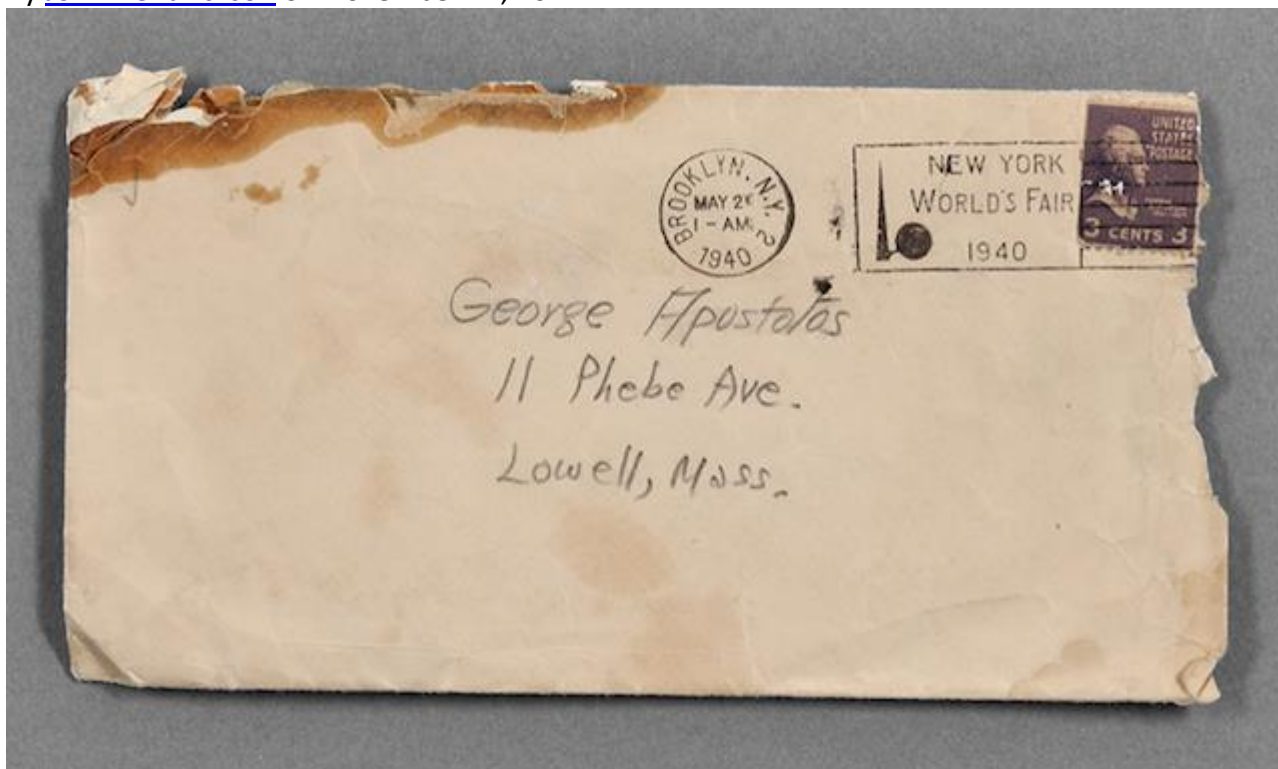


Read a Letter From a Young, Sex-Crazed Jack Kerouac

A trove of newly discovered Kerouac letters to a childhood friend go up for bid this weekend.

By [John Hendrickson](#) on November 12, 2014



Before he became a 20th-century icon, Jack Kerouac played high school football in Lowell, Massachusetts, and possessed enough talent to earn a scholarship to Columbia University and his first taste of New York City. Through these transformative years, Kerouac wrote captivating letters home to childhood friend George Apostolos, and they're as alive and rhythmic and nostalgic as *On The Road* and the brightest parts of Kerouac's other works. And now you can own them. Seven lots of Kerouac's dispatches to Apostolos, never before available to the public, will go up for auction this Sunday, November 16, in Boston through Skinner, Inc. Most are expected to fetch between \$3,000 and \$5,000 per piece. [You can bid on them here.](#) Reprinted with kind permission below is a letter a 17-year-old Kerouac typed to Apostolos, dated February 18, 1940.

This Basic story in the Record was written after lengthy discussions with Wolf and Wyse. The ideas were all mine, but they helped me a great deal.

Sunday Aft. 18

George,

Your last letter was dated Feb. 14, but it got here on the 17th. This is undoubtedly due to the snow-storm. I heard it was terrific up in New England. It was a whopper here, but I doubt if it reached the greatness of a Lowell Blizzard. I have an experience connected with the snow-storm here that is rather bizarre and crack-pot, though beautiful in the sense of beauty being in fitness to the end in view.

