

1215 N. Berendo St  
Hollywood, Cal  
Nov 17, 1952

Dear ~~Harvey~~ ---

It is with a little reluctance that I write this letter to you and it may well be that with things as they are, you will have some reluctance in receiving it. The fact is that I am broke, very broke, and have undertaken to ask a few friends for help during this temporary insolvency. My reluctance derives partly from the fact that this is my first foray into borrowing. I don't like it. I doubt it will become a habit.

Since as near as possible I would like this to be on a business basis, I should like you to know the reason why, if you can manage a loan, it will be paid back. Beyond that perhaps you would like to know a little of what goes on since I last saw you.

I should say at the outset that I have little collateral that Winthrop Aldrich would consider substantial but then I doubt if ever we would see eye to eye on this matter, and possibly others. But there is some collateral or what, in any case, I call collateral: I have managed since 1947 to make some kind of a living scrambling in the blackmarket here. This is the institution that allows a few people, not many, to make bread and butter by standards that only rascals use. \$25,000 worth of work now has the market value of \$2500 or less and what makes the abomination more abominable is the kind of material the writer is forced to work on. Still he can live on it as I have, and would be now, except for certain steps which I took in the year past.

With others on the blacklist I spent the last year putting together an independent film project. The purpose was to employ many of those now denied employment including myself. This was a large undertaking: it meant preparing a script and getting money, about 100,000. This has been done, a script completed and money raised, but because of the time consumed, every penny that I had saved is gone. The project however is in good shape. A film will be underway by the first of the year at the latest. I should add that when the money was raised, it was done with the provision that none would go to the personal support or salaries of the company members and none has. The money was intended only for the production. That's where it will go.

The film is a good one. It will have of course very small distribution in this country. Still there are theaters available (the president of our company is an exhibitor who owns three). Abroad, where dollars are available in moderate quantities for American films, is the place we expect our important returns. Since it is an inexpensive film (less than a hundred grand) our returns need not be great. We need nothing like the return of the ordinary or even the small Hollywood picture to provide us with the means to go on to further pictures. Moreover we have none of the large distribution charges or overheads that saddle most films.

I am aware that this may seem somewhat visionary to you. Perhaps it is. Yet, I felt one last deep urge to make the kind of film that I knew could be made and on limited means; and five years of enforced disuse of skills deserved one more opportunity to be put to work. So visionary or unrealistic - practical or realistic, the dirty preliminary work is done, a picture will be made.

This has been a rather long digression to prove the existence of collateral and perhaps proof is still wanting. What I have tried to say in the foregoing is that eventually as a part owner of a film company, and a minor capitalist, I shall have some dividends to call upon. Yet this is not offered as the substance of my financial stability. There are too many imponderables besetting this capitalist that do not beset, say, you. They are the obvious ones. What I offer as substance here is my capacity to make money despite the restrictions.

My other collateral matters are as follows: This year in January in a court of law I won nearly \$120,000 on the back terms of my contract from RKO. The jury found for me. But then the judge suffering some unmentionable fright induced by a campaign waged by Howard Hughes in the press, reversed the jury's decision, said the jury didn't understand, ordered the case to trial again. Ring Lardner's case was coupled in trial with mine. His on a technicality was not reversed and the judgment for Ring stood. Mine goes back to trial soon. I expect to win again. And I expect the judge to reverse again. My problem as I see it is a change of venue, to Peking or Moscow.

My real collateral is the approximately \$4000 that the government owes me for an income tax over-charge in 1947. This concerned lawyer fees which I thought deductible. The gov. didn't. I paid. Now a case exactly like mine has been decided against the government and the petitioner (much like me) is to be paid.

This briefly is the prospectus financially of my future. As I read it, I'm not very impressed. I can only hope you are. You should know that the sum (2000) which I ask of you will go only to my minimum living essentials, vastly cut since my Beverly Hills days, and that I am borrowing a total of \$4000. No more. The \$4000 was not arrived at because this was the most substantial collateral, although this is true. More important, this amount happens to give me the time necessary to set in motion and complete a program to recoup my solvency; to discharge my obligations to the film and to return again to work productively in the blackmarket.

Personal items: We are in fairly good shape, Mike and I. Mike has just been through a terrible period. The consequences of ~~his~~ almost total instability in his homelife over a period of years finally caught up with him and me. He had a complete block academically, could neither read nor write, and a number of the classical symptoms of a disturbed child. For a year now he has been working with a child analyst and at long last his fantasy world, built to protect him against the cruelty of an adult world, has been cracked. He has begun to read and to relate to people. It has been painful for him, to give up the warmth and pleasure of his fantasies, but he has tasted a compensating warmth and pleasure in his growing relationship with those around him. The change, although small, has been remarkable.

Me? Im alright. My personal life has not had all the equilibrium I would wish for, but then there are few who have any of the equilibrium to which they were accustomed a few years back. Ive had no change of opinion of the committee or its spawn wherever they exist through out this unrecognizable land of ours. I believed long ago that things were as bad as they could be but now I believe they will be worse. I see no war though, and as long as I see it this way, I am confident of the end to things as they are. There is more. But this is enough for now.

My very best to ~~you~~ and the children.

Would you keep the information on the film confidential?

Adrian Scott's "fundraising" letter, November 17, 1952.  
Courtesy Adrian Scott Papers, American Heritage Center, University of Wyoming-Laramie.