

August 6, 1984

Dear Bill:

I have just finished reading IRONWEED and it is one of the most beautiful books I have ever read. I am not going to try and "explain" it to you, but I do want to thank you for all the living, all the understanding, all the compassion, and all the dying that went into the writing of the book. There is such a sense of humanity and dignity in the book, as well as the various human foibles, and a touch of Irish Catholic GUILT.

Due to a few personal problems I can be unaware of what is going on in the world to an amazing degree, and so this is the first of your books that I have read. Believe me, I shall not deny myself the pleasure of reading everything of yours that I can find. I feel about you the way I did when I first discovered Isaac Babel many years ago, and the first time I read MOBY DICK. Reading IRONWEED has been one of the great joys of my life. I am grateful to you for writing it, and congratulate you on writing a book of such greatness and profundity, and for being such a supreme artist, that you make the entire process seem so simple, as if "it took five minutes". Thank you.

I hope this finds you well and happy and enjoying the blessings of Life.

Love,



Hubert Selby, Jr.
2036 N. Beachwood, #12
Los Angeles, CA. 90068

Selby
= copy

November 1, 1984

Hubert Selby, Jr.
2036 N. Beachwood, #12
Los Angeles, CA 90068

Dear Hubert Selby,

That was a spectacularly good letter you wrote me about Ironweed. Evoking such a response is why I aspired to writing a long time ago, and especially evoking it from other writers. I remember Last Exit to Brooklyn very well, though I haven't read it in years. Tra-La-La is an unforgettable piece of writing. I have lived intimately with its imagery and with its accuracy as a portrait for twenty years.

I wonder what you're working on these days. Whatever it is, I wish you well. Maybe one day we will meet and toss a few.

With gratitude,

Hubert Selby, Jr.
550 No. Orlando, #102
West Hollywood, CA 90048

Let file - S.

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March 2, 1988

Dear Bill:

A short note to say you did a wonderful job on the script. You did a perfect job of retaining the integrity of the book while writing a movie. Not easy to do, but you succeeded. By the by, any action of Billy Phelan? Theres a dynamite movie. I hope some day you get a chance to do that one too. Its such a beautiful book, and potentially a great movie. It is such a beautiful lyric, yet it doesnt obscure, in any way, the gray/blackness that is a part of any and every city.

Anyway, must go. Up to my ears in trying to stay alive. Familiar, no? By now the deciduous trees are starting to do their springtime thing and soon winter will be a memory, and you can go for a walk, take a deep breath, and tell yourself that last winter wasnt all that bad. Hope you dont have to shovel the car out before then.

I send you all my best wishes and hope this finds you, and your family, well and happy and enjoying the blessings of Life.

Love,

Cubby