

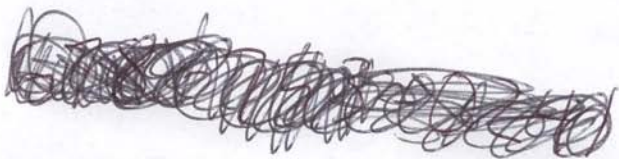
Dave Thibodeaux
Camdenton MO (Bagel Dam)

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Gary Eldridge
Lawrence, KS



Sept 23 2012

Gary,

Hey, it's Dave. This book sucks. Hope you remember me. P. Tom Signing year? Done Deal?

I've attached a photo to jog your memory.

Ha, well it might be a bit different from

my picture in the Kolans - if you still have a copy handy - but hey, years on so of banging

at Lakeside, the utter beer consuming, a

frail party habit and a slow metabolism are

you're do that - A flag, in the last year, I've

come to realize that follows picture a bit more

the other year someone mentioned that you were in

Lawrence, KS. They didn't know exactly what

you were up to, just that you'd ~~moved~~ moved

over to Lawrence from KC and were maybe working

on something related to a Lawrence hydroplant? Just

thought about you the other day, figured I'd shoot

you a note see how you're doing, what you've been

up to, catch you up on happenings down here, etc.

How is Lawrence? ~~That~~ I only remember heading there

once, to catch a Tigers-Jag hawks game. We won, maybe

Big Seemed like a nice enough town. Maybe

a little law ~~for~~ most of it, nestled right

up against the Kansas. How you found sure

They loving there? They ~~also~~ used to

run screaming from us. Well, ~~the~~ me

⊕

② I bet now women are ~~always~~ just throwing themselves at a guy who can make stuff work. (If you're not ^{using} ~~using~~ this to your advantage, man, you better start!)

I've been well, as has my family. My wife Ellen just turned 40 two months ago.

Don't know if you ever met her. She wasn't in a Greek house at all.

I met her just before graduation, she was still a ~~sophomore~~ sophomore at the time ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~

It's pretty hard to believe we've been married almost fifteen years. (The last has been a bit of a bear, but that's the norm here and, I'm guessy, everywhere else) Most of her family is in the area.

This has turned out to be ~~a~~ a real blessing the past year or so. Hard to believe I used to loathe them being around (then again, they did use to moosh my bear). Our eldest, Jake, is twelve and a half. John, the second and youngest, is ten. Life was busy enough with 2 boys running around being boys and asking silly questions

③ ... It's even harder now they ask questions I don't know how to answer. Like, why does Dad have to ride my bike to work every day? When are the lights coming back on? Why do I have to chop wood again? Fish, again? Damn man, it's impossible to respond.

Other things down here in Camden are so-so. I'm still working at the dam. We're maintaining our staff best we can, but money is tight and it doesn't seem to buy much, anything, with all the damned price gouging going on. The Lake was really quiet this summer. Hard to believe, I mean just a year ^{or so} ago thousands upon thousands of people came down here. Just to drink + make asses of themselves (It was almost a part-time job for some of our staff too, to tell the truth). Anyway, slow times, but that's not all bad. We're still actively trying to figure out who knocked out the turbines here last year, and how. We had a couple engineering profs come up from UMR to take a look at it. Took them a full week to travel up here, and that was after the week or so it took to get our message to them. I think they were happy to have something to do. Anyway, they checked everything from top to bottom.

One of the professors even strapped on some SCUBA gear and checked out the intake — not that it had been off, because we don't have any power with which to shut the damn thing off. They ~~gave~~ give it a clean bill of health, but no reason why it's not pumping out juice. It's just as we found before. The entire mechanism is completely sound, ~~the turbines~~ the turbines ~~are~~ turn smoothly, everything runs as it ought to — it just doesn't put out any electricity. It's my understanding that things are this way all over the country. Hell, all over the world, for that matter.

Heard what happened in South Dakota. Don't know if you've gotten word or not. A buddy of mine who works ~~at~~ — well, who used ~~to be~~ to be employed by the Mo. dept of transportation in Lee's Summit sent me the news just a couple of days ago. Oahe Dam flooded, and the whole thing failed. Washed out completely. No warning — really, how could there be nowadays? I guess they got a ton of rain, but you'd really expect a dam like that to hold. Then Gavins Point failed, too. Upshot was that Pierre and Sioux City got taken out, as did a whole lot of Omaha. I don't know who did the estimating, or how, but almost 12,000 Pierreans, 80,000 Omahans and 50,000 Sioux City folks got killed. With the food and medicine

Shortages after last year's tragedies, Sioux City's virtually wiped out. Omaha's now got to be way less than half its population as it was two years ago. I don't even think the people in the podunk towns all along the Missouri before Sioux City and between it and Omaha were even counted in the death toll, and, to be honest, I don't even want an estimate regarding those. Apparently, things were a little hairy down towards St Joe and Kansas City, too, but the river never crested over the banks.

I haven't heard about any other dams failing. Of course, my view, like everyone else's, is pretty limited right now. Maybe they weren't maintaining the dam as they should have, maybe it was just a poor design. Still, it's just not right for a dam to fail so completely and rapidly as that I just... I'm terrified that ~~the~~ the dam here is going to just up and blow. It keeps a hell of a lot of the Lakes of the Ozarks penned up. My family's place is up on a hill - we'll be able to weather a failure. The towns downstream from the lake, though. Well, I've sent word as far as Freeburg to watch for a sign that the dam has failed. I've got in a heap of trouble for it, making people more antsy that they are already, but I'm not going to have thousands of people's deaths on my head. And we're halfway organized now - far better off than before. Just for your information, we've got a couple big torches set up on top of one of the local mountains, right near Lakeland. Actually, they're on a ridge with a bald face to the east. The torches are big, and both covered from the weather, they're always loaded up with a mix

⑥ of old phone books, pine and oak Cit'll light fast and keep burning bright) and we've got mirrors set up behind them to beam what light they put off as far as possible. Everybody on staff — hell, everybody in town, now — knows that if the dam fails ~~they're to~~ ~~hightail~~ they're to hightail it up to the ridge and light both fires. We figured that folks downstream might see one — or one nearby — and think it was a mistake. But two should get the message across. I don't know, it's really the best we could come up with. I hope it'll save some folks, if it ever comes to that.

Also, I'm also nervous for everyone else I know who works near a river. I wanted to mail you and let you know that I considered you a really good friend in Pollo, and that I'm sorry we, rather I never kept in regular contact with you and that I think you should move the hell out of that floodplain. At least get near the campus at the top of the hill

① Here, whatever it's called. Or, barring that, at least figure out some kind of warning system. I'm sorry if I'm being a bit of a prick about this - I just want to maybe help ~~save some lives~~ save some lives.

Hope all is well for you and yours in Lawrence. If you ever get some mobility and want a vacation or something more permanent, look us up. We've got plenty of room in the guest house. Plenty of room. Plenty of food to go around. Another set of eyes on the dam would be more than welcome. You were always a hell of a good student. If I remember correctly, maybe you can pinpoint the problem. And hey, without the jackasses on the kite, the fishings been great here - best year ever for it. Hard to believe.

Dave J

ⓅPS: This is the first time I've used one of these couriers. Hopefully it'll get up to you within a month or so...?