

A Dark-Haired Girl & PKD



letters from the heart, the spleen, and the funnybone

**Correspondence between Linda Levy and Philip K. Dick
1972-1975**

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What the Collection Contains

I offer for sale the original pieces of paper on which my personal correspondence from Philip K. Dick was written. I created this narrative to provide a context for the correspondence, as well as a glimpse at each document.

For each letter I show one page, with the content partially obscured by a design of puzzle pieces (which seemed appropriate considering the puzzle that was the man himself), plus a thumbnail of each page of the document.

This collection is being offered in its entirety to preserve the continuity of the events described in the correspondence and the context of those events hinted at in the glimpses of this relationship you are about to see.

It is also the first collection of its kind offered by one of Dick's dark-haired girls.

The collection includes, in addition to the correspondence, my personal copy of The Dark-Haired Girl, two Georg Grosz prints (signed by Grosz in pencil), the only known prints of three photos Phil took of me, and the November 6, 1975 issue of Rolling Stone magazine, with an article on Phil that he sent me a dollar to buy.

Preface

I don't need to tell you that millions of people around the globe have been avidly reading the work of Philip K. Dick for decades, and millions more have been thrilled by the movies that were made from it, notably the iconic films *Bladerunner*, *Total Recall*, *Minority Report*, *Screamers*, *A Scanner Darkly*...you know.

There is a biopic in the works as I write this. How well the script captures Phil, and how faithfully Paul Giamatti portrays him, remains to be seen. I don't know what period of time the movie covers, or even if Linda Levy will be a character in the film. Consequently, I want a chance to present my story before the movie version of Phil becomes solidified in the public eye as the absolute and only truth.

Phil's wives knew him, certainly, his children to the extent they could in his absence, his many friends knew some aspects of him, his fellow writers knew yet others. Of those few, even fewer knew another side of Phil, the man who wrestled with demons and often lost. Those few were usually women. Phil loved women, sometimes to obsession, and as much as he loved them, I think he simultaneously detested them. Otherwise, how do I explain the brooding darkness that consumed him and led him to outbursts of violence – physical and emotional - toward the women he professed to love?

I don't want to imply that there were only two sides to Phil, because, like everyone, he was multi-dimensional and multi-faceted. In this correspondence you will see the man who loves and longs, the man who is mean and vindictive, the man who is playful and funny, and the man who is hard to categorize.

In the introduction to *The Dark-Haired Girl* (TDHG), the editor, Paul Williams, quoted from a letter that Phil had written to Roger Zelazny on December 1st, 1972, eight months after Phil and I met:

“What this all has been is an identity crisis... it hits you in middle life, all your values go to pieces, you can't work or function, you just wander off.... one goal that didn't disappear from me: my search for the dark-haired girl, which I wrote about in letter after letter, often to the dark-haired girl herself [*TDHG editor notes: Kathy in San Rafael, Jamis in Vancouver, and Linda in Fullerton*]..I've now put together 127 pages of these letters, written from Feb to Nov of this year, and sent them to my agent as a sort of journal.”

The editor adds: “He told another correspondent he was starting work on a new novel, to be entitled *Kathy-Jamis-Linda*.”

According to the introduction to TDHG:

“The manuscript sent to the Scott Meredith Literary Agency was entitled *THE DARK-HAIRED GIRL: A SEARCH FOR THE AUTHENTIC HUMAN BEING*.”

The manuscript was never finished. I urge you to read *The Dark-Haired Girl* if you haven't already. It will provide the perspective you need to appreciate this collection of correspondence.

Who is Linda Levy, and how did this correspondence come about?

I was a freshman at Cal State Fullerton in the fall of 1969. Before my freshman year ended in May of 1970, anti-Vietnam War protests and their aftermath reduced the campus to bloody turmoil as peaceful protests turned into riots with the arrival of helmeted police armed with nightsticks.

Protesters burst into classrooms disrupting lectures. The photos below were by student photographers, taken from the balcony of the Humanities Building, which was also my vantage point as all of this unfolded, and they show exactly what I remember seeing: I was thrilled when I found them to match my memory so closely.

Ultimately the campus went on strike in solidarity with universities across the nation following the killings of four students at Kent State at the hands of the Ohio National Guard.

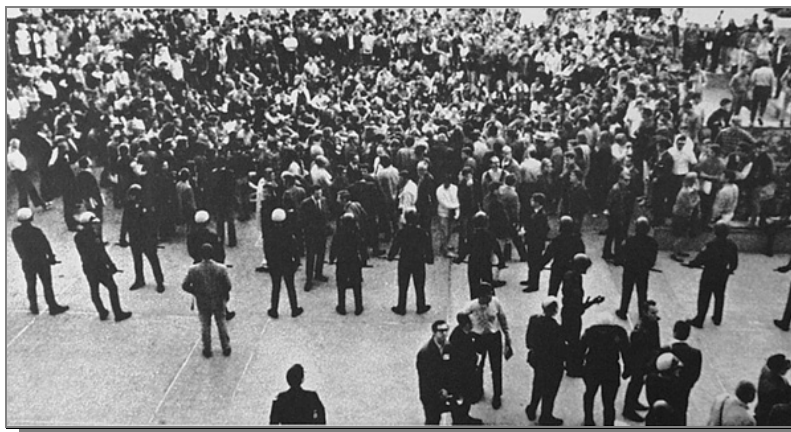


Photo Courtesy of CSUF Archives

I found these photos in the archives at Cal State Fullerton. They speak much more eloquently than I can about the atmosphere at the university during my freshman year.

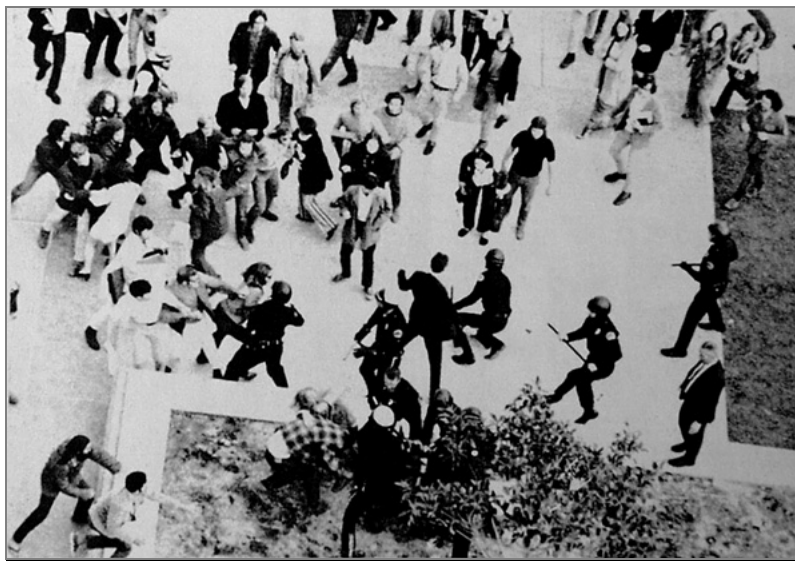


Photo Courtesy of CSUF Archives

It was a lot to take in during my first year away from home. I grew up in the conservative suburb of Palos Verdes, south of Los Angeles. Between Palos Verdes and later, Orange County, I was immersed in a politically conservative culture, although I didn't know it at the time.

From war protestors to the Watergate hearings, this was the atmosphere in Fullerton around the time that Phil first lived there.

Serendipity at the Tick Tock

In August of 1971, eight months before Phil showed up, the ordinary, unremarkable event occurred that would propel me straight into Phil's trajectory: the convenience store at the corner had no Mad Magazine.

It unfolded something like this:

It was time to register for fall classes, always an ordeal in the years before computers.

My first year we had to run for classes – going to the actual classroom to snag a card ensuring a place in the class – and as freshmen we usually didn't get one because we registered last.

My second year was slightly better because we registered *before* the freshmen but *after* all the upper classmen. We didn't have to run for classes, though, this time we stood in line for hours waiting to register, watching the chalkboards nervously as class after class closed and was erased from the board. Those of us still in line scanned the catalog anxiously trying to put together a new variation of the schedule as each class we needed filled up.

On this particular day, I was halfheartedly preparing for the ordeal for the upcoming fall semester, when I suddenly developed an irresistible urge to go to the Tick Tock market on the corner and get a Mad Magazine.

I can't explain it. I hadn't read Mad Magazine in years, but suddenly I had to have one.

When I got to the Tick Tock, Mad Magazine was sold out. No Mad Magazine. Maddening.

But I still needed a diversion. I idly thumbed through the paperbacks on the rack and settled for Larry Niven's "All the Myriad Ways." I took it home and read nonstop. Wonderful stuff, this science fiction, I thought. I found a science fiction class on the schedule and without any trouble at all, I got in.

In that class, taught by Dr. Will McNelly, a prolific writer about science fiction, I would discover a new world of literature and have the opportunity to meet the people who wrote the words I was rapidly becoming captivated by.

McNelly also taught Chaucer, a class I took in spring of 1972 when the science fiction class ended. One day, McNelly came to class with a letter from Phil and read it to us. He said we were welcome to respond. It was the first time I heard the name "Philip K. Dick."

In the letter Phil sounded so sad and lonely that I felt compelled to respond:

NOTE: I do not have the original of this letter, so it is not part of the collection.

April 7, 1972

Philip K. Dick
c/o X-Kalay Foundation Society
26 West 7th Ave.
Vancouver 10, B.C.

Dear Phil,

Hi Phil. My name is Linda, and I think that we have already been more or less introduced by Will. His letter was descriptive, certainly, but I am not sure just how flattering. It seems he told you about me materially-my money and all that but I am afraid that I really don't fit into this thing of the "lovely, lonely, lost, long-haired chick". Also, this is a premiere, in two senses; one, that I don't know you and have never written to you or spoken to you before, and two, I have never sat down in front of a typewriter before and just started typing without knowing beforehand what was to be said. Maybe it will improve my thinking or creativity or something good.

Me. Well, here goes. I am twenty-one, just barely. To me, twenty-one sounds so young in years, and it must to you too. But, I don't know, I feel older than twenty-one years wise. I'm not a sage by any means, but you know how it is, when you feel older than your friends the same age and you think you can see so much more about the world around you. It's not just conceit either because I really think I do, sometimes to the point of amazing those much older than I because I, oh what's the word--feel, absorb, enjoy, experience, am more affected by the world around me. And I wish to God that this typewriter had an exclamation point! There, I just made one. I am a student, which is how I know Will, my major is English but I'm thinking of changing to Public Relations which is typical I guess of how I am always looking for something different. I guess we all are. And I'm working, I have two jobs and an occasional third one. In the morning I am a secretary and "go-fer" for a commodities firm, and in the afternoon I am a switchboard operator and receptionist for an electronics manufacturing firm. That is where I am now, it's lunch-time for everyone else so the board is quiet, no salesmen in here yet to try out all their new lines on me. If I accepted every offer I've had to go out for a drink I would be in a perpetual alcoholic stupor.

I have been meaning to write to you ever since Will shared your letter with me. I hope you don't think I am presumptuous in writing to you, maybe I should have waited to see if you wanted to hear from me, and since when am I worrying about things like that anyway? Anyway, the thing that kept me from writing to you before primarily was that I was afraid that you would think that I was being supplied for you or something, and when I asked Will for your address I had no idea that he would tell you I'd write. Maybe that kept me from writing, too, because I wanted it to be a surprise--sort of a serendipity. But, then today, Will showed me your latest letter, and in it there was that same quality that had impressed me in the first one and the desire to write to you came again.

I should try to define that quality, I suppose for your sake. I guess, it's that you struck me as being unique in that you are so vulnerable. Or else you are merely honest in your vulnerability by admitting it. It made me want to "reach out and touch you" which is Will's phrase, but I borrow it when it's applicable. I don't know when I have heard anyone talk so freely about a hurt such as yours in relation to Kathy and maybe a little with regard to Rosie, because it sounded like you simply didn't feel as much for her. And as for being ripped off, well Phil, I get the impression that you will not give anything you don't want to, and that your generosity is immense. Underlying impression: they did not rip you off materially that you resent, they robbed you of a little of that "something" that hunger, that people have for people...the elusive quality that it seems you yearn for so much in other people. Am I making sense or am I just babbling. I hope you can hear me underneath all these neat little machine-made letters.

Who are you any way, Phil? Aside from being lonely yourself? The first letter seemed like your primary concern was to find someone who needed you to care for them as much as they needed to be cared for. It was a little unreal, but then I thought, well, here is a man with a lot of love to give and no reservations about giving it. And I apologize for being too blind to see that you reach out for that because that is what you yourself really desire. Excuse me, I am getting really out of hand and I hope you don't mind if I change the subject!

I am going camping this weekend for the first time in my life. We're going to the Kern River. I've never been there before either. I wonder if I will like camping. I don't know, I've always been sort of an indoors person, and getting outside and doing the sports thing never really interested me. Give me a stack of books, a nice warm room with a fireplace, some coffee, some cigarettes, and something to munch on and I won't bother anyone until the last book is finished. (You can take the extra R out of cigarettes and pretend it's an E and stick it on the end of coffee and that will take care of my typographical error.)

That place you are at scares me. What do you mean "It's hard to get in, but easy to get out?" If I were you, I wouldn't stay there. I can see how it could supply you with what you need in having people around, and in having someone to care for you--but it seems so institutional. I picture it as being a sort of Synanon. I don't know, though, what is it like? Do you like it there? That is important, no matter what kind of place it is. I can't imagine whether or not you would like Fullerton. I've been here three years now, and I really like it, but that is because it is representative to me of how I managed to buck my parents authority and in spite of many difficulties: financial, depression, and otherwise of how I finally made it on my own, without anyone's help but my own. And that is something that has become so important to me that it is almost a mania: my reliance upon self. And every time I get hurt I kick myself for retaining what I ~~xxxxxx~~ as my problem: my great dependence upon people. I love people, I need people, and I want to know and be friends with every single one of those people out there so help me! I guess my typing reflects the way in which I'm responding to what I'm thinking. I'm really getting emotional here. I can tell because I am having difficulty spellign with my fingers.

