

WALDO FRANK

april 19 48

TRURO, MASSACHUSETTS

My beloved friend and sister,

Your most welcome letter reached me up here. I do not know if you read English easily - probably you do; and since it is so much easier to write you that way - rather than in my lame Spanish - I shall risk it.

Although I understand perfectly why I did not see you, I cannot help grieving that it was so. I tried to find you the 8 days you were in New York. When Victoria Ocampo went to Washington to see you, I asked her to ask you if I could come too -- but she could not do so, for some reason. And now, although you are in my country, you are still 3,000 miles away!

Yes: Jean and I have retired to our home near the sea, within the winds of this northerly world. We live in an old house - old for this country (about 150 years); and here to us come the struggles and anguishes and angers of the great world, but composed, integrated, within a certain quiet. I have just completed my long novel, my masterpiece, I believe, *The Island in the Atlantic* -- which, if you read English with ease you can read in the autumn. If not, some day, I hope, it will be translated into Spanish. I have written it with a kind of resignation: if it is not received more "numerously" than my other books in my own country, it may well be the last long novel I shall be able to afford to write. It is a kind of testament -- an act of piety - a proof, if you will, of God: written in the ever thickening silence and neglect which my countrymen honor me with, as they have honored the other few real creators of our past.

I suspect, from your letter, that you never received the letter I sent you to Brazil. It was a great joy for me, that the Nobel Prize - for once - should have selected with such wisdom. It does happen, sometimes. You are a great great poet, and the world in honoring you has done honor to us all.

In one of my letters to you, which I think was lost, I wrote to you at the request of the Editor of *Commentary*, a very good monthly cultural Jewish magazine; they are running a series of articles on "The Crisis of Man" -- to which writers like John Dewey, Reinhold Niebuhr, Pearl Buck, myself, et al. are contributing. When they asked me who of America Hispana ought to contribute, I named you: they pay well, incidentally. Do you think you could find time within the next three months to do an article for them? -- on any subject that comes into the general title? For instance, you might write on the crisis of mankind in America Hispana -- some of the problems of the new race - the raza cósmica, in that beloved other America.

— JEAN STARR UNTERMEYER —

Another thing: there is in New York a woman poet, (a good one, not a great one) who has a genius for translation: she has just done a remarkable translation of Hermann Broch's "Death of Virgil" - from the German. She does not know Spanish, but a certain intuition makes her feel that she should translate your Poems * and she is right. I am sure she would do a good job, and she is so earnest about it that she is ready to learn Spanish in order to do so. I have heard you are coming to New York soon. Could you get in touch with her while you are there? speak to her at least? Her address is 235 East 73rd street - and she is in the phone book.

It was good of you to tell us that we would be welcome en tu casa when we come to L.A. We'll remember that "but Heaven only knows when we will be coming. Meantime, could you make the (I fear) difficult, long journey from New York or from Boston to visit us after you are finished in New York? Un abrazo de

Waldo

* The translation I have been of your poems in English. I am very poor...

[Carta] 1946 Apr. 19, Truro, Massachusetts [a] [Gabriela Mistral] [manuscrito] Waldo Frank.

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