

Thursday 14th

Dear Roger.....

It was a dark and stormy night (as Snoopy would start his book) when we got to Richmond. It was even darker and stormier when we got to Virginia Beach. Fortunately it cleared Tuesday morning and everyone had a fine roasting on the sands before it clouded over and became a dark and stormy afternoon and night and next morning! So we came home in rain and drizzle all the way to Charlottesville. In fact, we had expected headlines in the Washington Post and TV news reports to the effect, "Hero's Welcome For Barlow's Whose Vacation Triggers Storm That Ends Drought". But not a drop of rain had hit west of the Blue Ridge and the Valley was as dry as ever.

Found your letter in Box 85 when we got back last night and was much relieved to learn that you are gainfully employed on the HBO movie. Let's have some information as to what it is all about. And a clarification of what you meant by Holly's birthday and a Maxxum in the house. Which Maxum?..which flash? If you haven't yet bought a flash, hold off for a few days until I can give you a report on the little one...1800AF is the model you should probably get as the other two make quite a handful out of the flash and camera.

No word yet from Martha The Mad Motorist (Gogomobile driving literary agent) but a bit early to expect to hear from her one way or the other.

Am invited to a ¹⁹⁹⁷ Mitsubishi car intro up at Mystic Conn. on the 25th/ (all expenses paid, of course). They have a couple of fairly interesting models with turbos. No Diesels, I'm afraid. Two models have an electronically controlled suspension, self-leveling and automatically adjusting for speed and road surface. So they say. With a driver override for normal or "sport" driving. Believe it also lowers the car an inch or so at speed.

So you survived the boys! Tom sounds like a sort of brain washed number. What the hell is Colin doing to him about not being safe in the front seat! Hell, he isn't going to be safe climbing a tree or crossing a street either. Or eating popcorn at a funny movie, he might laugh and choke to death. ^{And how is he going to drive a car from the back seat?}

You may have been shy...but easily mistaken for just good manners! Worst thing I remember about you was your high opinion of Antonioni's lousy, overrated movie of the people on the island. An architect who complained he couldn't do good work in Italy. Hogwash! But don't despair, Boris Kauffmann also liked it.

I do remember how you sneered at American TV...and then couldn't be dragged away from the set! And, of course, you remember how impressed I was with your ability to steer, shift gears and light a cigarette all at the same time you were negotiating a couple of curves!

Before I forget, that 5 foot, computer-printed letter was most impressive. Keep up the good work.

Hey! finally saw THE PURPLE ROSE OF CAIRO....what a grand piece of work! What a delight....in all respects. It would be a dull world, cinematically speaking, without Woody Allen....who can now, like Chaplin, apparently make anything he wants. Lucky him. Lucky us. He even had the guts to end the film on a downbeat note...the only honest ending it could have even though it would have been easy to have contrived a "happy" ending.

Monday.

Friday night I was reminded, forcefully, why "clipping" is a 20-yard offence in the NFL. It ought to be "forfeiture of Game". Cody, the young lab, came at full tilt from behind and clipped me...unlocking both knees and dumping me in a heap with a great crash (6.2 on the Richter scale). Very painful to have all the ligaments and muscles in the legs stretched so quickly and to such an extent. Also when your knees buckle, and you collapse, your heel comes up and your foot bends at the toes probably ^{cracking} ~~knocking~~ some of the small bones. I am now the proud possessor of the PURPLE TOES OF BARLOW. Yellow, too. Anyway with a painful left knee and the damaged toes on the right foot, I was in no condition to walk even with a cane. So I have been using a "walker" for a couple of days as it reduces the load on the legs and provides valuable stability. But today, I can, again, manage with a cane as the left knee seems fully recovered...only the cracked toe is painful. Most of my bones must be rubber...or steel...to not break under such conditions. First such fall in over a year...the last one for the same reason! YOUNG DOGS ARE A MENACE!

Oh, our main video store had a cassette of the 1986 Monte Carlo Rallye (called just that) which is worth looking at. Excellent quality and one incredible crash right in front of the camera. A VW GolfGTI slides into the bank, flips 360 degrees and comes to rest against a telephone pole at an angle of 45 degrees with steam pouring out of it. The driver waves for help, his navigator gets out and with the aid of spectators get the thing off the pole and on the ground...and off they roar! To eventually win their class! But it is the damndest mix I've ever heard. Like all the tracks were just set at one level and no one touched a control at any point. Thus the sound of the 200-400bph engines was always a muted buzz even in the clear spaces between the rattation...of which there was too much. But one did want to hear those engines screech and the drivers had all the wheels spinning as they rounded the curves and corners. Oh, the Lancias won! Superchargers for power low down and turbos for power up the rev range with the minimum drag on the engine. They must have a clutch that disconnects the supercharger at some point.

What news on the HBO front and why the Maxxum???

Love to you both