If I haven't turned you off too much by my emotional outbursts in here I would love (here I go again) to hear from you. In my eyes, I have completed a complete cycle within this letter from being sure of myself to being totally confused and I guess back again. But please don't think that if you write to me that I will be another problem, another crazy lost and lonely girl that you will have to worry about because I do not mean to be that. It's just that dammit, I need something too, and that is a friend, somebody to think about. Will you be my friend?

Godbye for now. I hope things go well for you, Phil Dick, from the up in the morning to the down at night, good luck.

Good bye again with feeling!

Linda

My address is:

Linda R. Levy
2918 E. Ruby Dr. #D
Fullerton, Calif. 92631

or if you want to call:

(714) 528-3985

P.S. I'm not going to retype this, will leave it, errors and all because I know I would change it and then it wouldn't be the same at all. Nothing is really better if you try to improve it - it's just different.

Within a few days of mailing this letter, I heard from McNelly that Phil wanted me to pick him up at the airport. I was surprised and apprehensive because I never expected him to respond in person, but I went, and I asked Tim Powers to go with me.

A few other students had also written to Phil, so we rounded everybody up and off we went to pick Phil up at LAX

When Phil saw me in the group, he fixed me with a disconcertingly intense gaze. From the airport we drove into the Hollywood Hills to visit Norman Spinrad, and as I drove Phil rode shotgun, not looking at LA as it went by outside the window but staring at me instead, which was very unnerving. It wasn't until long after his death and upon the publication of *The Dark-Haired Girl* (TDHG) that his reaction to me was explained. In his letter to Bev Davis, which starts on page 71 of TDHG, is his description of that night:

“...Linda had written me while I was in Canada, and, when I got off the plane at L.A. International, there she was waiting, with the others, to meet me. Destiny in a miniskirt.”

Words and PKD

Phil seemed compelled to write. If he wasn't working on a book, or material for an eventual book, he was writing to his numerous friends, and if he wasn't writing to them, he was writing to and about the most recent woman in his life. I think that Phil genuinely adored women, with an oft-demonstrated weakness for dark-haired women. He loved and detested women with equal intensity, as a few of these pieces show.

Whenever Phil wrote a typewritten document, he made a carbon copy. As a result, many of the typewritten letters he wrote, including some to and about me, have been included in collections of his letters.

What no other collection contains is the personal handwritten notes, the greeting cards, the postcards, the off-the-cuff words written to a dark-haired girl. This correspondence has never been offered before and has not been seen first-hand by anyone but me for decades.

Until now.

PKD, Side One

The passage that follows is from the beginning of the first letter I ever received from Phil.

He had been in Fullerton for a couple of weeks when he invited me to join him for dinner with Harlan Ellison. I was quite awestruck to find myself there, at a table in a restaurant in Hollywood eating Chinese food with Philip K. Dick, Harlan Ellison, Ed Bryant and a few other people.

I sat next to Phil and during dinner he handed me a fat envelope, with the following letter inside. I read it right then, too curious to save it for later. I was already euphoric just being at that table, then I got really amped up when I read this amazing letter, and that was before I got to the astounding part:

“P.S. Linda, I am very much, very deeply in love with you. So this here is what I’d like to ask you: will you marry me?”

That letter can be read in its entirety starting on page 57 of TDHG.

April 21, 1976

Dear Linda,

Sitting here, I heard a song on the radio, and the words made me think of you exactly:

"...This world was never meant
For one as beautiful as you.

"...Now I think I know
What you tried to say to me.
How you suffered for your sanity..."

Linda, don't get crazy trying to keep up with your beauty. It's like a curse, isn't it, being so lovely. You're fighting to win a race with life, not trying to keep up with it -- like the rest of us do, the less appealing, the less attractive, the ordinary -- but I god, sweet heart, you're going to sprint ahead of it and come out rushing and spent on the other side; you're going to win, you're already aware of it...most of us fight with death, trying to pin it two miles out of camp, but I think you're going about with it a little, eventually, doesn't want you. It can't stand the competition. A girl so lovely and gentle and warm, so bright with cle, humor that reality can't keep up with her -- I see you manufacture your own reality around yourself to replace the one you call-crank reality is more poignant, more touching and charming; soft tales about police stories by a kind and whimsical girl who is really very lonely. Usually, it is the dull people, the ugly people, who are lonely, because no one wants to get near them; they have nothing to offer. Here you are, Linda, a dazzlingly beautiful little girl wearing a body of pure gold, absolute gold like something fast up by that fountain of multi-colored water we saw that first night on the trip from the airport; purple sparkling water all shimmering with light. We are all of us, the rest of us, gray compared with you, like it's pale water. We are like lead-colored water, resisting to admit, "This world was never meant for one as beautiful as you..." But what would make you leave? Where would you go? Deep, deep into yourself, maybe, estranged from us, distrusting us because we can't understand you, or, for awhile, we're unable to live out-selves intelligible to you. We're like bopping objects around you, made of silly putty; we rub and squish at you, flipping out, this like war-games, but all we do is mess you. Yeah, Linda, the fault is ours, but also the loss. You can't, maybe, do without us, but what the hell would it be like for us to not have you? To remember you, if you were no longer here, would turn out our brains backward, crasing real after real criss -- fortunately -- nothing retained. There's no capacity in the regular human head to incorporate a memory of someone so dear, so precious as you, it's something beyond to you. I always say, "It's not a just universe." Usually I mean by that that the world seems always to tear off the wings of its most delicate, most valuable creatures. It takes delight in destroying and abolishing its prettiest parts. But in your case the injustice is simply that you will not always be here.



The next letter is hard to categorize. I suppose, if pressed, I would call it a love letter, or a letter of longing.

Shortly after his arrival in Fullerton, I became afraid of Phil. His intensity, his unpredictable anger, his tendency to curl up into a ball, locked away inside himself, eyes empty, cold and silent scared me. I was 21 and he was 42. I kept thinking that someone his age should be more together than he seemed to be, to not reel from passing remarks and obsess over them. I suggested that he get some help. He told me that he had never needed psychological help before, but I had destroyed him, broken down his defenses, and he would acquiesce, although reluctantly, to my wishes. [Later, after he died, I learned from one of his biographies that Phil had started seeing a psychiatrist at the age of 6. I could let go of the guilt.] In the early 1970s when all of this took place, self-realization was the modality du jour, suddenly everyone was rethinking their lives, and many chose new directions. Among them was Bayard Bratstrom, a professor of biology, I think it was, at Cal State Fullerton, who was studying psychology. Phil chose him as his psychologist, and insisted that I attend the sessions, hence the referral in the letter to “when you phoned me from Bratstrom’s office.”

In the scan you can see that this letter was originally addressed to Kathy, something that’s not visible in TDHG.

This letter can be read in its entirety beginning on page 64 of TDHG.

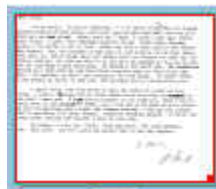
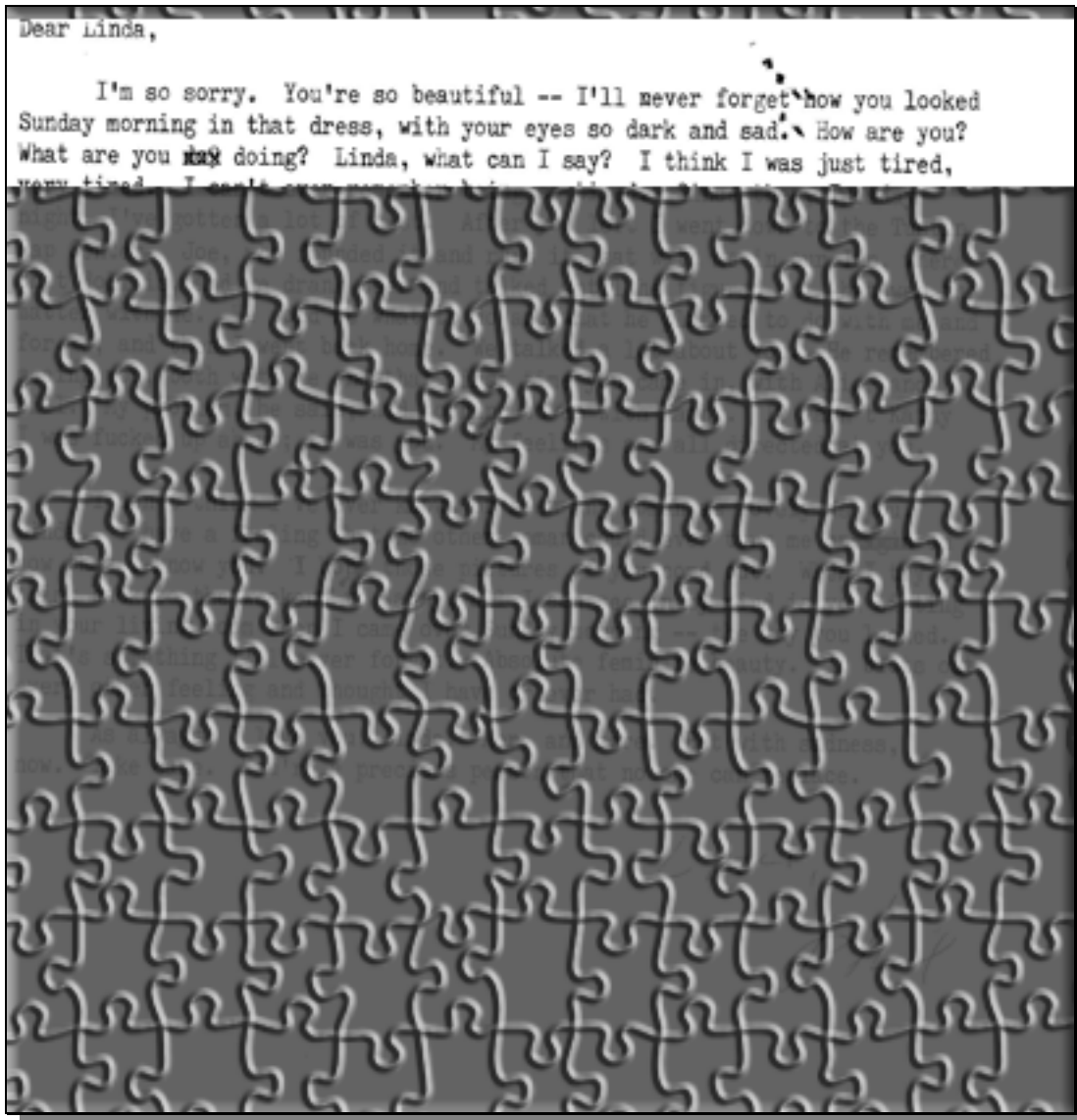
May 15, 1972

Dear *Linda*
~~Kathy~~,

No, Katherine; it's not you I'm writing to: it's Linda, once again. Today, Wednesday, I woke up feeling the most intense loneliness for you, Linda, as if I had not seen you in a terribly long time. I sensed you as so real. An absolute reality, outside myself, but far off. I was aware of you --not as a pretty foxy



I am not certain, but I believe this may have been written shortly after the incident with the oncoming traffic.



Here are a few of the photographs of me that Phil took in 1972, which he refers to in this letter:



Photo Credit: Philip K. Dick



Photo Credit: Philip K. Dick



Photo Credit: Philip K. Dick

Years later, after Phil passed away, Gregg Rickman came to interview me. He said, “Phil writes that you’re beautiful. Tell me: *were* you?”

I suppose it’s possible to ask a ruder question, but in the intervening years I still haven’t found one.

Sometimes, when Phil spoke, he'd start to talk, then wait a beat before continuing, sometimes forcefully other times faux-shy; he'd start to speak and then stop abruptly with a fondly-bemused expression and say, "Gee Linda Levy, you sure are pretty. Will you be my friend?" then lower his head shyly and kind of scuff his toe.

When Phil was playful it was the big pay-off in the relationship. He was funny and spontaneous and kind of sly; always full of outrageous ideas – the do-it-yourself lobotomy kit, for instance - and suggestions for things to do or places to go or someone to visit.

On the occasions when Phil's behavior became alarming, I was shocked because it was so unlike the kind and funny, if intense, man of a moment before. The first time I witnessed it, it knocked the wind out of me with its suddenness, a real whiplash moment.. He had two modes when in a fearsome mood – either withdrawing into an intense, seething, deeply inward-turning knot, or releasing it in a fury. No in-between.

As a result, I kept my physical distance over the years, but we still spoke on the phone about once a month. Sometimes I'd call him, sometimes he called me. "How you doing, honey?" was how a good telephone conversation might start. He spoke solicitously, but if there was a certain note, a little something weighty like sadness or maybe fatigue pulling the edge of his voice down, the conversation wouldn't last long.

If you could get him laughing, or lecturing on some concept of religion or reality or philosophy those were fine moments. I took Phil to class with me on occasion. Eventually, the professor would make the completely understandable error of assuming that Phil was a student and call on him when he raised his hand. He would make a brief comment or ask a question, just enough to whet the appetite for more of what he had to say,. When he raised his hand the second time, the instructor called on him right away. Eventually the instructor would just turn the floor over to Phil who would expound happily and at length with rapt students gathered around him afraid to miss a word.

I've been asked about his drug use. I personally cannot recall ever seeing Phil take drugs, prescription or any other kind. He was the snuff man. So he sniffed a lot and ruffled the mustache under his nose and sometimes he sneezed. That was the strongest substance I recall seeing Phil partake of.

Shortly after he arrived, Phil moved into an apartment down the street from mine. We both moved to Quartz Lane about the same time. I was living with Alice, and Phil moved in with Joel.

One night Phil and I went to the movies to see Fiddler on the Roof. On the way there, I mentioned that I had made plans with Norman Spinrad. Immediately, Phil withdrew into a terrifyingly icy silent state, sitting in the passenger seat curled up into himself, a solid rock of cold silence and inward focus. It always scared me when he did this because I wasn't sure who he would be or how he would treat me when he came out of it.

