The Palmer House

October 3, 1965, Sun. 2:00 p.m.

 One year today! I hope it hasn’t been as wretched a year for you as it has been for me. I have been utterly miserable. The year has taken a terrible toll on me.

 I saw my internist last week. Had not seen him since Aug, 1964. He handed me my death warrant. He was as astonished as I at what the examination showed, though I had suspected for three months. Not cancer. He and I are agreed that he should always tell me the truth.

 As I told you earlier, I am suffering from a broken heart. Internal hemorrhaging. The effect has been cumulative. You have killed me as surely as if you had given me a dose of cyanide.

 I heard your opening remarks on Friday, but noted you didn’t remain long. You sit near the door so that you can get out quickly to go to the nearest bar or the latest female victim of the “snake charmer.”

 Yesterday I passed near you in the lobby at 8:00 a.m. and went to Petit Café. You followed me and sat near me. I had an opportunity to observe you for nearly an hour. The back of your neck is thinner. You have lost weight and hair.

 You might have had breakfast with me. You are so indebted to me. I don’t mean financially. That’s of no moment. But you sought and took my most precious possessions – myself and my love. Then, on a moment’s notice, you discarded both. I grieve for you day and night. You were so heartless, so cruel. You haven’t kissed me since April 26, 1964. It’s a long time to suffer acutely every day.

 I cannot go on without you. I shall be publishing an announcement soon. I am financially ruined – over $7,000 of business debts. I will not continue my paper next year. I am unable to, physically or financially. The emotional strain since last October has been unbearable. I was nothing if not your wife. You knew I wasn’t the kind of woman to have an affair. Yet you just walked off without a thought when you saw a way for easy money. “Chance of a lifetime!” you wrote. No good-bye, no explanation, no feeling on your part as you stabbed me to the heart.

 I found I couldn’t deliberately take my own life. But you have saved me that moral failure. You have taken my life, along with the love you sought and then discarded. I shall be relieved when death comes, and hope it will be soon.

 I’ve driven past that hideous Marina monstrosity four times. People have been most gracious to me. One night friends took me to Kon-Tiki. If only, just once, you had taken me to some special place to dine!

 Last night a group of much younger admirers – ten in number – took me to Ivanhoe. Well, I’ve never been in such a place before and think I’ll never be again. My hosts were young physicians and a couple of wives. All drank much too much. I took one cocktail. The food was not much shakes. I suppose you’ve been there often. Al Capone’s joint.

 I am being forced to make some major adjustments in my life. I shall tell only two dear friends what the medical findings are. Before I learned these facts about my health I was advised last month of a positively fabulous movement that’s quietly afoot on my behalf. I was overwhelmed. An expression of appreciation for my long years of dedication. I was 75 years old on Aug. 15. (you were always too self-centered to remember any birthday but your own). Then, at the meeting came another fabulous proposal. All so late when the heart is gone out of me.

 When I die your financial debt will be automatically cancelled because I have no record of any kind. Your greater debt will never be cancelled.

 I leave on the five o’clock plane. My heart is so heavy when I leave you.

 “ . . . . the heart that has truly lov’d never forgets,

 But as truly loves on to the close;

 As the sunflower turns on her god, when he sets,

 The same look which she turn’d when he rose.”\*

I wish will all my heart for one kiss before I die.

\*This is part of a poem by Thomas Moore, titled “Believe Me, If All Those Endearing Young Charms”