

December 18, 1982
[redacted] Living Place
Milwaukee, WI 53202

Dear Lou,

It's Saturday. The maid was in Thursday, so the house is clean. I do have a huge pile of laundry to do, but answering your letter gives me the needed excuse to put it off until later.

Sorry you didn't like my "goofy" letter. Sorry you didn't think it funny. I just didn't feel like writing a real letter, once I got started. This time I do feel like writing a real letter, but before I start, I'll give you a limrick or two:

Oh, Vienna, the fortress of Freud!
Whose surgeons are always employed;
Where boys with soft hands
Are provided with glands,
And two-fisted girls are de-boyed.
or (my favorite)

From the depths of the crypt at St. Giles
Came a scream that resounded for miles.
Said the vicar, "How gracious!

Has Father Ignatius
Forgotten the Bishop has piles?"
or (oh, enough of that!).

Let me spend this letter telling you about my forgot house. After all, now that you are a gay man, you have to at least know about these things.

Well, two years ago, I was given the good news that I could buy the old (neglected) apartment for a hefty price since it was going to convert to condominium.

we
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I hustled about and bought the big old (neglected, Queen Ann house just behind the grocery store on Farwell, a block from the old apartment. The house had not been abused, but very badly neglected to the point where I knew it would take a lot of money to restore it to its Victorian glory. After hiring an expert to go through it I knew its strengths and weaknesses and cost estimates indicated that, while expensive, the old place was worth saving. So - I bought it and started in spending money.

New boiler heating system, new chimney from roof up, new roof, new hot water heater, new 200 AMP electric service, + new ceiling + plaster repair, repair of plumbing and electrical wiring, carpeting of 3 bedrooms, hall + stairs, paint entire interior, replace fireplace hearth tile with antique tile, bought 14 lighting fixtures (all either crystal chandeliers or antique gas fixtures which have been wired for electricity - WOW did I spend money on fixtures.) etc.

While all of this is going on I am furnishing, kicking out almost all my old furniture and replacing with very fine antiques. Gary Tally, an old friend, whose expertise lies in oriental rugs and antiques, has served as my decorator. God, he is talented! Little by little, the whole house has come to life. For two years I've lived at auction houses, house sales, antique galleries + shops, estate sales, etc., buying very carefully so that each item fits into the overall scheme. I'm not even going to tell you how much I've spent, because you would think I've taken complete leave of my senses.

Now for the past few months I've been accessorizing - buying all those goodies that finish up a room. The major furnishings + fixtures are

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are bought & in place (except for a couple of bedroom sets which are extremely difficult to lay hands on & the ones I've seen are not right).

In a month or so I plan to take pictures and will send you a set, but for now let me give you a brief tour.

Vestibule: wallpaper to harmonize with reception hall paper & drapes. Carriage lamps (1880's) to provide lighting.

Reception Hall: very dramatic and elegant. Imported French wallpaper - navy blue with small all over pattern, silk oriental rug (magnificent antique version) before fireplace - fireplace with red tile - replacement antique tile in hearth done so well old home buffs gasp. Stained carpeted, 1860's ladies & gentlemen's chair in tufted wine velvet, oriental prints from mid 1800's, small 1876 - statues on stair posts, inlaid game table (French 1850's) between two chairs etc.

Dining Room: 12x15 wine background oriental rug, crystal chandelier (from dining room of ^{my} old apt.) Victorian couch to match chairs in reception hall, another Victorian couch 1850's with matching gent's chair (rose tufted & channelled velvet), 1810 Sheraton Secretary, another 1850's gentlemen's chair, brocade cover, rose tile fireplace, Victorian marble bust on pedestal, ~~the~~ globe banquet lamp and one with the wind lamp, marble top table, center table, tilt top, both 1800's-1880's. Accessories: silver tea set, cut crystal, old pressed glass, Steuben, 1840's bird prints (Selby's from old apt plus one new one). Etc. mantle clock 1892.

Entire first floor - heavy wine velvet drapes with swags and ecru eyelet embroidery curtains behind. All custom made on 1900 treadle sewing machine since we could not find anyone with power machine capable

of handling heavy material that would do the work without spending about \$5,000⁰⁰ on labor!

Dining Room: Sliding pocket doors, built in China cabinet; bay window. Blue + gray Chinese oriental rug - walls (like living room - museum gray) round golden oak table with 4 staidigt back chairs, 1830's buffet server, 48 inch huge crystal chandelier with 5 arms, dripping with crystals + ropes, weighs over 200 lbs. Special supports etc. Knocks everyone's eyes out. ~~Pair~~ Pair 1860's ~~side~~ balloon back side chairs: gray velvet seat upholstery. Accessories: silver, China, pressed + cut glass compotes etc.