That night, we didn't talk a lot on the way home. Some of it was the elephant in the room of his icy silence, which he chose not to mention or explain. Some if it was that the movie touched me profoundly, and I was quiet and contemplative as I drove. I needed gas, and pulled into our neighborhood gas station, realizing too late that a fellow student I had future plans with was working that night. I was worried that he was going to assume Phil was my father and might mention something about our upcoming plans, so I pulled up to the pump and got out to talk to him to head off a confrontation with Phil. It didn't work. Phil got out of the car and stomped over to the Tick Tock next door. He came back with his purchase, settled heavily in the car, and I pulled out of the gas station to drive us the remaining few blocks home.

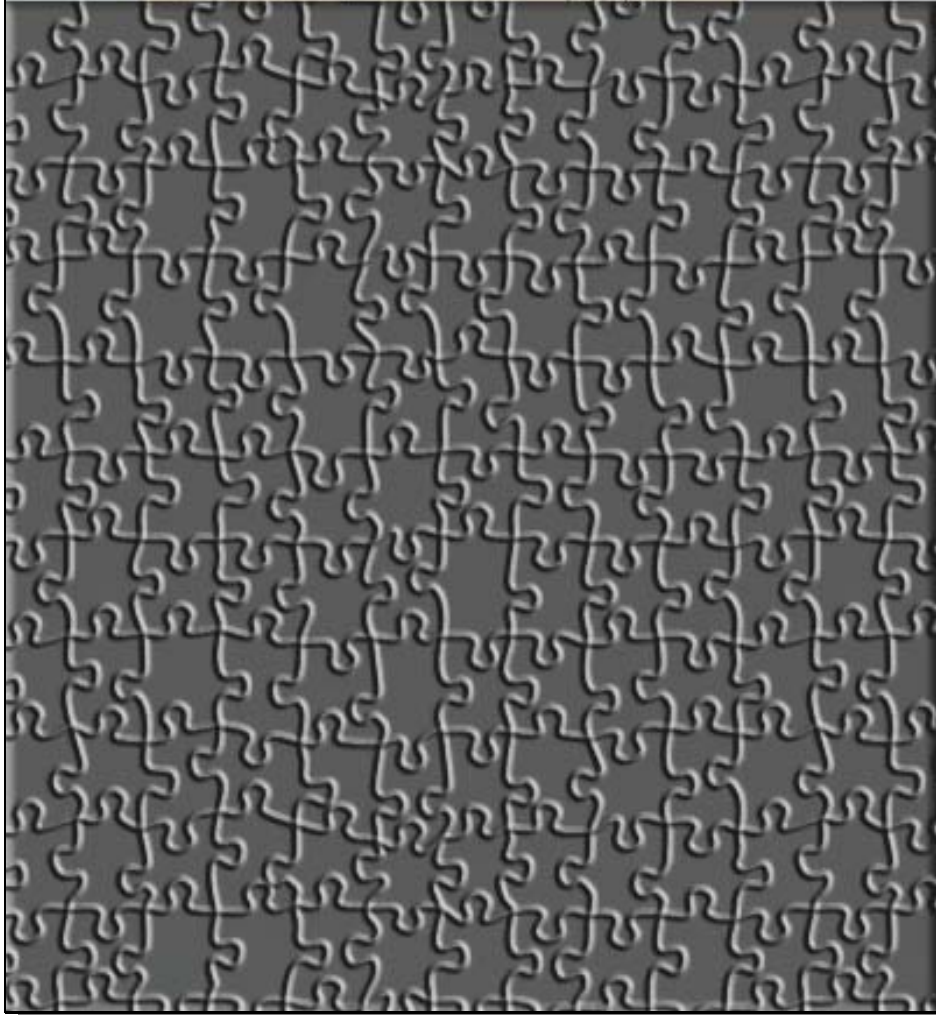
Suddenly, he grabbed the steering wheel and turned it forcefully into the oncoming traffic.

I tried to wrestle control back before we had a collision, and finally succeeded. The entire event probably lasted no more than ten seconds, but it left me dizzy, confused, and frightened.

With heart pounding and adrenaline pumping, I was so shocked and frightened I had difficulty speaking. I pulled over to the curb and said, "Get out." Phil turned and grabbed me by the windpipe with the hand that was in a sling (that's another story) and began to squeeze, cutting off both my air and blood supply, while pummeling my face with his other hand. Furious, and disbelieving, I fought him off, and again ordered him out of my car. I somehow got him to leave and I drove off, determined to have nothing further to do with him. Consequently, when I ran into him at a science fiction convention a few months later, and he introduced me to somebody as "the woman I was in love with until she beat me up," I simply left the convention. The following letter is asking me where I went and telling me about all the people I missed being introduced to.

Dearest Linda,

What happened to you at
the Convention? We never saw
you again. there was all
kinds of fun that evening.



Somehow Phil never seemed to comprehend the effect his behavior had on me. I had to avoid him in order to maintain my health and my sanity, but a sentence in the following letter in which he talks about living with Tessa, illustrates how he seems oblivious:

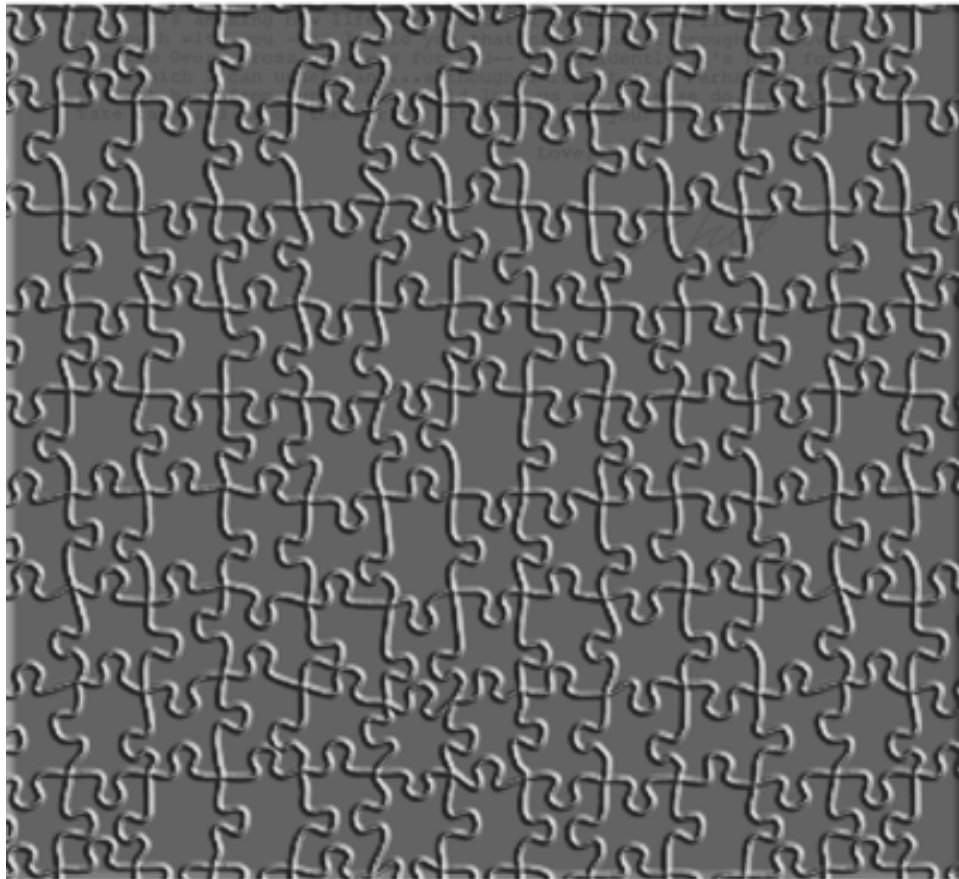
“...I’d like you to meet each other, but I remember you telling me you can’t come down here any more.”

In this letter, Phil also mentions the two Georg Grosz signed prints he gave me as a gift.

After dinner with Harlan Ellison we returned to Harlan’s house. I mistook a painting on the wall for a Georg Grosz. Harlan was incredulous that I didn’t know Picasso’s *Guernica*. But Phil was so impressed with the fact that I knew who Georg Grosz was that he gave me these signed prints that had belonged to him, given to him by one of his wives, although I don’t know whom. Both of these prints (photos shown below the letter) are offered as part of this collection.



I've been fine, living with little Tessa in our new apartment; she is a sweet, pretty, bright girl, and things look optimistic. I'd like you to meet each other, but I remember your telling me you can't come down here any more.

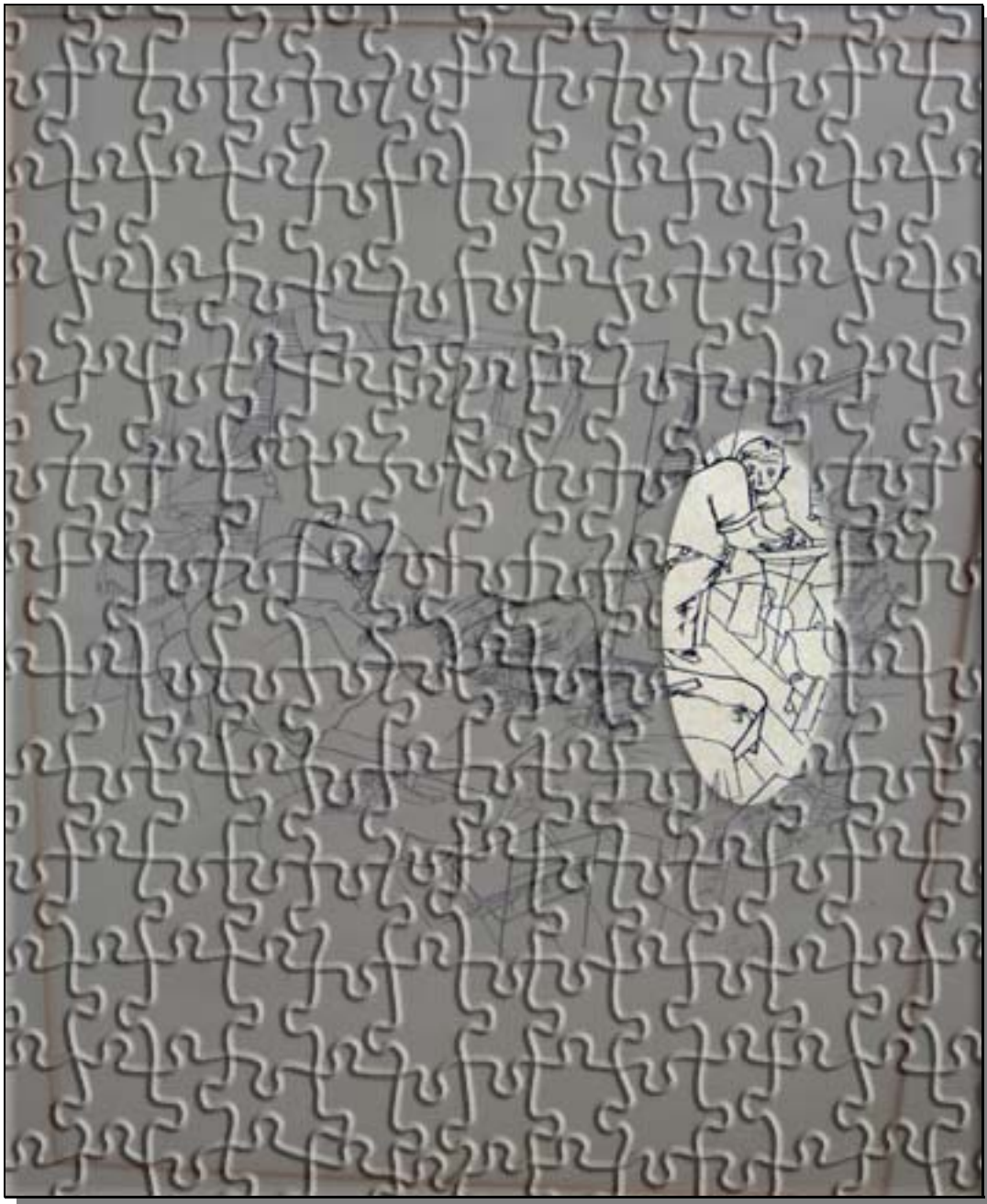


These signed Georg Grosz prints are plates 31 and 32 from the book *Ecce Homo*.

Plate 31.

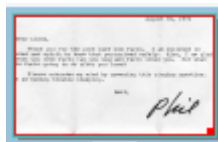
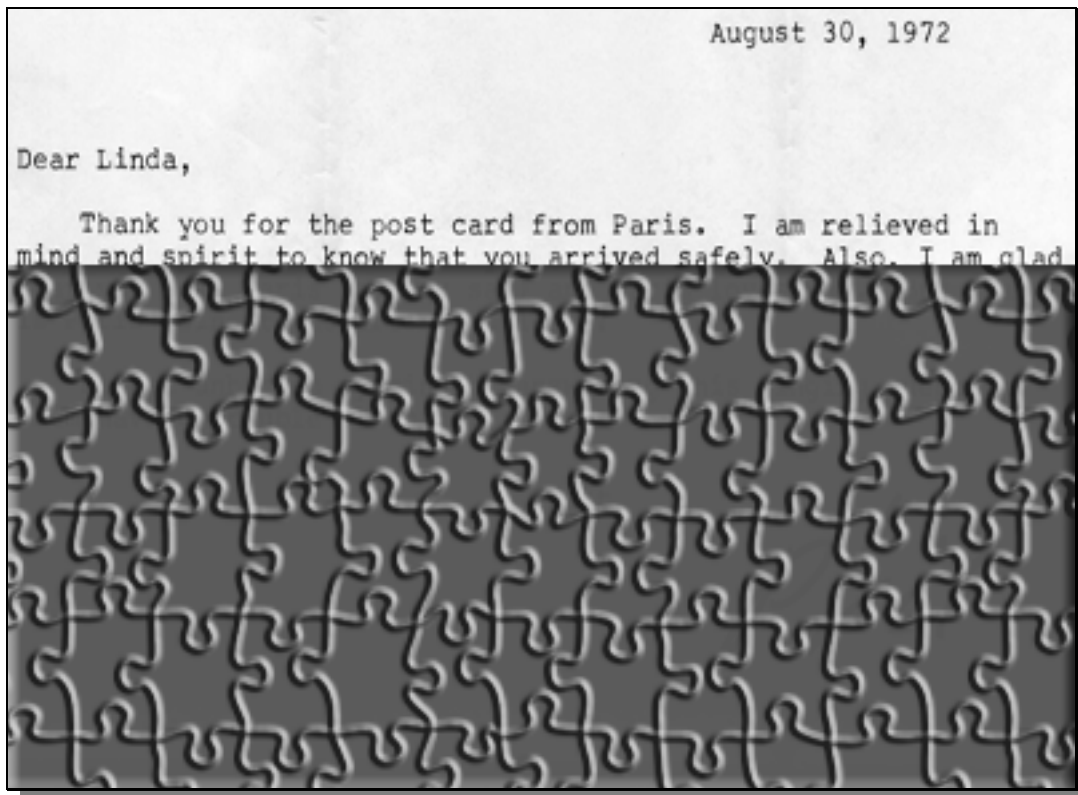


Plate 32



I sent Phil a postcard from Paris. It wasn't until TDHG came out that I read Phil's comment on the subject on Page 82: "Linda finally dropped acid and wandered out of my life, too screwed up in her head even to leave her apartment. She is now in Europe, which is weird considering her phobias. By the time she returns, I hope Tess and I will be gone. Linda's apartment is just up the street. We walk past it every day. Linda was the cruelest girl I ever encountered."

