Letter to Michael Wiegers

Patricia Goedicke
Dear Michael,

What's been happening here in Missoula is that Leonard's condition keeps deteriorating more and more. I still have no real idea of the prognosis, but for the present he's holding his own pretty well, especially now that he's taken his first shot of morphine (for respiration problems; not for pain, thank God) and is experiencing some relief from the devastating, sometimes nightlong bouts of breathlessness he's been going through.

Anyway, that's why I may be sounding oddly frantic in my recent letters. You might think the last thing I'd be tending to these days would be all these little odds and ends I keep writing about, but I have to tell you that, even though I know it will probably seem terribly melodramatic to you (to say the least!), ever since I finished this book I've been scared that one or the other of us -- because each of us has had more than our share of medical emergencies the last 12 months -- might cork off before it was safely under wraps. Hence my relief that you plan to publish it this winter -- or is it this Fall? (Sam said "The winter of 2000", whereas the contract says October 99) -- but hence also my somewhat scattered barrage of questions and suggestions these last few weeks especially. I'm just trying to get everything done from my end as fast as possible.

And so, in my hurry the other day I didn't even give you the RIGHT correction to the Winterson quote I'd like the "endnotes" to end with.

I've appended it to the bottom of this letter, but I'll send you a printed copy of the correction when I send the contract, about which I do have some questions.

1) Do you need a printed version of the disk I sent you as well? I think I can get it to you by May 15. But if I incorporate the most recent changes (to the endnotes, say) in the printed version, should I also do so on a disk and send you another one to take the place of the first?

2) When I receive requests for reprints of individual poems, should I refer such requests to Copper Canyon? If not, what information should accompany the reprinted poem? (My grasp of copyright conventions is shaky to say the least)

But you know, I've yet to hear from you about whether or not there SHOULD be endnotes. What do you think, now that you've seen them? And does that mean that I would have to, as,

3) per number 4 of section d of "Manuscript and Delivery" (Contract pg. 2), "provide written permission" just to quote from those "works"? If so, at this point I think I'd probably lean towards ditching the whole idea of using any at all...

I'll send you the answers I left out of the Questionnaire as soon as I can get to them, but meanwhile,
4) Re the request for "recent recordings" of me reading my poems, would video tapes do? Or not? (I think there are a couple of fairly recent audio tapes around, but there are several videos about). Which would you prefer; or do you need any?

Here's the most recent version of the last endnote:

"Third Rail: Autobiography of Lastness"

"What is it that crouches under the myths we have made? Always the physical presence of something split off.

....Suppose the moment of Creation and our torn-off universe were recorded in the stardust of our bodies?

We are the beginning: We are before time.

....Have pity on this small blue planet searching through time and space."

— Jeanette Winterson's GUT SYMMETRIES