

3. 1. 1972

My dearest Brother Austin,

What a beautiful and thoughtful Christmas letter, ol' man! It had the presence and feel of your room, time of morning, mood of the writer, everything, locked deep into it. So very lonely and loving when a Brother remembers another at such a time of blissful day, and sends his greetings the way you did. And "4am 25 December 1971" is a touching opening!

As you can see I have only just now received your letter, what with the log jam at the GPO, both ways I'd imagine. But it is still fresh and of the moment. I on the         .

Like yours, ours was a family Christmas, nuh, which I tend to live through the children. As long as they're O.K., I'm O.K., too. And Pat.

Of course, pressuring hard against the family health in the stark, cold norther reality of life over here, with its weak prospects of all kinds. I look at our two boys and wonder! and wonder! and wonder! Anyway, they're both sensitive to the imbalances, prejudices and brutalities all over; television, newspapers, daddy's concerns sort of add up to a dawning awareness in them. Fuck Santa! We're in the world.