I'd just like to mention that the only phobia I have is fear of heights, so "phobias" is an attribute that Phil assigned to me, not one that I actually had. I may have been screwed up in the head, but I never had a problem leaving my apartment. I did drop acid, but it had nothing to do with my trip to Europe. Also, I'm not cruel in the least. I just needed to maintain my distance for my own well-being.



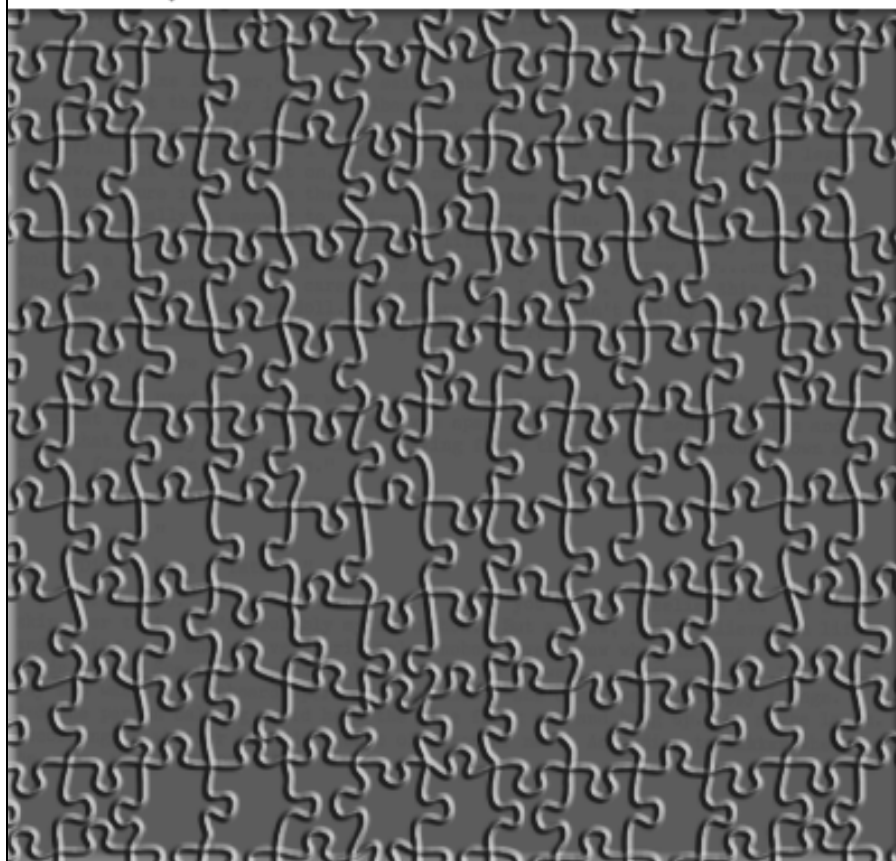
There is no date or postmark on the letter below, and it was hand-delivered. This is the letter that became the story Goodbye, Vincent at the end of TDHG, starting on page 241. That was the only time that story was published, to my knowledge.

I always wondered what people thought when they read the story, filled as it was with references to things that were meaningful only to us or maybe a handful of others. If you've read the story, here is the subtext:

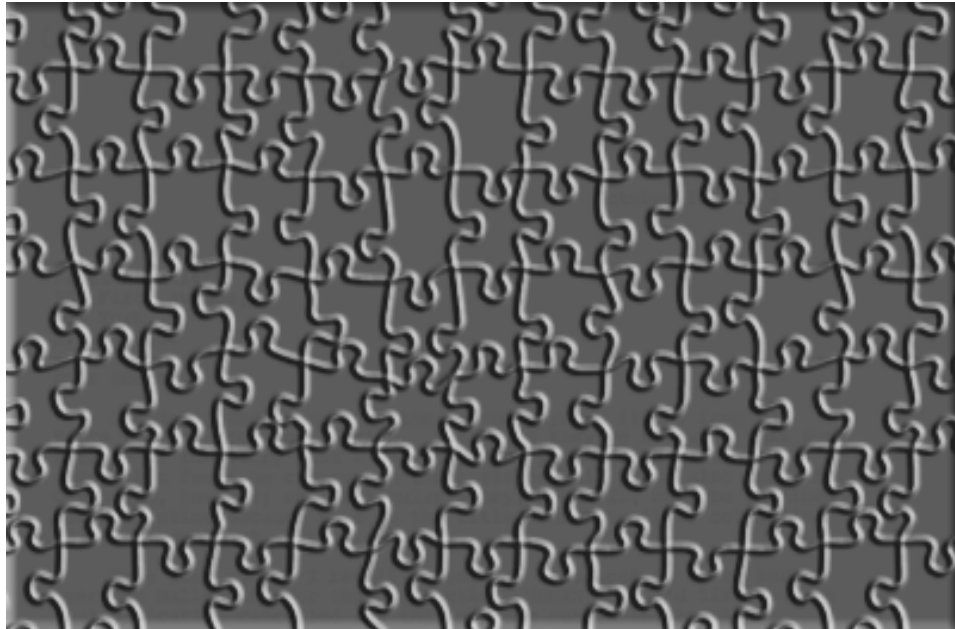
- The Linda doll – I was, and still am, fond of dolls and have a lot of them, including stuffed animals. Phil refers to them in some of the letters he wrote to me and others.
- My Camaro. It was a 1967 yellow Camaro, three on the floor. My first car. I called it George, and I had a little story about who George's father was, which is hinted at, but not explained in the story. The story was that George's father was the Goodyear Blimp Columbia.
- "The Levy people say she was a switchboard operator sometimes." I worked a lot of part-time jobs while going to school. One of them was as a switchboard operator, first at Whittier Hospital, and later at Elpac, in Irvine. In fact, the letter I wrote to Phil was written while I was on the switchboard at Elpac.
- "...but she had so many worries. Like going without her bra." And "According to one brochure, she drove an ambulance or something – anyhow, she was driving her ambulance one day, without her bra, and the LA cops busted her." And "one time she was caught selling tickets to an autopsy." So, as I mentioned, I worked at Whittier Hospital at the switchboard which was in the basement next to the morgue. One day, I came up to the cafeteria for lunch and the head nurse tackled me and sent me home because I wasn't wearing a bra. As I mentioned, the morgue was next door. The pathologist asked me if I wanted to view an autopsy – it's amazing the creativity some men use to meet women! – and I was curious, so I did.
- "She had a funny little wistful shriek, they say. When you put your arms around her she shrieked in the most captivating charming way. Although it was a lease-breaker, they say." At times when I was at Phil's apartment, he liked to sneak up behind me and grab me by the back of the neck. And yes I shrieked. I hated it.
- Drinking whenever possible. Not remotely accurate.
- Polishing gravestones – that's anybody's guess, however, the Chevron station is the one I mentioned earlier in the story about the night he tried to drive into oncoming traffic, and there was a Pizza Hut next door to it. Or maybe Phil was truly prescient, as I am now a docent at Mountain View Cemetery in Oakland, California. I don't polish gravestones, however, I just give tours.
- "Hello, Vincent" and "Goodbye, Vincent." That was really a charming touch, I thought, since the very first letter Phil wrote to me began with a quote from Vincent (Starry Starry Night) by Don McClean, about Vincent Van Gogh.



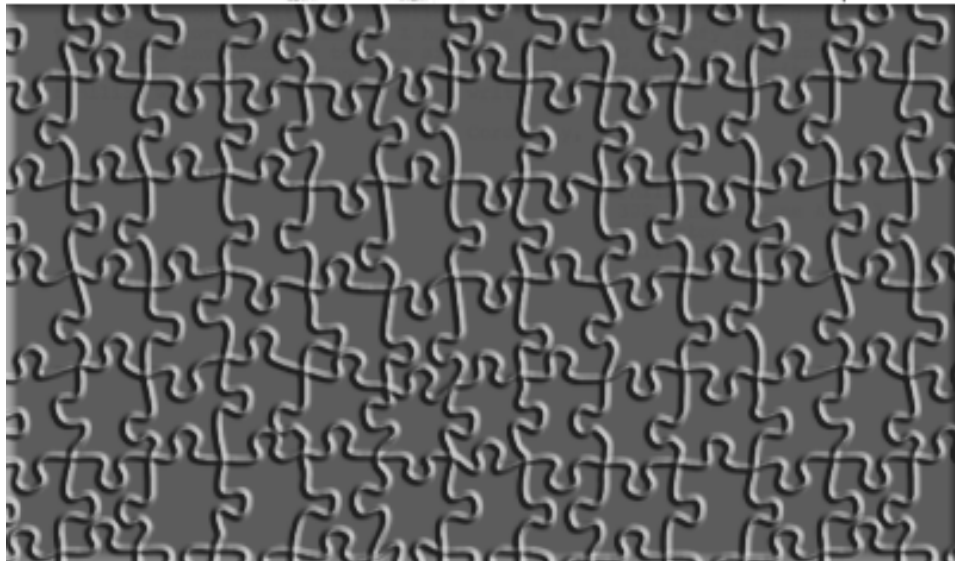
"That's a Linda doll," the guy said. "Made by Levy. You've probably seen their building alongside the freeway up near L.A. They're second only to Matell, and eventually they'll surpass them. This doll has a lot more character on its face than Barbie."



In the letter below, Phil directed Scott Meredith to dedicate the book *Human Is* to me. Before that could happen, Phil changed his mind. My understanding is that happened with some frequency; as you can see from this letter, someone else got bumped so the dedication could change.



To Linda Levy --
Let us run across a pasture, hand in hand,
and never look back. With all my love.



PKD, Side Two

In the fall of 1972, I saw yet another side of Phil, the angry and vindictive side.

The episode that led to this set of correspondence was this. Tessa came down to my apartment to talk to Alice and me. She was bruised and in tears; she was talking about Phil turning the stereo up full-blast, turning on the air conditioning and beating her. Because I had witnessed and borne the brunt of his rage before, I saw no reason to doubt her. What else could I tell her to do but leave for her own safety? I don't know what transpired after she left my apartment, but she evidently told Phil about my advice, and either based on the way she characterized it to Phil, or the conclusions he drew himself, these items are the result.

In this first letter, Phil expresses the feeling that, in the timing of my advice to Tessa, I have deliberately jeopardized his future. I wasn't aware of any of what he writes about here, and even if I had been, it wouldn't have changed the advice that I gave her.

One odd thing about this letter was that, written on the flap of the envelope, was the quote "Starry, Starry Night," which was a phrase that Phil used with me significantly and fondly. It strikes an odd note considering the tone of the letter.

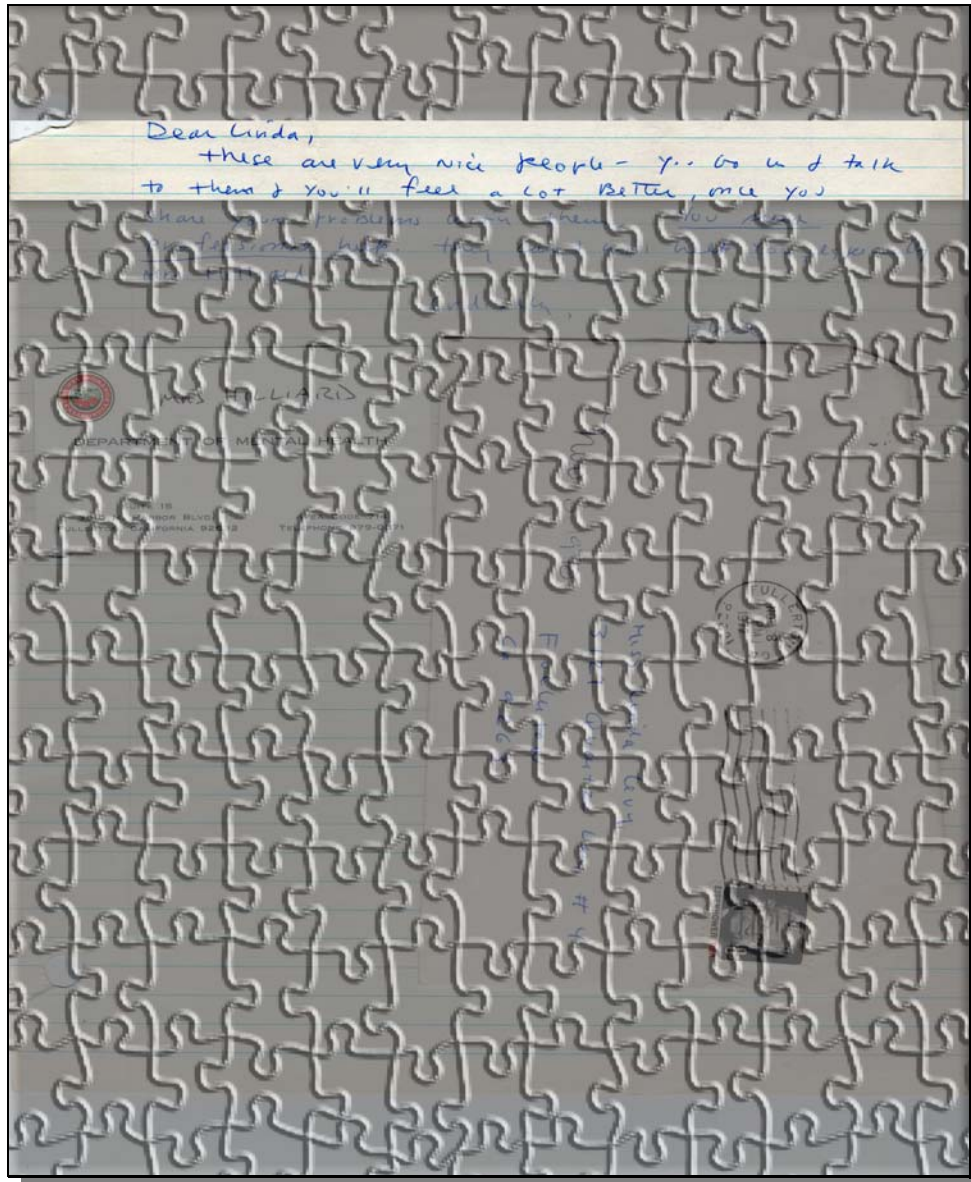
Dear Linda,

Advising Tess to leave before the trip to San Francisco is so irresponsible that I begin to think back to all the people who have told me they see a sadistic streak in you. Any chance of our being able to stay in Fullerton depended on that trip, as you knew. All



Not content with that letter, Phil began a campaign of harassment and annoyance. He did silly things like put a note on my car saying, "Linda Levy has warts and is a hazard to the beautification committee of Quartz Lane." I didn't keep that note. But there were more to come.