Before I enter into that elongated story, I'd like to shoot the shit about some things. With my typewriter here I can write longer letters than you, so don't let it bother you.

(There is a vast symphony orchestra now playing "Our Love"; it is intangibly beautiful---stirring as hell.) I got up at 2:30 today, after retiring at 4 A.M. yesterday morning. As you know, I am alone on week nights and enjoy the solitude of my study, and sometimes despise it. But on weekends, I usually have a hectic schedule. This weekend, I had some fun. I had dinner at Dick Sheresky's house after school Friday. He lives up on the 26th floor, and the window of his ultra-modern, cozy little bedroom overlooks a vast scene that bates the breath. Gosh, how these kids don't realize the splendor of their glittering life. This Dick Sheresky walks around like Joe DesJardin, but my God he is so witty and intelligent. He is six feet tall, and has little curly hair. He's always got a joke on his lips. That night, while having dinner alone in the glittering dining room, the maid came in with a tray, and Dick said: "Hey, about some more pecker-juice, Julie?" I sputtered my milk all over the table when he said that. He said: "Oh that's nothing, Louis. I used to goose my other maid." (We have a mania to call each other by our middle names.) After dinner, I went in to meet his mother and father and little brother-----and sister, or shall I say Sister...in the parlor. His sister was standing in front of a mirror, looking at me through the reflection. There is no doubt in my mind that you or I have never laid our eyes on such an exquisite creature as Jacqueline Sheresky. Her neck has that stamp of blueblood; it curves up delicately and like ivory to a perfectly moulded almond chin, and thence to quivering scarlet lips, covering a row of alabaster teeth. Her eyes are dark as ebony, with a flash of fire in them. Her hair topples down in rippling cascades of black sleekness, over a pair of resilient, lush shoulders. She is slim, blooming, and graceful; I have never seen anything like it.

I assure you, George, she has more class than 50% of our Hollywood actresses. She is only 14, going on 15. It's amazing how she can be so beautiful and so young. Although she is so rich, so refined and so distant, I have resolved to marry her some day. I shall worship her from afar.....and will stop worshipping her only if she marry some one else in the future. She is going to Vassar, a girl's private school in Poughkeepsie New York, one of the most exclusive girl's schools in the country.

First, I had heard of her beauty from other kids who had seen her. Then I had seen her myself, a short glimpse, while having dinner at Dick's last December. Then I saw her one day in the subway, that morbid de-glamorizing machine, in which she glittered like a precious stone. Then, I finally saw her in all her splendor, standing before a huge spot-less silver-rimmed wallmirror, with all her dark beauty staring at me through the reflection. No smile on her face, no morbidity, just a dark look from dark eyes; dark and deep intelligence.

She is exactly what I have always dreamed of; she is my dream girl. Every man has a dream girl, but seldom do they really meet their dream girl. I am an idealist. I am a hopeless romanticist, a dreamer. I shall worship her with quiet dignity. I shall draw her attention to me by exploits, success, and possibly a small measure of fame. Into insignificance goes Carney, Coffey, Betty Brennan---- they all fall in slumping heaps before her. She is the queen of the feminine hoi polloi; she is the essence of feminine pubohritude.

I am not throwing any bull. (EH, HEH, HEH, OOH, OOH, HA HAH)

I've said enough for one day about her, but it won't be the last time you'll hear of her. The trouble with me is, that I haven't the nerve to ask her to the Senior Prom----in which I shall wear my first tuxedo, and get my first taxi ride with a gowned damsel to the swank Waldorf-Astoria...where people will line the entrance to watch the rich society parade by into the dazzling inner recesses of the carpeted lobby and dining and dancing room----for one night I will be a member of New York society---but I say one night, and I assure you it will be for that night only. Were I to escort this Goddess to the Waldorf, I would have my measure of life poured into one night. I am afraid that God-damned Jew Sokolow has already asked her. He's the one who took her to the Penn that night I had dinner at Dick's.

While eating in Dick's presence, I hear the strains of "The Man I Love" played with one finger, and with the exact phrasing that I use on my aunt's piano. I was amazed. "Gosh, that's the exact way I play that song. Nobody else does," I said. Dick said it was his sister: "That's Jacky playing a hot riff from Tuxedo Junction. Isn't she terrific?" But I didn't hear him, because I felt as if there

was some significance in that. How the fuck can anybody have the same ideas from the piano that I have? I am such a lousy player. And she went on playing with one finger, leaning over with her tongue sticking up over her upper lip I suppose, in the exact style that I play.
Mental telepathy.

