 135, 139, 240–1, 464, 467, 494, 615
affair with Ficke, 135
with Markham in New York, 12, 31, 97, 110, 116, 126, 170, 173, 175
nude photos, 464
Jones, Mary Harris "Mother," 101
Jonson, Raymond, xxx, *184*

K

Kalich (Kalish), Bertha, 75, 80, 88, 99–100, 117, 125, 142, 150, 170
Kallen, Horace, 19
Katz, Mr, 250, 267
Kauffman, Reginald Wright, 443
Kearney, Patrick, 634
Keats, John, xvi, 64, 101
Kemp, Harry, 423, 476, 486, 529, 538, 574
Kemp, Mary *see* Pyne, Mary
Kennerley, Mitchell, 314, 326
Kenton, Edna, 139, 267
Kildare, Owen
My Mamie Rose, 364, 412, 415

Kiper, Miriam, 121, 235, 240n2, 282, 296, 362, 377–9, 379, 380, 553, 565
Klaw, Marc, 395, 398, 400
Knight, Bertha, 579, 582
Knopf, Alfred, 248, 323, 519
Kreisler, Fritz, 412
Krog, Fritz, xvii, 214, 218–19, 221, 223, 233, 336, 367, 407–8, 409, 415–16, 427, 430, 434–5
Kruger, Otto, 246
Kubitz, Estelle Bloom, xxxii, xxxiii, xxxvii, 595–6, 609, 615, 618n1
Kuhn, Arthur K., 402
Kurt, Melanie, 412

L

La Guardia, Fiorella, 661
Lambart, Harry, 506
Landis, Kenesaw Mountain, 313
Langner, Lawrence, 379–80, 441
  Licensed, 389–90, 439
Laska, Edward, 56, 170
Laughing Gas, 212, 311, 357, 379–80, 522–3, 528, 534, 561, 605
Le Barbier, Charles, 590
Leigh, Frederick T., 290, 294–5, 376
Lemon, Courtney, 214, 232, 267
Lengel, Nelle McNef, 422, 432
Lengel, William, xxvii, 1, 8, 20, 33, 73, 211, 235, 296, 299, 314, 330, 341, 343, 345–6, 422, 426, 547, 574, 576
Leslie, Amy, 252, 353–4, 431, 445, 446
Levetzow, Ulricke von, 136n6
Levy, Louis, 615
Lewis, Alfred Henry
  Wolfville Days, 441
Lewis, Karl, 142
Lewis, Sinclair, 575
Libbey, Laura Jean, xvii, 89, 101
Liberal Club, 229, 233, 240, 267, 357, 386, 610, 611 *see also* Holladay, Paula
  Polly's Restaurant, 381n1
Light, Evelyn, 651
Light in the Window, The, 357, 369, 496
Little, Crosby, 577
Little, Nyan, 572, 575, 577
Little Theatre movement, xv, 2–3, 3 *see also* Browne, Maurice; Chicago Little Theatre; Los Angeles Little Theater
Livingston, Belle, 648, 649, 650
London, Jack, 355, 391n5
Long, Ray, 73, 296n5, 383
Lords of High Decision, The (film), 523
Los Angeles Little Theater, xxv, 472, 597, 607–8
Lure, The, xxiv, *189*, 207, 208, 211, 215, 217, 230, 238, 244, 246, 252, 263, 300, 306, 310, 311, 312, 314, 316, 322
Luther, Martin, 98