First the letter that follows, in which Phil suggests I go talk to "these nice people" and makes it clear that he thinks I need "professional help." The letter included the card and name of someone at the Department of Mental Health.

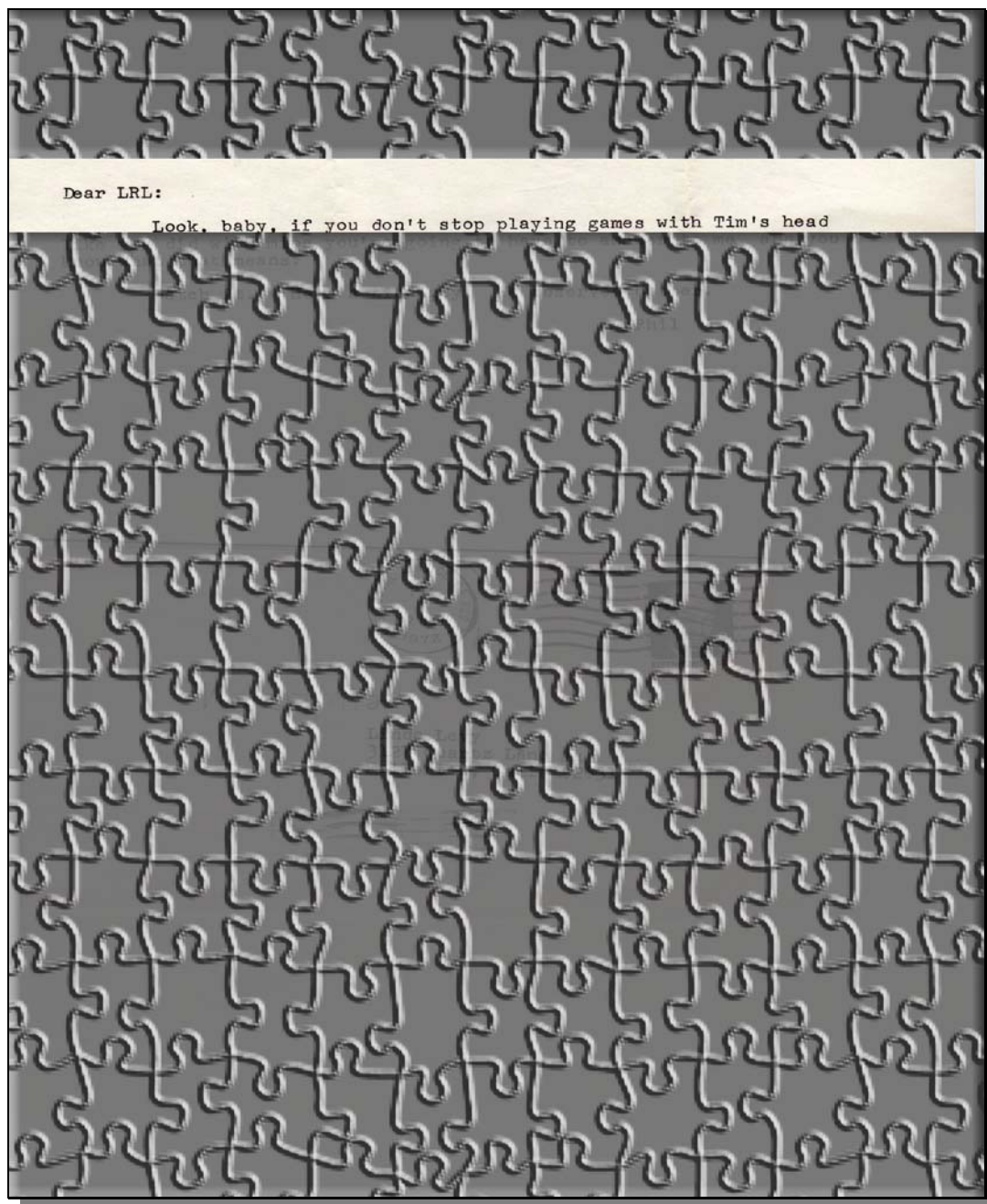


In the letter below, “Tim” refers to Tim Powers. I don’t know what I did to deserve this particular missive. Tim and I had met before he and Phil became neighbors, but we really didn’t start hanging out together until Phil insisted that Tim take me to see *A Clockwork Orange*. I had been afraid to see it; it looked too violent and creepy to me, but off we went. Phil had instructed us to come by the apartment afterwards; he and Tessa were having a party.

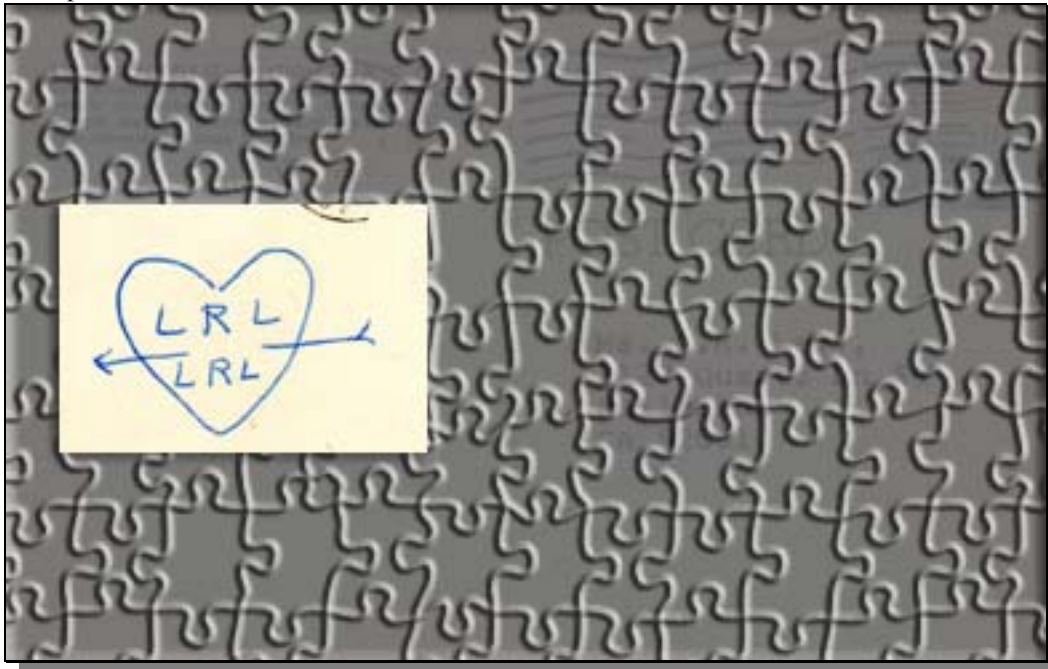
Tim and I had a great time. I loved the movie, and in fact after that we went to see it every Wednesday night for weeks at the theater across from the campus. To this day, it remains one of my top ten favorite movies.

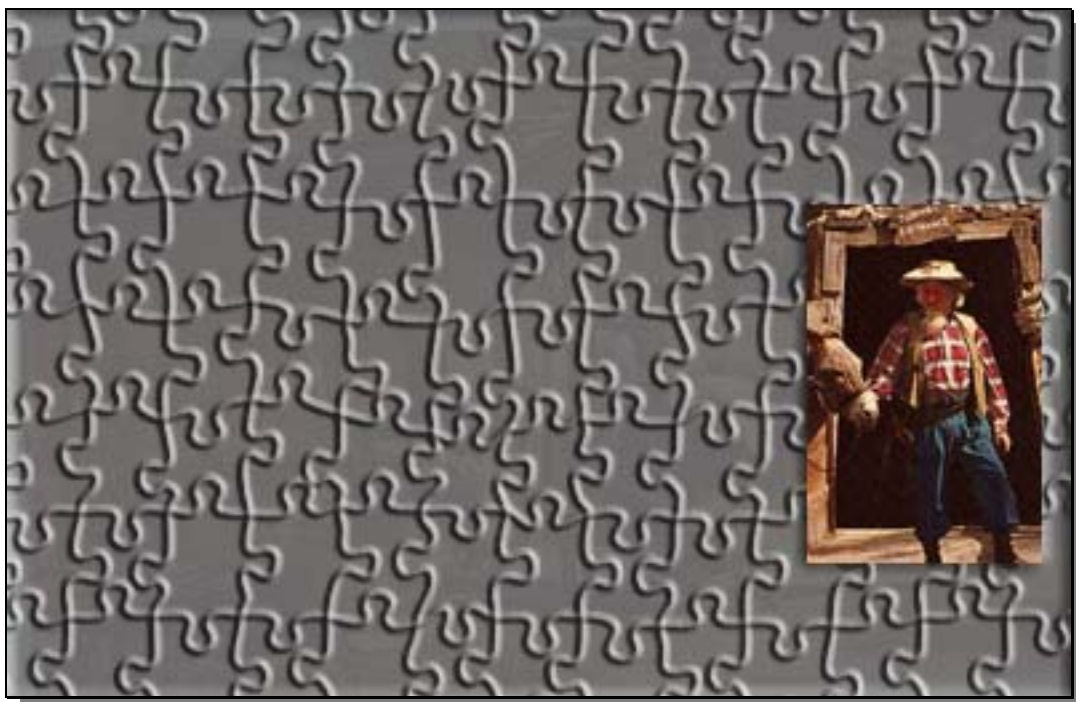
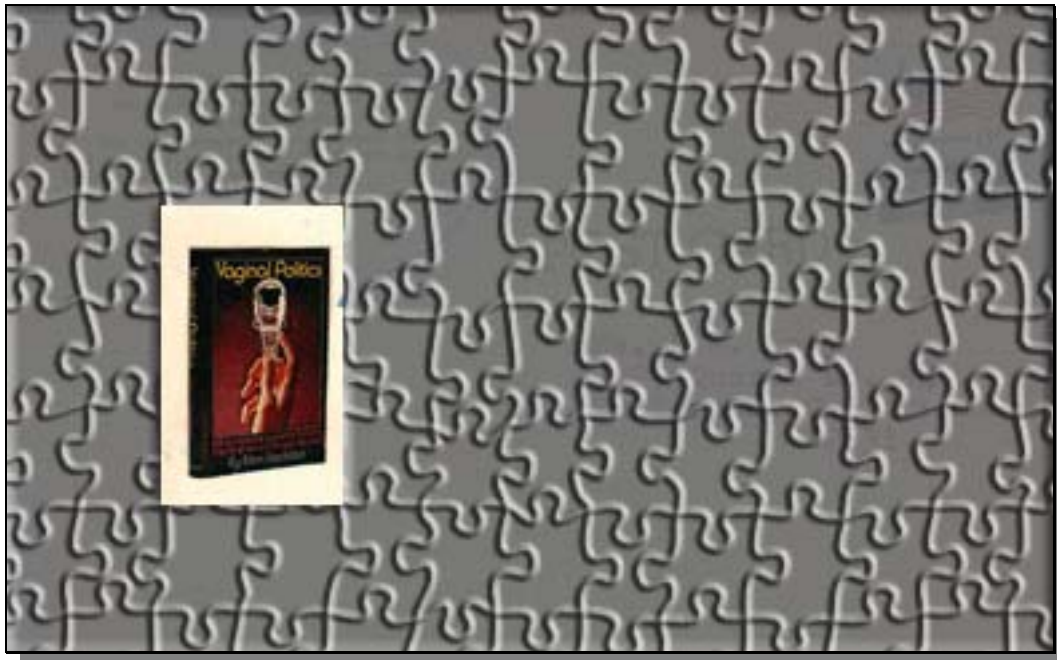
But, after we went to the movie that first night, we returned to the apartment as instructed, to find a dangerously quiet and gloomy Phil, and a silent, still Tessa, sitting on the couch in an empty apartment, untouched plates of snacks on the coffee table in front of them. “You were supposed to come to our party,” he said. We tried to remind him that he’d sent us to the movies, but he would have none of it, so we left, deflated, the excitement we’d felt after the movie completely gone.

The letter that follows is short and pithy and mildly threatening.

