

April 10, 1965

Dear John,

I have just signed a contract with the Macmillan Co. to do a book on methods of collecting and preserving marine animals. My God it's frightening, all the little print of what one can and cannot do. I've just sold my soul! In exchange for \$2500 I am to give Macmillan one hundred thousand words about grubbing up little marine animals along the seashore. They are sending me a check for \$1000 and the rest will be made in installments proportional to the progress of the book. I am proud that Natural History Press made a bid of \$2500 on the very ~~line~~ line and I sent them and my literary agent packing.

In truth, the money is not going towards the novel cause of writing this book at all. I'm really going to make Gulf Specimen Co. work and need every penny. For the last five years I've been operating out of house trailers, rented shacks and shrimp boats. Now I'm buying a large house in Panacea with two woodland lots for \$2000 full price. Show me any other place in the United States where you can get coastal property for that sum and I'll give you a shiny red apple.

Do you know of any foundations or trusts that have some extra money lying around that I could use to actually write and illustrate this book? It's supposed to have 150 photographs and line drawings and this alone will involve considerable expense. Even the keepers of the specimens-in-formalin agree it will be a worthwhile book.

Incidentally, thanks for recommending Shirley Fisher. I'm afraid I already signed and handled the contract on my own, but I will certainly have her handle all my future works.

How's your book coming? Write when you come up for air.

Sincerely,