M

M. Knoedler & Co, 643
MacDowell Colony, 646, 661
MacKaye, Percy
  Caliban of the Yellow Sands, 584

Mackey, Clarence, 465
MacPherson, Jeannie, 632
Maeterlinck, Maurice, 23, 389
Maguire, Loretta, 555
Mann, Bertha, 522
Markham, Kyra (Elaine Hyman)
acting career, xxiii–xxv, xxxiii, 11, 12, 116, 125, 150, 208, 212, 316, 327, 405, 422, 436, 438, 439, 441, 447, 448, 453, 454, 468, 469–70, 471–2, 486, 502, 503n3, 518, 521, 581–2, 584, 600–1, 607–8, 610, 620
affair with Dell, xxiv, 5–6, 7, 9–11, 12–13, 55, 68–9, 72–3, 76–7, 139, 210
age difference with Dreiser, 9, 144, 538–9
as an artist and lithographer, xxv, 5, *201, 202, 203, 205*, 535, 547, 567, 628–9, 639, 646–7, 652, 653, 656, 658, 662
automobile accident, 647
bas-relief of Dreiser's head, 525n4, 539
at the Bigelows, 350, 351–2
book illustrations, *204*
clothes, xxx, 67, 165–6, 169, 247, 249, 254, 288, 404, 447
cohabitation with Dreiser, xxvi, 44, 45, 91, 97, 103, 106, 107, 150
on the commercialism of the stage, 208, 256, 264–5
in *Conscience*, xv, *191*, 353–5, 362, 367, 373, 384, 392, 395, 396–7, 400, 407, 410, 414, 415, 417, 418, 419, 421–2, 426, 432–3, 436, 468, 607
in *Conscience* (reviews), 353–4, 421–2, 425, 431, 444, 445
considering ending her affair with Dreiser, 537–40, 543
considers children with Dreiser, 234, 399, 422, 432, 488, 493
in *Copy*, 468, 485n5, 494, 495
daily life at her parents' house, 115, 119–21, 130, 132–3
in Dell's amateur productions at the Liberal Club, 358
Dreiser and Markham's planned meeting in Boston, 24, 25, 27, 30–2, 36, 39, 41–2, 43, 103, 146
Dreiser as her "lover-husband," xxix, xxx–xxxi, 106, 406, 411
Dreiser's depictions of in "Sidonie," 629–31, 637n1, 639–41, 642, 645
Dreiser's pursuit of, 7–8
early years, 4–5
end of the relationship, xxiv–xxv, xxxi–xxxii, 560–2, 568–70, 585, 593, 594–5
excluded from Dreiser's social life, 467, 468–9, 470, 487
film performance, 212
friends' worries over her relationship with Dreiser, 116, 159–60, 161, 168–9
in Haiti, 647
handwriting analysis, 85–7
Harry Eugene Gaither (son), 645–6
her "dark beauty," 4, 21, 22, 29,

35, 42–3, 46, 47, 54, 62, 68, 164, 169–70
at her father's in Chicago, 416, 543, 548–9, 552, 553, 555
hope for a future with Dreiser in Chicago, 548–9, 550–1, 554, 555, 558–9, 571–2
ill health, 59, 543, 546, 548, 550–1, 556, 574, 591
letter to Dreiser [6 July 1922], *197*, 612, 622–4
letter to Dreiser [16 May 1916], *195*, 568–70
letter-writing by, xxxii, xxxiv, xxxvii, 8, 36, 60, 62, 63, 64, 65–6, 143–4, 146, 210, 523
loneliness, 411, 427
in *The Lure* on tour, xxiv, *189*, 207, 208, 211, 215, 217, 230, 238, 244, 246, 252, 263, 300, 306, 310, 311, 312, 314, 316, 322
marriage to David Stoner Gaither, xxv, 629, 637, 641, 643, 646–7, 654, 656–7, 665
marriage to Frank Lloyd Wright Jr., xxv, xxxiv, 472, 603, 605, 608–10, 611, 616
in *The Masque of Montezuma, 180*
meeting with Dreiser, xxiii, xxiv, 1–2
missing Dreiser whilst in Chicago (1915), 253, 354–5, 362, 363, 374, 375–6, 378, 413–14, 417–18
in *Mister Antonio*, 471–2, 503, 548, 594
at the Mizner Development Corporation, 628
name change, xxiv, xxxiii–xxxiv, 13, 207, 629
Nordfeldt's portrait, 92, 97, 141–2, 144, 250, 316, 614, 652
opinions on marriage, xxx–xxxi
in *Panthea*, 212
passionate love for Dreiser, xxviii–xxix, xxxi, 8, 9, 23, 26–7, 32, 42, 50, 66, 121–2, 126–7, 133, 146–7
personality, xxiv, 52, 63–4, 76–7, 100–1, 112–13, 118, 135–6, 160, 171–2, 173, 219, 220, 273–4, 300, 309, 474–5, 589
photographs, 450, 477, 493, 498
photos of herself sent to Dreiser, 90, 391, 408
on physical beauty, 234
physical exercise, 458
planned move to New York, 11–13, 54, 70, 71, 75, 87, 90, 94, 109, 111–12, 115–16, 121, 124, 125, 133, 134, 138–9, 155, 158, 160, 165–6, 175
planned return to New York, 432, 433–4, 435–6, 437, 439, 441, 444, 445
Poem Cycle, 594–5, 673–7
poems sent to Dreiser, 59, 132, 144, 220, 331, 557, 565–6, 588, 589, 594–5, 610, 621
portraits/photographs, *177, 178, 179, 182, 183, 184, 185, 199*
post-relationship feeling for Dreiser, 622–4, 632–3, 635
potential story about Frank Lloyd Wright, 618
previous lovers, 20–1, 23–4, 25, 29, 33