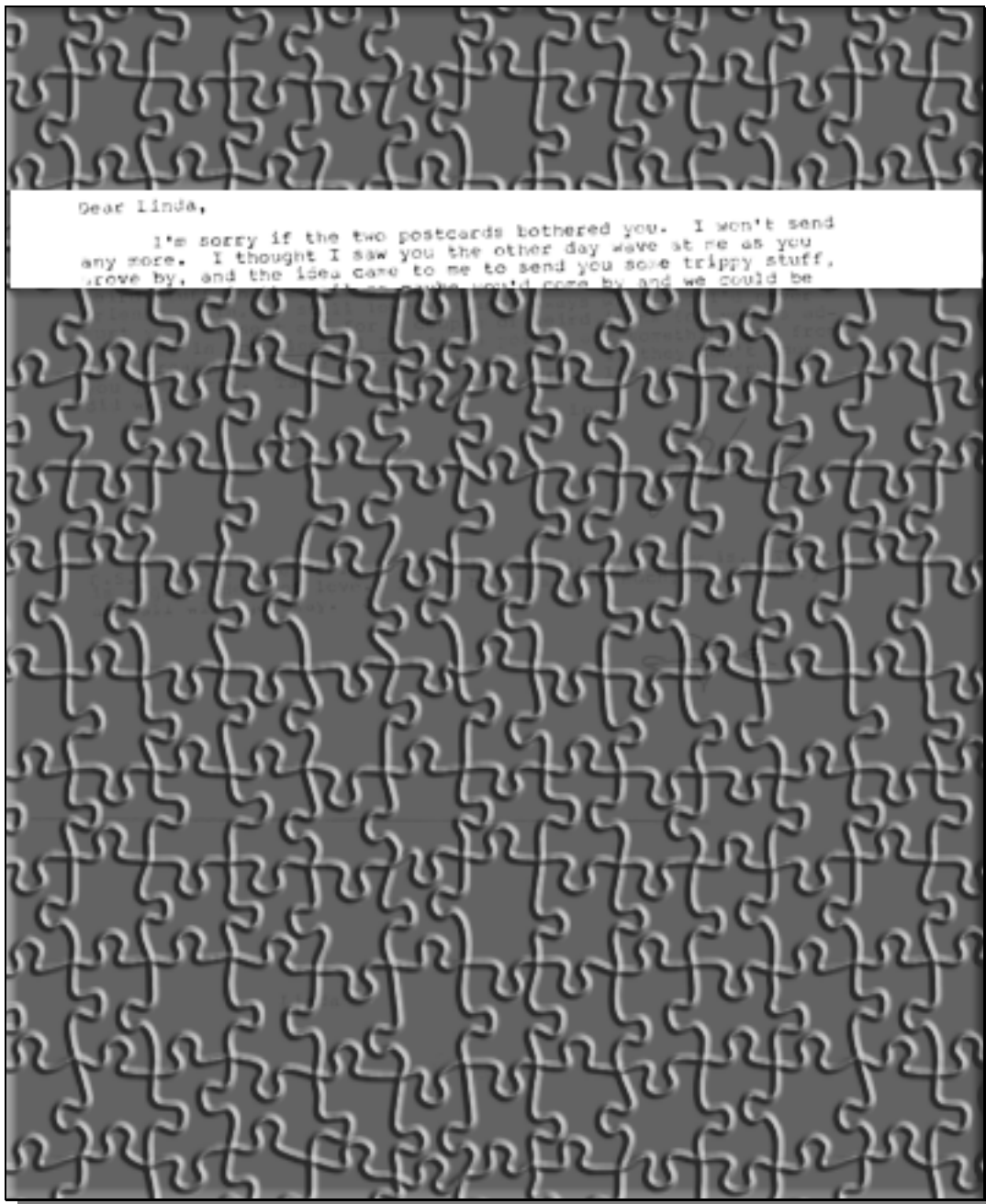


Then, the postcards started to arrive:





Then came the following letter of apology:

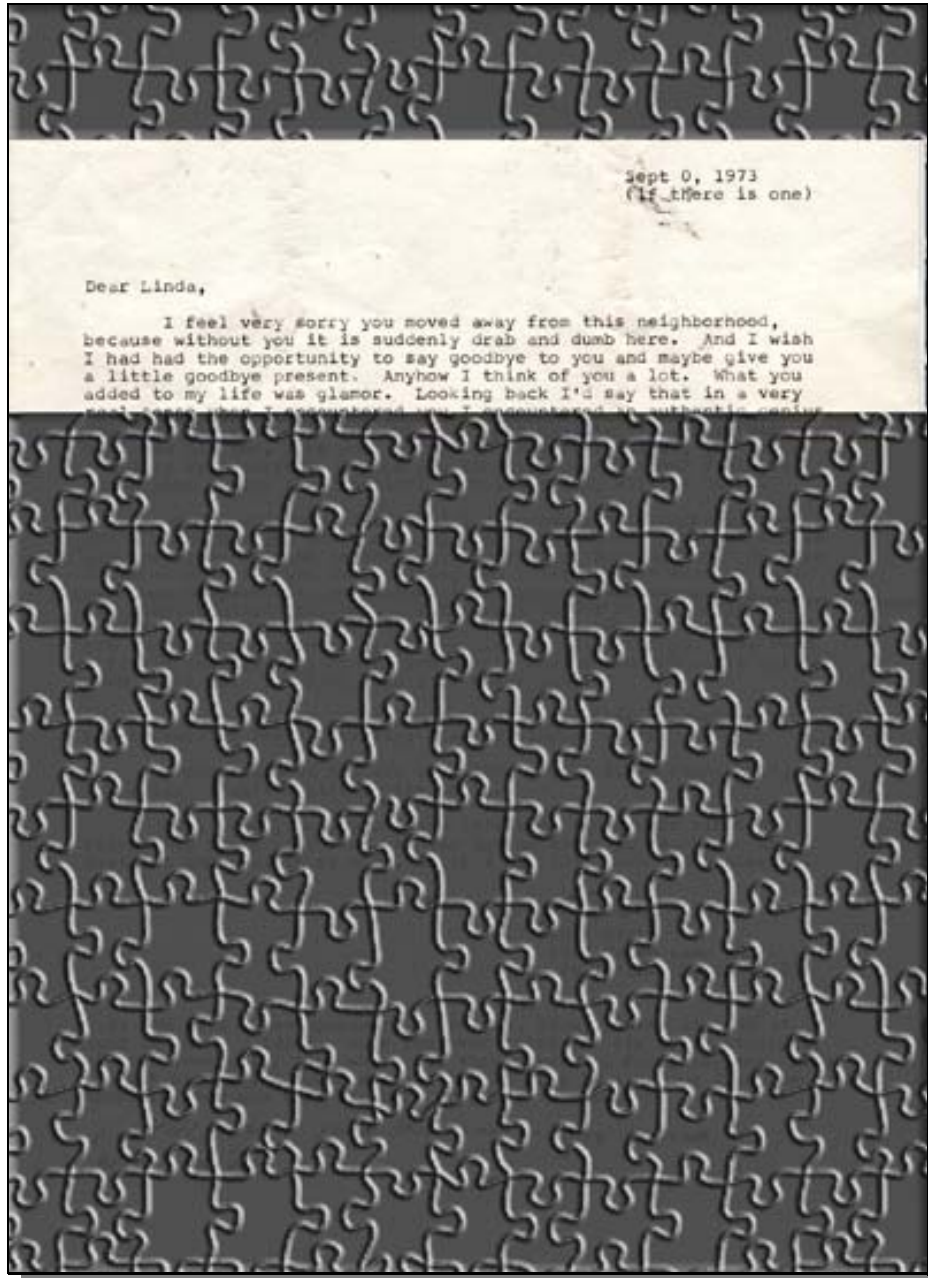


Dear Linda,

I'm sorry if the two postcards bothered you. I won't send any more. I thought I saw you the other day wave at me as you drove by, and the idea came to me to send you some trippy stuff.



I think I may have played a larger role in Phil's life than I realized. I had nothing to compare it to. I assumed that he was as flirtatious and flattering to all women as he was to me, but since his death, I've read some letters and seen some inscriptions in books, although certainly a limited sample, but they seem to indicate that maybe I meant more to Phil than I knew..



Dear Linda,

I have so much regretted the trouble between us, Linda, that caused the breakdown of our relationship. We are both troubled people, dark and clouded; like you I have my own periods of fire mixed with ice in which the intensity of my feelings gets too strong. Like you I sometimes withdraw. Like you I now and then reject another person because I am becoming too involved with that person and hence too dependent. I thought I saw you today --Sunday-- at the wheel of



PKD, Side Three

Phil could also be fun, playful, and hilariously funny. When he was in that frame of mind, he was a joy to be around, and when I received a letter written in that frame of mind, it was always a treat. The next letters are some examples.

The following is a fan letter from Phil, written as if we had never met. I had moved to Phoenix following my graduation from college with a degree in Mass Communications, to take a job at a direct sales company. Writing the company newsletter – or house organ, as it was called – was one of my jobs. The purpose of this photo was to introduce me to the sales people. It was taken at a sales meeting at a fake Western ranch/movie set near the office in Scottsdale. Under the photo was the caption “Meet Linda Levy.” I sure look happy about those leftovers.

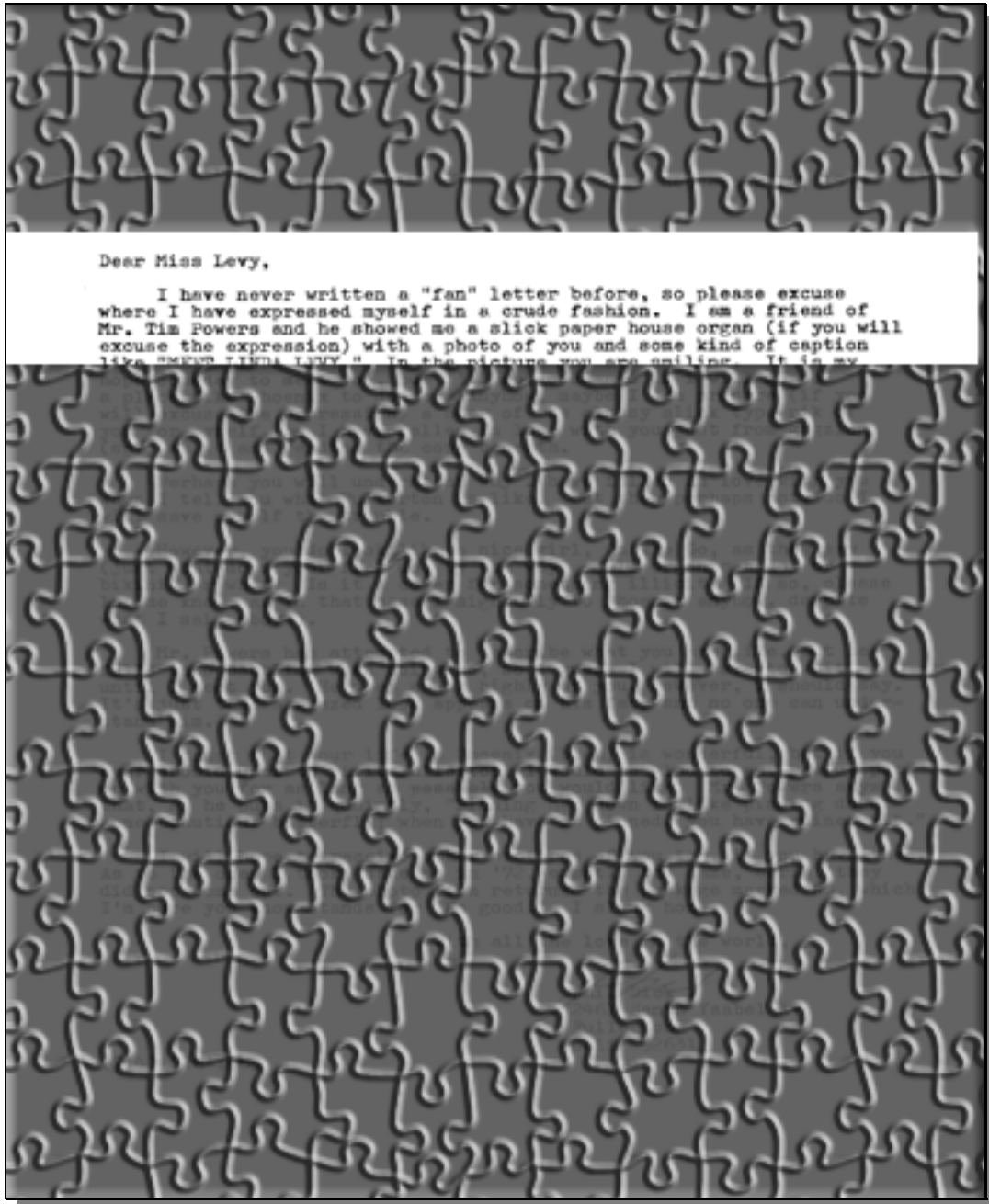
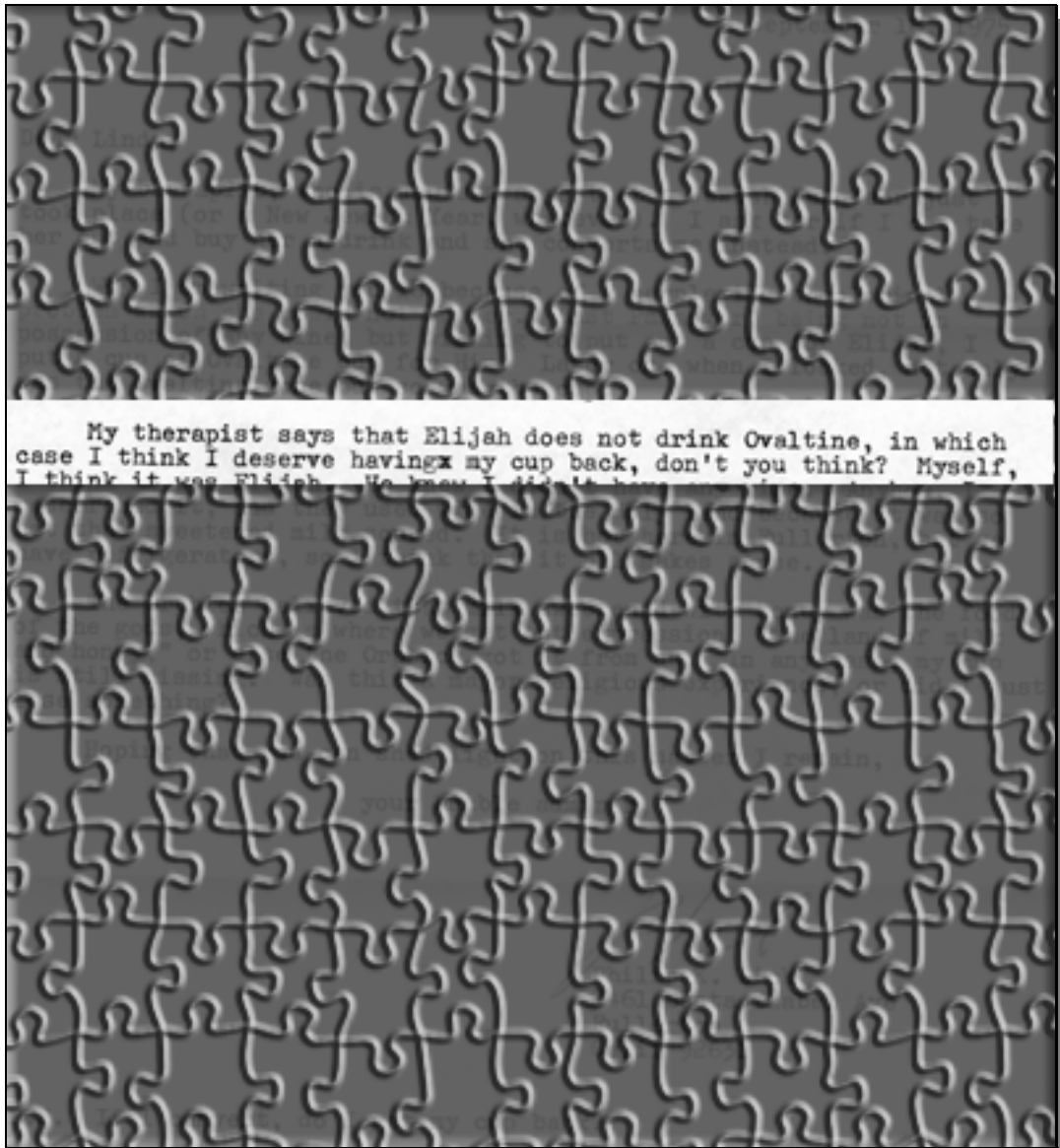


