

September 5, 1933
New York City

Dear Philip,

I have arrived, as you see, in New York, and will be with you in a few days. It will not be as soon as I had hoped, however. I am shipping you some personal things by rail which ought to get there before I do. Take care and keep them safe for me. I have some rather sorry business here in the city that I must attend to before I can come.

There is a man here named Starkweather who is hiring crew for an Antarctic voyage. He has been hounding me for months, by letter and by wire. I have no interest in his voyage, as you well know. I swore I would not ever return to that hellish place and I will not, so help me God! But the man wants me to captain his ship, and he will not take no for an answer. I told him I would meet with him when I arrived in New York. Perhaps he will understand my refusal when I shout it to his face.

You may imagine my annoyance when I got here and discovered that the imbecile has been telling the press that I was already signed on! We are to meet tomorrow. I intend to be quite firm with him.

Adding insult to injury, a lunatic German here at the hotel has been after me ever since he learned by name. Again and again I encounter him "by chance"; the man is obsessed with fairy tales. Each time we meet he asks if I know anything of South Seas folklore, of great statues in the pack ice or of lost island nations. I have told him no; I know nothing of Tsalal, or black-toothed savages, or a man named Pym, or of anything south of the Antarctic Circle but ice, whales, and misery. If he approaches me again, so help me, Phillip, I shall knock him senseless!

It is not bad enough that Starkweather has been misusing my name in the newspapers. He has been using it to attract his crews as well. He has even managed to sign some of the boys from the Arkham and the Lady Margaret on the strength of it.

How he got any of the Arkham crew I shall never know. None of us who were on that voyage are ever likely to forget the things that were said about those murdered men, or the howls of that poor mad boy Danforth. The things he whispered to me toward the end when he knew where he was, still haunt me. God only knows what he told the others.

I am going to do what I can to convince