Markham, Kyra (*Continued*)
with the Provincetown Players, xxv, 594, 595, 610
reading for *The Girl in the Coffin*, 560, 561
in Reicher's productions, 360, 363n4
relationship with her mother, 7, 27, 134–5, 165, 255, 262, 264, 271–2, 273, 275, 336, 340, 344, 346, 393
relationship with Howard Scott, xvii, 610–11, 627, 628, 630, 649
return to Chicago (1916), 470–1
reviews/notices, 39
separation from Dreiser, xxiv–xxv, xxxi–xxxii, 468
sexual attraction to Dreiser, 53–4, 146, 153, 231, 234–5, 261
sexually transmitted disease, 472
Sisters (play), 628
sketches for Dreiser, 221, 222, 227, 230, 233, 240, 246, 284, 614
sleeps surrounded by Dreiser's letters, xviii, 104, 121, 130, 144, 153
sprained ankle, 353, 366, 436, 440
strained relationship with Dreiser, 460–1, 464, 467–8, 470–1, 474–5, 478, 480–2, 501–3, 504, 509–10, 519, 520, 521–2, 523–4, 526, 527–8, 541, 542, 552–3, 553
suspected appendicitis, 109–10, 111, 159
touring with the Chicago Little Theatre, xxiv, xxv, xxvi, 28, 34, 35
trip to Savannah, 501, 502–3, 504–5, 505, 506, 508, 509–10, 511
in *The Trojan Women*, 3, 4, 34, 66, *182*
unconventional attitudes, xxx, 8, 48
visit to Jennie Hyman Mendelson's, 457, 458, 459, 462, 464
War Brides reading, 402, 412
in *The Weavers*, xv, 468, 483, 492, 496
work in New York, 162, 170, 173–4, 275
Martha Washington Hotel, 121
Masses, The, 259
Master Painter, The (Markham), 5
Masters, Edgar Lee, xxx, 1, 235, 313, 382, 421, 446, 447, 448, 508, 544–5, 601
Matthison, Edith Wynne, 104, 117, 149, 584
May, Lola, 249, 315n4, 412, 506, 610
Mayo, Doris, 412
McCann, Lee, 85, 103, 129, 134, 147, 155, 167, 175, 576, 577
McCord, Anna, 323
McCord, Peter, 298, 323
McCoy, Esther, 382n6
McGrath, Harold, 623–4
Meade, Edwin Doak, 402
Meltzer, Samuel James, 556
Mencken, H. L., xxiii, xxx, xxxiii, 17, 19, 212, 316, 322, 341, 342, 348–9, 355, 494, 528, 565, 572, 574, 601, 615, 626, 630