Photo Credit:
Donald Freeman



Of all the letters in this section of the catalog, this one is my favorite. Phil has put out a cup of Ovaltine for Elijah. The Ovaltine, and the cup, have disappeared. Phil wants the cup back.



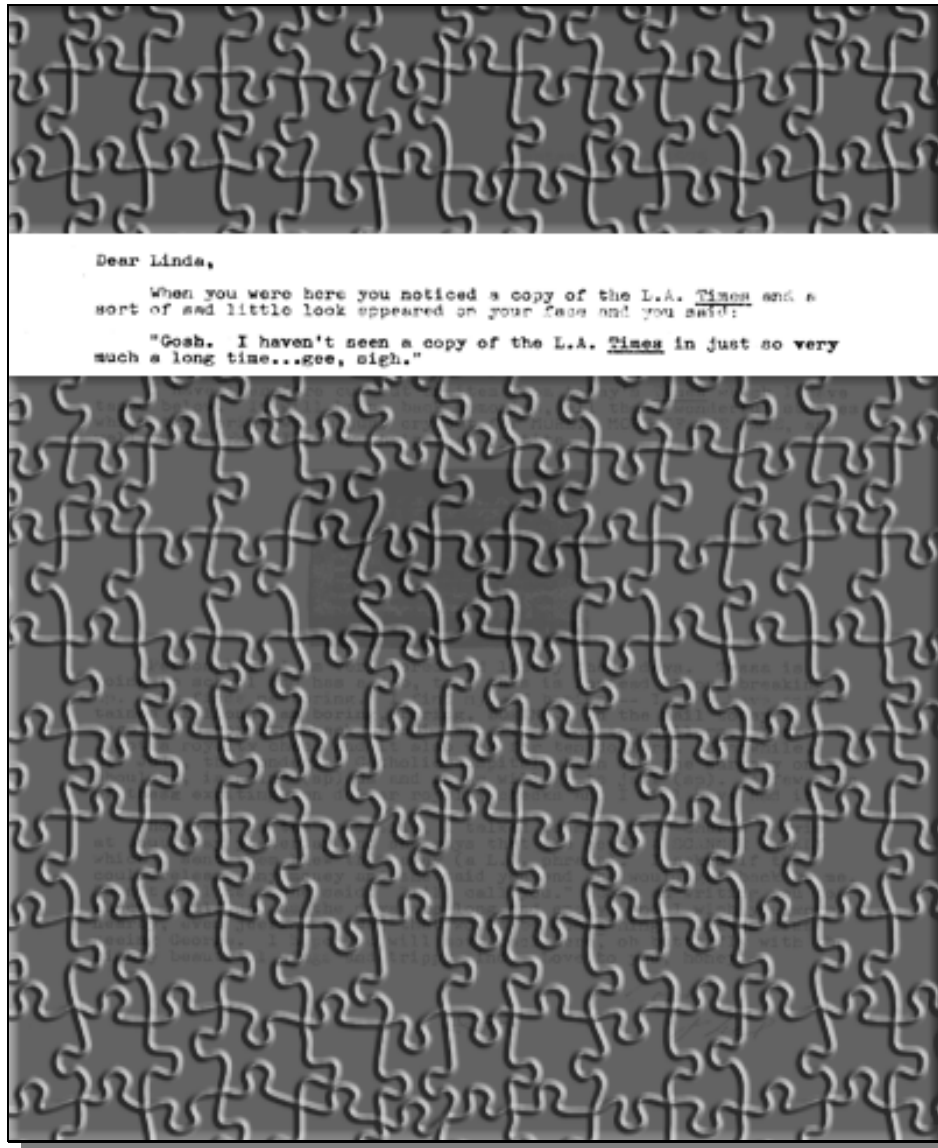
My therapist says that Elijah does not drink Ovaltine, in which case I think I deserve havingx my cup back, don't you think? Myself, I think it was Elijah. We know I did it because I know I did it.



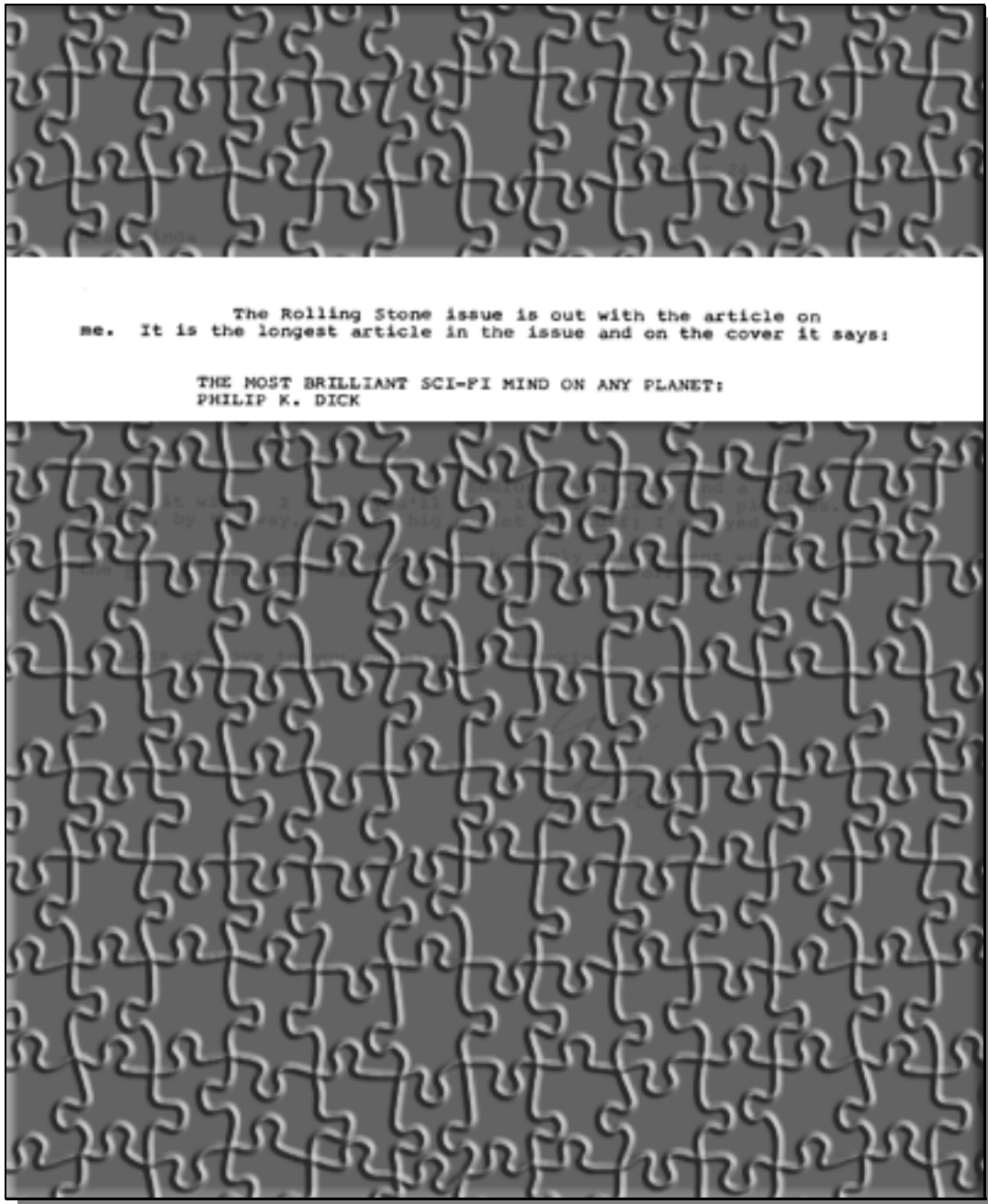
A Day in the Afterlife of Philip K. Dick, the excellent BBC program about Phil, includes some film of Phil being interviewed. In one snippet he talks about how he baptized his son Chris with Ovaltine.

PKD, Side Four

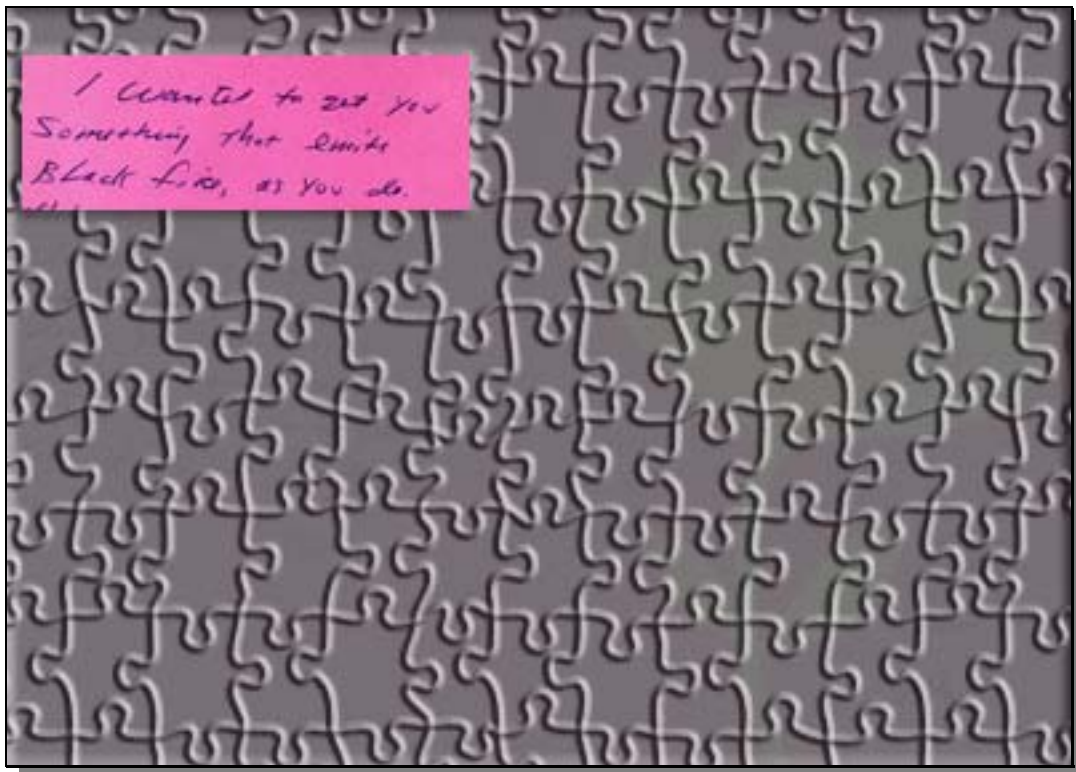
The following correspondence falls under the category of impossible to categorize. Not funny, not sad, not vindictive, just simply Phil. This letter talks about what's going on in the lives of Phil and Tessa. They are bored.