So far, this has been the funniest letter I ever wrote to you. What do you think. What a Goddamned sordid, hopelessly awkward, hypocritical, idealistic, self-conscious and crazy fool am I.....

But I know that you understand me, and that you won't hold it against me if I pour out all my kaleidoscopic nonsense into your vast basin of human intelligence.

*Only the Shadow Knows EH EH EH. (I have gone back to reading em.
I have about 5 Shadow maps.*

That night, we picked up Burt Stollmack and John Wilson at Burt's house and walked from 72nd to 34th street, where we entered the Hotel Penn to hear Glenn Miller. On the way down, we sang songs and said hello to people we didn't know and raised hell generally. At the Penn, I was standing in the doorway looking into the Cafe Rouge--- we couldn't get in because it was crowded and stayed out in the lobby chairs and listened.....---and there I saw Sokolow and She dancing to Miller's sweet ballads. John Wilson was leaning against me, with his arm around my neck and we were both singing with Ray Eberle softly, when Sokolow and She looked at us. They both smiled-----and for the first time in my life, I showed a spark of communication with her by raising my hand slowly and waving at them both. She looked at me for a while---- Sokolow raised his hand and waved wildly ----then slowly she raised her hand, slowly and precisely like I had done, and waved her hand at ME, because she was looking right at me, not at John... I couldn't stand it and went back to a lobby lounge chair and stared across at Dick who was talking with Burt. Dick, that slubbing and clever Bastard who lived in the same house as she....I mean She.

After that, we went back to Burt's house, where Burt's rich old buck began to tell us dirty jokes---he's a great guy, Fouch, and he reminds me of my Dad. (Remember? "Just a little rasp..." AAAAHH brooway BROWSSHHH BOONMMMM tremble, tremble, tremble, earthquake!) God, do I want to get back home!

Last night, I met Olatad and MacKaye in front of the Rialto, and then we met another kid, and we all went into Diamond Jim's for a beer.

Then, we went to a show for two hours, and then walked to the Gay Blades, where we met Burt and Dick Gottlieb (little Irish lad) and went in skating. There, Bob and I had a feud all night over a cute little blonde, and wound up with me dating her up for next Sunday and he dating her up for next Sunday, and both of us won't keep it. What fun with that guy...he reminds me of home, because he is the essence of the unsophisticated, un-rich, regular guy... like you, and Scotty and Fred.

By the way, what's the matter with Fred? I'll bet Freddy is becoming a big Happy more and more every day. Am I right. I pity that poor little Claire that's in love with him. Tell me all about Fred.. I don't even know if he's working at the Royal. What does he do?

If you lay Leo before I get back, then when I do get back, she will have fallen into the habit of laying the young cooks that visit her house, and I will join the fold. So go to it. Do you realize George that Leo is a healthy woman with healthy desires, and that she doesn't get it enough from her mean husband, and that being somewhat Hot, she won't hesitate for a second to enjoy life with a bunch of healthy and handsome young cooks. What woman wouldn't grasp the opportunity. Am I going to treacher with kid gloves, when I get back. So go to it George. ... she wants it and needs it, while we need it because we are getting older every day, and nearer to natural male desires. Lay her you babe, and we'll have a twice weekly fuck for the rest of our lives, which is really LIVING. Tell me about developments in that particular angle.

About the snow storm. It was raging outside with a 70-mile gale. I decided to get a taste of the Lowell trips I used to make through the fields during big blizzards. I dressed up well and ventured out. I went down by the docks and listened to the ships in distress on the bay and on the East River. Later, I stopped into a waterfront bar for a stomach-warming beer. Here I studied various characters. Then I went out and went on the Brooklyn Bridge. There I stood alone, with the gale full in my face, the only man on the Bridge on that night. Once in a while, a blast would almost blow me over, but I resolved to conquer the fear I had for a while. I did conquer it, for I could stand there and laugh out loud after a while. I don't know why I did it, but I do know that it was the first adventurous experience I've had in a long time. I guess you must think I am crazy, George, but I had the time of my life. I'd of had more fun with you maybe though, because it was so damn fucking much fun. Well, I guess I'll end this whacky letter. Write soon, and give me detailed accounts of the things that you do in good old Lowell.

*P.S.: Get the Downbeat and read
it so that we can discuss
music next Summer 15¢ a copy. — Adv.)*

Your eccentric pal,

Jack

*I am en-
closing my
Basic Story.
Most of ideas
are mine.*

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