Mendelson, Jennie Hyman, 457, 458, 459, 462, 464
Metropolitan Museum of Art, 305
Michel, Louise, 152
Middleton, George, 353, 367, 423
Minter, Mary Miles, 517
Mirror Films, 507n4
Mitchell, S. Weir
  Hugh Wynne, Free Quaker, 385, 390
Mizner Development Corporation, 628–9
Modern Stage, 358–9, 360, 363n4, 395n3, 398
Moods, Philosophic and Emotional, Cadenced and Declaimed, 663
Moore, Alexander Pollock, 89, 90n2
Moore, Lou Wall, 526, 554
Mordel, Albert, 327n4, 329, 342, 348, 369, 601
Mouquin's Restaurant, 437, 438, 459, 564
Mowbray-Clarke, Mary, 222n2
Munsey, Frank A., 434
Myers, Gustavus
  History of American Fortunes, 512, 513, 514, 517, 529, 534n5

N

Nathan, George Jean, 395
Nazimova, Alla, 75–6, 312, 402n1
Nelson, Gertrude Hopkins, 336, 399, 446, 600n3
Nethersole, Olga, 300
New York
  23 West 58th St apartment, 13, 209, 214, 215–16
  165 West 10th Street apartment, xxx, *193*, 211, 241, 331, 333, 334, 335–6, 338, 364, 366–7, 376, 383, 384, 405, 408, 409–10, 421, 423, 427–8, 440, 468, 469, 502, 503, 506, 508, 511, 517, 518, 518–19, 520, 532, 534, 544, 545, 572, 578
  611 West 152nd Street, 216, 219
  3609 Broadway apartment, 12, 66, 67, 124, 209, 215n1, 219, 223
  East 59th Street room, 12
  Hall of Fame, 46, 53, 141, 245
  High Bridge, 46, 53, 244
  Markham's planned move to, 11–13, 54, 70, 71, 75, 87, 90, 94, 109, 111–12, 115–16, 121, 124, 125, 133, 134, 138–9, 155, 158, 160, 165–6, 175
  Palisades, 46, 48, 51
  textile workers' strike, 70n3, 152
  Woman Suffrage Procession, 107
Nicholson, Meredith, 523
Nordfeldt, Bror, xxx, 5, 92, 336, 379, 408, 410, 434, 596, 616
  portrait of Dell, *181*
  portrait of Dreiser, *187*, 458, 599
  portrait of Markham, 92, 97, 97–8, 141–2, 144, 250, 316, 614, 652
  proposed walking trip with Dreiser, 356, 380, 488, 492
Nordfeldt, Margaret, 99n3, 408, 410, 434, 596, 616
Norris, Frank, 355, 356, 412
  Moran of the Lady Letty, 441
  The Octopus, 412

Norris, Frank (*Continued*)
Vandover and the Brute, 385, 390, 412, 439
Notes on Life, xxix

O

O'Brien, Howard Vincent, 105
Oglethorpe Club, 485n4, 489, 490, 496, 500
Oland, Warner, 520
"Old Ragpicker," 357
O'Neill, Eleanora, 345, 348, 526, 527, 537, 565
O'Neill, Eugene, xxv, 229, 610, 630
Ordynski, Richard, 608, 614
O'Sullivan, Vincent, 494, 565
The Good Girl, 565

P

Packard Theatrical Exchange, 516
Papa (Atkins), xv, 607
Parmelee, Maurice, 240
Payne, Will
The Story of Eva, 441
Peabody, Josephine Preston, 42n2
Peattie, Elia W., 522
Perkins, Frances, 348
Perrys, David. M., 451
Phillips, David Graham, 355, 426–7
The Hungry Heart, 427
Pickford, Mary, 506
Piranesi, Giovanni Battista, 151
Pitt, Fannie Addison, 582
Pittsburgh Leader, 89
Players Producing Company, 353, 374n1
Plays of the Natural and Supernatural
one-act plays, xvi, 212, 357
publication, 1, 494, 510
readings, 212, 222n2
reviews, 522–3, 525n7, 525n9, 528, 534
writing of, xxvii
Playwrights Club, 80
Poetry Theatre League, 618
Pogany, William Andrew, 399, 476, 486
Polly's Restaurant, 381n1
see also Holladay, Paula
Potter, Grace, 267, 450
Powys, Emily Marian, 401, 404–5, 420, 434, 460, 482n4, 528
Powys, John Cowper (Jack), *188*, 338, 341, 342, 345, 348, 373, 377–9, 378–9, 380, 388n1, 391, 404–5, 420–1, 422, 434, 458, 460, 482n4, 499n3, 528, 544, 545, 601, 615
Prahar, Renee, 423–4, 437
Primavera (Botticelli), 79
Princess Theatre, New York, 64, 66, 170, 174
Progressive Stage Society, 360
Provincetown Players, xxv, 2, 3, 141n3, 390n1, 472, 594, 610, 616
Putnam, Nina Wilcox, 558
Pyne, Ester, 477n3
Pyne, Mary, 477n3, 538, 540n2, 551, 558, 574