Music Room: Modern TV. (only item on 1st floor modern!) 1850's settle (couch that converts to bed) Jenny Lind style, 1850 mahogany dining table, 1875 upright grand piano carved + inlaid (resting + rekeyed + I don't even play piano) Satin glass oil lamp + cut glass oil lamp - both converted to electricity. Walls - dusty rose - same color as velvet upholstery in living room. 1st floor actually one very large room when sliding doors opened (always open) - oriental rug, ornate gilded picture frames, Accessories: Japanese Satsuma vase (large) crystal, silver etc.

Kitchen: Fixture: 1880's wellstock ^{white} globe with glass shade, brass - gas converted to electricity, 1840's work table for kitchen table, 1830's Hitchcock chairs. Braided rug + hardwood floors etc. More work to be done here when I modernize with dishwasher etc in the future.

Stairwell: painted white - pictures Birds Goulds (best bird prints in world - far better than Audobon's) Gray carpet, Gray velvet drapes at stairwell window over lace curtains. ~~Large~~ Bronze statue gongy apolls in window ledge. Statue at top and bottom.

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1st Bedroom: Gray carpet, hardwood maple furniture, 1850's grandfather's dresser, walls pale pink - back wall cloth covered in pattern pink + gray to match drapes on 3 windows (bay windows) on opposite wall. Plain grayed pink tufted comforter on bed: Accessories - 1830's 1840's Indian, prints hand colored - very valuable! Fixture: French gas + electric - art glass - glass candle + flowers all brass - very expensive, very rare, very beautiful. cut glass, silver etc.

2nd Bedroom (mine) Another Gouled bird print 1860's hand colored - owl feeding young in gold leaf frame, my portrait in gold leaf frame. ~~Color~~ Wall pale blue - plain blue satin drapes, patterned blue silk bedspread, still have my old bedroom set, 1800's 2 arm gas fixture and matching wall sconce. Pink tufted velvet high back ladies chair 1850's. Mahogany table 1880's etc., Accessories: glass, silver etc.

3rd Bedroom - Large - (very large) All book cases from old home. Couch opens to bed - This room is mixture of antique and modern. Serves as guest room, library etc.

4th Bedroom - just starting on it - It will be all antique, but much more ~~casual~~ casual in feeling - wall paper, country furniture etc. will serve as small guest room.

Well, there is more, but I'm bored you long enough. It's fun and expensive.

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I've never spent money so freely or so fast but I'm loving every minute of it. Still can't believe I'm living in a picture book house, but I am. It might all sound very high queen or faggoty, but I assure you it is not. Looks very elegant, but still masculine - for all the world like a very fine old men's club.

Haven't done much to outside. In very bad shape, but that's my project for the next year or two. Enclosing a picture of the outside from the real estate flyer when I bought the place. Outside to be done in 3 Victorian colors and then landscaped!

Then after that I'll redo the huge attic which has another finished bedroom & bath that hasn't been used for years. Room up there for complete rental apartment to bring in income in my old age.

Now - God knows that's enough about the house. Love life - NIK! Oh, occasionally a trick, had one young man for several times, thought male would develop, but it didn't. Once in awhile I go to bars, but was out of circulation for about 3 years and whole crowd changed.

A couple of parties (oldest in house - no fun!) GPU crowd never hear from (can you believe that?) Well, I don't care. I do not regret the years spent in the movement. I really think we accomplished a lot. The sad part is that there is still a lot to be done and GPU is almost dead here and the movement across the country is also on the wane.

STILL in your group

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Lou, I'm hoping to take a trip (if finances permit) sometime in 1983. San Francisco would be uppermost in my mind.

As you know, on previous visits I've spent so much time on movement work that I really would like to come just as a gay tourist to the gay meccas of the world. Besides, I want to see you. I'll let you know and I'll work hard to make the extra money I'll need for a trip, because I've got thousands to spend on the exterior of the house next year and that can't be put off much longer. Surely the market will continue to be good to me.

My God - I just realized that this isn't a letter - It's a book! Well, I'll close with just one more reminder and I'll wait to hear from you -

There was a young man from St. Paul's
Who read Harpur's Bazaar and McCall's;

Till he grew such a passion
For feminine fashion

That he ~~was~~ knitted a snow for his balls.

Tata

Eldon

P.S. Doncha like my writing paper?