

THE



PEN

LETTER

**THE
OPEN LETTER**

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FRED WAH

Buffalo, N.Y.
Jan 2/66

Dear Frank:

Your insistence on an "open letter" has, I repeat, left me cold. But seeing no magazine from you this past month without it I now try to give you something, along with poems from two people here who are much in the flux of what follows (thus, I have sent you four persons, two from the west and two from the east) along the lines of what must surely be a point, now, for all of us (so young) to take heed of. I quote:

"He craved to talk, as any live man does, to get at things by talking about them. In fact, he was one of those who talked to live. But he came quickly on a danger: that it is not easy to keep talk from sliding into small talk and at the same time it is not easy for talk to avoid (in order to avoid small talk) parables, anecdotes, all those easy stoppages of conversation which pass themselves off as wisdom sayings and are nothing more than schmerz, than, ah, how large life is and how long, which doesn't matter a breath to any live man, how his predecessors were eternal about it, it does not matter, he only wants to be sharp about it, to stay on its point, to hold all that it contains, not dissipate an ounce of it by any such generalizations, however couched in humor or weh. So Apolonius took a vow of silence for five years.....He listened, instead. He found out how to hear.....He made his breath stay home."

I find such a danger when you ask me for an "open letter". I have taken no vow, as such, but I see little but "small talk" appearing when I try to talk-up what I should hang on to for a poker pot. So print this as my "open letter" Frank, and for now -

best etc.,

Fred