R

Rake, The, 118, 275, 384n1
Rauh, Ida, 381n2, 388–90, 441, 616

Raymond, Allen, 610
Reckitt, Charles Colby, 30n3, 169n1, 252, 374n2
Reckitt, Elizabeth Goodrich, 241, 252
Reckitt, Florence, 130, *183*
Rector, George, 79, 93
Red Book Magazine, 382
Reed, Florence, 101, 117
Reedy, William Marion, 28
Reformer, The, 603, 605
Reicher, Emanuel, xxiv, 422, 460, 584
  Elga, 358, 359, 362, 364, 388, 391–2, 394–5, 398
  The Girl in the Coffin production, 358–9, 360, 363n4, 395, 412
  Modern Stage company, 358–9, 360, 363n4, 395n3, 398
  The Weavers, 393n3
Reicher, Hedwig, 359, 394, 395, 398, 584
Reisenweber's Café, New York, 56, 60
Renganeschi's Italian Restaurant, 437
Rice, Anne Estelle, xvii, 236, 599
  see also Drey, Anne Estelle
Richards, Grant, 572, 601
Richardson, Helen, xxvi, xxviii, 2, 611, 624n1, 634n1, 655
Riley, James Whitcomb, 565
Roberts, Bill, 459–60
Roberts, Mary Fanton, 362, 363–4, 401, 459–60
Rodman, Henrietta, 267, 556
Romeike, Harry, 486
Rosenthal, Elias, 111, 383n2, 416
Rosenthal, Lillian, 112n1, 572, 642
Rossetti, Dante Gabriel, 119n4, 136
Roth, Edmund, 452, 577–8
Russell, Lillian, xvii, 88–9

S

Sabatini, Rafael
  The Life of Cesare Borgia, 382, 382n7
Samuels, Mitchell, 382, 572, 576, 582
Sargent, Margherita, 365n1
Saturday, Franklin, 564–5
Scarborough, George
  The Lure, 207–8, 212
Schuyler, Magdalen, 228–9
Scott, Howard, xvii, 610–11, 627, 628, 630, 649, 655, 656, 658
Scribners (Charles Scribner's Sons), 292, 293, 294, 295, 458
Seigel-Cooper department store, 128
Seitz, George B., 422
Serrano, Vincent, 238
Seton-Thompson, Ernest, 544
Sexton, Bernard (the "Grey Wolf"), 531n4, 541
Seyffertitz, Gustav von, 472
Seymour, May Davenport, 656
Seymour, William, 656
Shaeffer, Louis, xxxii, 472, 594, 647
Shakespeare, William, 584
Shaw, George Bernard
  Fanny's First Play, 247n3
Shay, Frank, 513, 542, 615
Sheffield, Justus, 372, 464, 590
Shelley, Percy Bysshe
  "An Ariette for Music," 84
Shiel, George, 236, 576

Shostac, Nancy, 493
Shubert, Jacob, 395, 400
Shubert, Lee, 395, 398
Shubert Film Manufacturing Company, 212
Shubert Organization, 2, 208
Simonton, Ida Vera, 434
Sinclair, Upton, 405
Sister Carrie, 9, 90n1, 100, 141n3, 173, 266, 275, 295, 300, 439, 555, 558, 582, 623
Skinner, Otis, 472, 500, 594
Smart Set, 216
Smith, Florence, 329, 437–8
Smith, William Neil, 156, 342, 437–8
Snellenberg, 328
Sonia's Art Cigarettes, 129
Speiser, Maurice J., 489, 497n4, 500n1
Spring Recital, The, 357, 369
St. Clair, Malcolm, 633
Stanchfield, John B., 601, 615
Starr, Theodore B., 535
Stein, Geoffrey, 407
Stein, Gertrude, 49
Stephens, James, 215n2
Sterling, George, 607
Stewart, Katherine, 632
Stoic, The, xvi, 250, 274, 275, 634n1, 651, 662n3
Stratford Hotel, Chicago, 411, 416
Strawn, Julia Clark, 543, 546, 556
Strindberg, August, 173, 317n1
Strunsky, Anna, 391n5
Strunsky, Simeon, 389
Stumm, Maud, 221
Swanberg, W. A., xxvi, xxvii, xxxii, 4, 213, 647