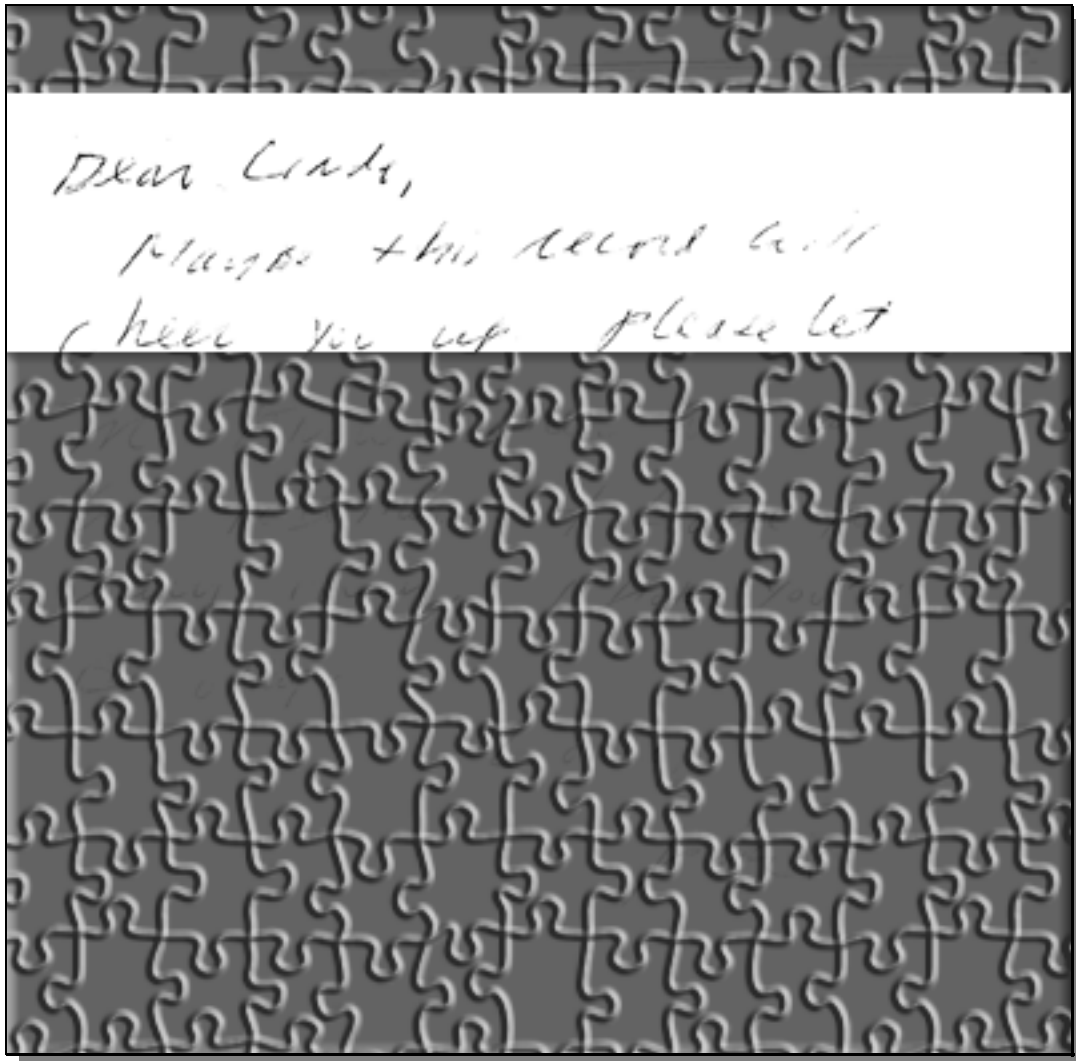
Phil writes to tell me the issue of Rolling Stone with the article about him is on the news stands, and he sends me a dollar to buy it.



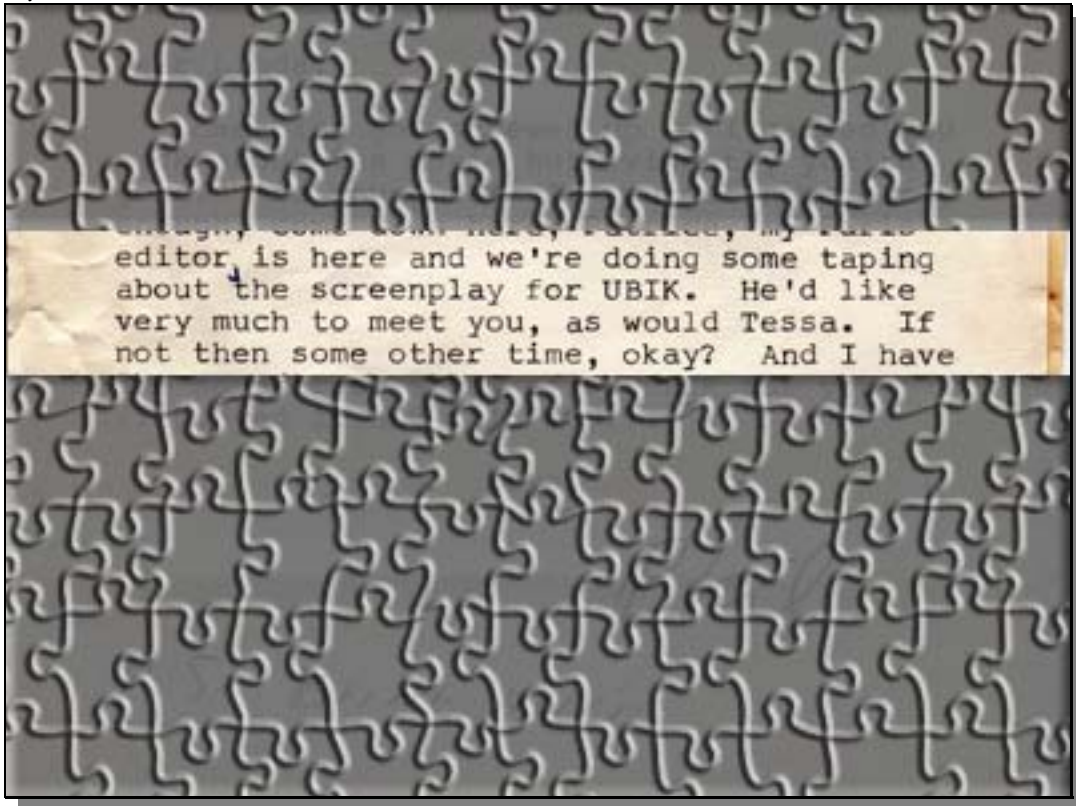
This greeting card came with a gift of some popular new technology – a fiber optic decorative display with an ever-changing wheel of color. It reminded Phil of the fountain we saw on Santa Monica Blvd, the night we picked him up from the airport.



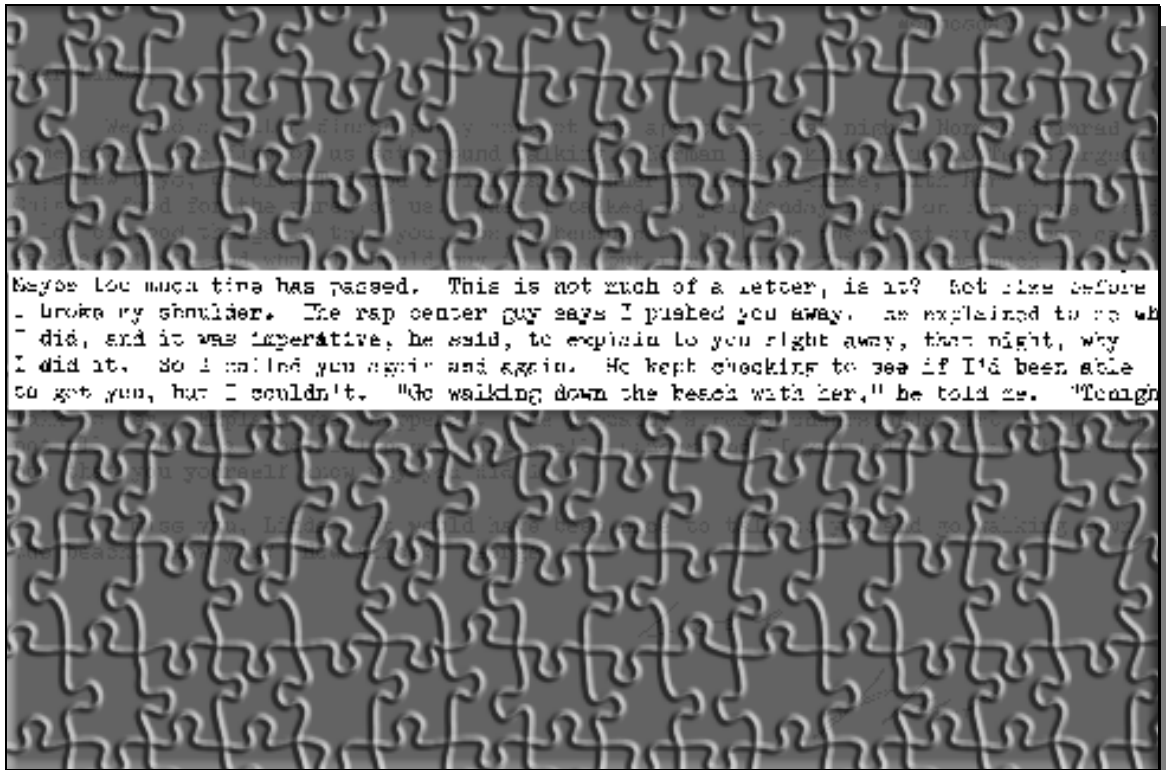
Phil knew that I was a Jacques Brel fan, so he brought me an album by Nana Mouskouri that included Brel songs.



This note talks about his houseguest, Fabrice, who has come from France to work on the screenplay for UBIK. Evidently I had not yet met Tessa; Phil also says that he has the Fiddler on the Roof album for me, so this must have been written some time after the night we saw the movie, and shortly after he met Tessa. I don't recall if I went.

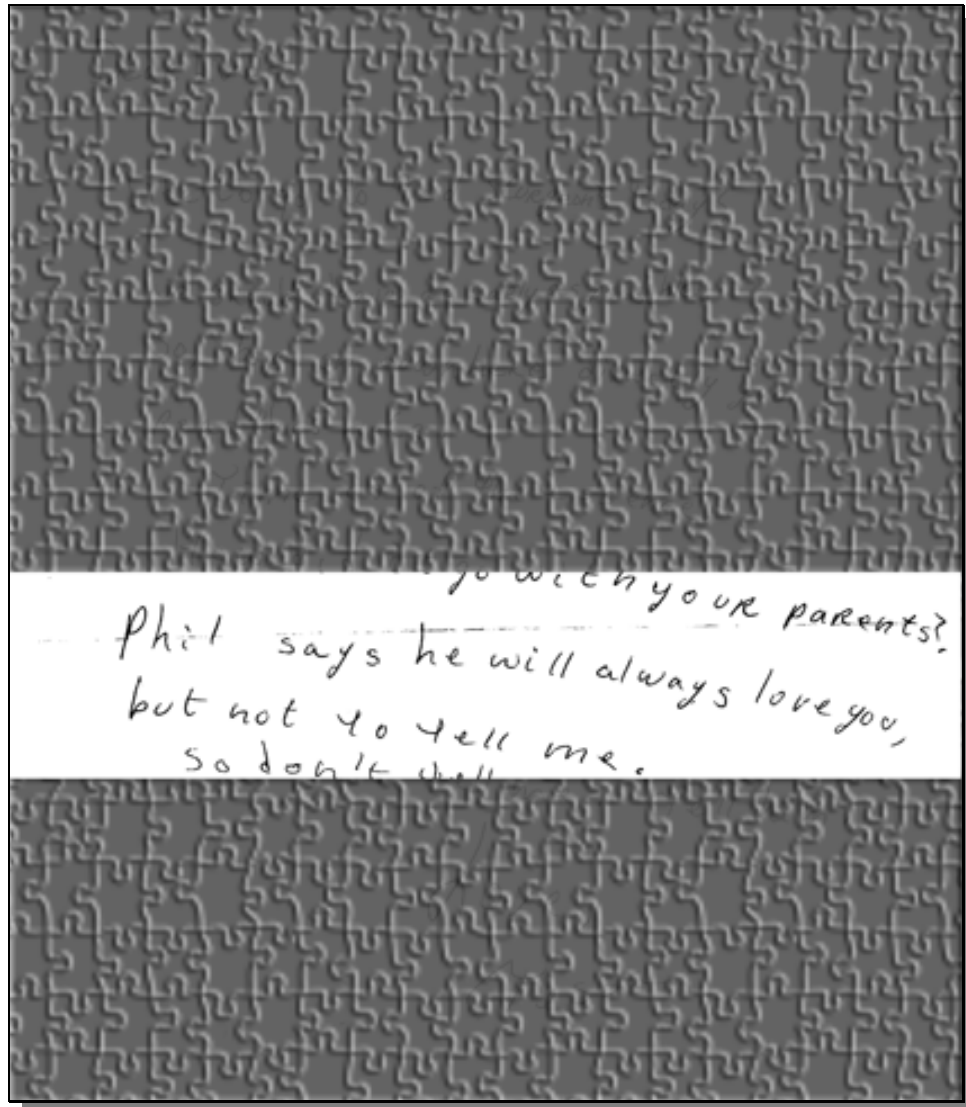


Phil wrote me a note about Norman Spinrad coming to dinner, and the plans they were making the next day to visit Ted Sturgeon. The rest of the letter is about a visit to the rap center where Phil struggles to understand what happened the night he drove us into traffic. With no apparent irony, he writes, "The rap center guy says I pushed you away."



PKD, Odds and Ends

These last two pieces are included here because I don't know where else to put them. The first is a note from Tessa, inviting me to go to Ted Sturgeon's. It may have been written the day after the last note chronologically, referring as it does to a visit to Ted Sturgeon's house. The rest of the message is interesting, too.



I don't recall going to Ted Sturgeon's house, so I suspect I did not join them on this occasion. However, on another occasion, we met Ted and Wina at the Greyhound bus terminal in downtown Los Angeles, as seedy a place as you're likely to find. I don't recall why we met there, but we sat and chatted for a few hours. In a store nearby I found a little plastic skull fitted out as an ashtray, which I presented to Ted for his famous unicorn pipe. It was pretty cheesy and I imagine he tossed it in the first trashcan he came to.

The last piece of correspondence is the oddest of all, and I can't prove that it was written by Phil, but Tim Powers thinks it was probably written by Phil because it was the kind of thing that Phil would do. I present it here for your consideration.

I received this letter in the mail, signed Pen Pal No. 2. It's clearly a parody of a rambling handwritten letter I had previously received from someone I met named Gregory, whom I don't remember. I don't recall showing Phil this letter and I don't know why I would have, but this letter is clearly written on Phil's typewriter, with the spacing changed from single- to double-spaced, and whoever wrote it had intimate knowledge of the letter from Gregory. I'm not including the Gregory letter in this catalog, but the collection includes it for the sake of showing the inspiration for the document.