T

Taft, Lorado, 31
Taft Jr, Oren, 607 *see also Conscience* (Taft)
Tagore, Rabindranath, 239
Tarkington, Booth
  Mister Antonio, 471–2, 503n3
  The Turmoil, 397, 400, 412
Tatum, Anna, xxvii, 109n4, 129, 251n1, 267, 272, 274, 278, 289, 291, 526, 642
Taylor, Bert Leston, 31
Taylor, William Ladd, 330
Taylor, Winifred, 377–9, 380
Teal, Ben, 170
telephones, costs of, xxvii, 291, 388, 460
Tempest, Marie, 530
Tennyson, Lord Alfred, 27
Terry, Phyllis Nielson, 530
theatres *see also* Little Theatre movement
  American People's Theater, 359–60
  commercialism of, 208, 256, 264–5
  Dell's amateur productions at the Liberal Club, 357–8
  nationwide booking system, 2
  Reicher's Modern Stage company, 358–9, 360, 363n4, 395n3, 398
Theatrical Syndicate, 2
"This Madness: An Honest Novel about Love," 630
  Cosmopolitan cover, *200*
  "Sidonie," 629–31, 637n1, 639–41, 642, 645
Thomas, Augustus, 523

Thompson, Francis Joseph, 161, 174
Tiffany's, 535
Tinker's Wedding, The (Synge), 486
Titan, The
  Dreiser's search for a publisher, 294, 295, 297, 298, 308–9, 314
  Harper's rejection of, 211, 294–5, 297, 300, 302, 308, 318
  John Lane's publication of, 211, 316, 330, 356, 496
  Markham as inspiration for Stephanie Platow, 278, 628n1, 630
  poor sales, 356
  potential lawsuits over, 211, 314
  preparations for Harper's publication of, 223, 227, 231, 237, 239, 242, 244, 250, 251, 254, 260, 265, 266–7, 269, 272–3, 274, 278, 281–2, 284, 286–7, 288–9, 290
  publication, 160–1
  publishing troubles, xvi, xxv
  research, 1
  revisions, 211
  writing of, xxv, xxvii, 21, 33, 35, 37–8, 40, 46, 48, 54, 58, 69, 73–4, 79, 98, 108, 111–12, 116, 119, 148, 151–2, 158, 209, 217, 220, 221, 223, 232
Titzel, Mary Elizabeth, 4, 25, 33, 42, 54, 64, 71, 159
Tjader, Marguerite, xxviii
Tobey, Berkeley, 380
Tobey, Virginia Forrest, 235, 282, 296
Todd, Helen, 333
Towne, Charles Hanson, 16, 438
Toy Theatre, Boston, 41–2
Tragic America, 534n5
Trail of the Lonesome Pine, The (film), 505
travel books *see also Hoosier Holiday, A; Traveler at Forty, A*,
  ideas for, 356, 380
  possible trip to India, 232, 292, 492
Traveler at Forty, A, xvi, 36, 53n1, 105, 161n2, 214, 216, 254, 259, 268n5, 275, 277, 292, 302, 316, 323
Tucker, John Francis, 589n3, 590
Turkey Trot (restaurant), 79, 93
Twain, Mark, 17
  Life on the Mississippi 441
Twelfth Night Club, 468, 485n5, 497n1
Twilight Club, 588, 590

U

Urner, Mabel Herbert, 372

V

Vance, Louis Joseph, 355
  Joan Thursday, 426, 439
Viereck, George Sylvester, 323, 369–70, 590
Voice, The, 358, 369
Volkenburg, Ellen Van
  and the Chicago Little Theatre, *183*
  disapproval of the affair, 115, 116, 159, 161, 168, 241
  founding of the Little Theatre, 3
  meeting with Markham, xxiv
"Voyage, The," 299

W

Wage Earners' Theater, 360
Wagner, Richard, 136
Walling, William English, 391n5
Warfield, David, 599
Warren, John, 341
Washington Square Bookshop, 391n6
Washington Square Players, 381n2, 382n5, 388, 389, 395, 398, 618
Weiman, Rita, 56
Wells, Ray, 429
Wentworth, Marion Craig
War Brides, 402n1
Wesendonck, Mathilde, 136
West, James E., 544
Westervelt, Edna H., 241
Westley, Helen, 380, 581
Wharton, Edith, 355
White, Mrs, 338, 385–6, 405, 409, 440, 444, 460, 518–19, 532
White, Sally, 389
Whitlock, Brand, 355, 400, 405
Turn of the Balance, 400, 412
Whitman, Stephen French, 355–6, 429
The Happy Ship, 441
Predestined, 355, 429, 439
Whitman, Walt, xvi, 63, 171, 592
Widowing of Mrs. Holroyd, The (Lawrence), xv
Wilcox, Ella Wheeler, 372
Wilde, Oscar, 22n4, 582
Wilkinson, Louis, 498
Williams, Mr., 547, 582
Willis, Susanne, 244
Wilmer, George *see* Hines, Dixie (George Wilmer)
Winter Garden Theatre, 229
Witherspoon, Herbert, 412
Wolff, Adolf, 529, 584, 605
Wood, Everett, 341
Woodhouse, Mrs 434
Works Progress Administration (WPA), 657n1, 659–61, 660–2
Wright, Frank Lloyd, 608, 618
Wright, Willard Huntington, 214, 494, 530, 572, 601, 615
Wright Jr., Frank Lloyd, xxv, xxxiv, 472, 603, 605, 608–10, 611, 616
Wycherley, Margaret, 584

Y

Yeats, William Butler, 130, 607
On Baile's Strand, xxiv
The Shadowy Waters, 486
Yerkes, Charles Tyson, 211
Yewdale, Merton S., 615
Yorska, Madame (Elsie Stern), 225
Young, Howard Irving, 629

The Winchester University Press

The Dreiser Edition

Jude Davies, General Editor

A principal figure of twentieth-century American literature, Theodore Dreiser has a centrality that stems both from the permanence of his best fiction and from his pre-eminent role in American cultural life during the first half of the twentieth century. The Dreiser Edition is sponsored by the University of Pennsylvania Library, the University of Connecticut, and the University of Winchester.

The Dreiser–Markham Letters

The Correspondence of

Theodore Dreiser and Kyra Markham

Edited by Keith Newlin

These letters between Theodore Dreiser and the actress and artist Kyra Markham (born Elaine Hyman), reveal the intellectual, artistic, social, and sexual ferment of 1913–1916.

> "At times Dreiser's devotion to his absent lover is remarkable, as is his humor, kindness, and flattery. . . . In these private letters, Dreiser is revealed to be a complex individual, witty, caring, kind, jealous, and petty. . . . In her letters, Markham is also brutally honest, fully expressing her joys and frustrations with her career and with Dreiser. . . . I felt that I had read a Markham biography, a work that has never existed, one that reveals, for the first time, the life of a talented woman at the beginning of the twentieth century, a woman who wanted a relationship (a husband and family) but who also wanted an artistic career."—Roark Mulligan, editor of *The Titan*

Keith Newlin is Professor Emeritus at the University of North Carolina Wilmington. He is the author of *Hamlin Garland, A Life* and editor of *A Theodore Dreiser Encyclopedia*, *The Oxford Handbook of American Literary Naturalism*, *The Oxford Handbook of American Literary Realism*, among other books, and he was the founding editor of *Studies in American Naturalism*



WINCHESTER
UNIVERSITY PRESS

ISBN 978-1-906113-39-1
90000
9 781906 113391