

RANDOM HOUSE *e*BOOKS

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# Letters from a Nut

Ted L. Nancy

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Copyright

Letters  
from a **Nut**  
\_ \_ \_

*Jed L. Nancy*



Dedicated to Rita, Marty, and Alan  
I'm proud and happy to be the end table in this living room  
set

Also dedicated to  
Marilyn, Leonard, Lynn, Jenna, Dylan,  
Marla, and Stuart

# Introduction

MY FIRST CONTACT with Mr. Ted Nancy was the night of August 30, 1995. I went to a friend's house to watch the Jerry Lewis Labor Day Telethon, which I watch every year. There were a few other people there, and as we were enjoying the program, I noticed a handful of letters sitting on the coffee table. I read one, and then another, and then another. I began to laugh out loud at the letters, and just as much at the responses from the various businesses and corporations that followed each one. Then I started reading the letters to my friends, and the next thing I know, the whole room was laughing and having a wonderful time. I stopped reading only when Jerry Lewis sang "When You Walk Through a Storm." I never miss that part every year. It's one of my favorite things.

Anyway, one thing I know as a comedian is that it's very rare for people to laugh out loud at television or the printed word even though they may be enjoying it very much. But the people in that den were really laughing. Believe me, I know laughs, and these were real big show business laughs. I thought, *I don't know what this is, but it's some pretty powerful stuff.*

There was just one strange thing. There was this one fellow in the room who just kind of nodded approvingly as each letter was read. He didn't seem irritated, nor did he seem particularly impressed. He was just sort of sitting back, taking the whole thing in.

I have learned over the years how when funny people see their work appreciated, it's something like when parents watch their children playing. They may not be involved, but there's this detached pride in the joy that they

feel indirectly responsible for. That was the look on that man's face that night. I guess I didn't realize it at the time, but I am convinced to this day that that man was the real Ted L. Nancy.

When I left, I asked the host if I could borrow the letters. I didn't know what I was going to do with them. I think I really just wanted to read them again. So I took them home, and over the next couple of weeks, read them again to various people I know whose senses of humor have been rigorously developed to professional strength.

I must, by the way, mention if you should find yourself in possession of this book, one of the great joys of it is definitely reading the letters out loud. And always be careful to point out when something is in parentheses. The careful use of the parenthetical phrase is my favorite aspect of the Ted Nancy writing style.

Anyway, everyone's reaction was the same as the night of the telethon. You cannot not laugh at these letters. So I called my friend, whose house it was, and asked him if he could get any more of the letters. He said, "Sure, there's lots more." Then I called my literary agent, Dan Strone of the William Morris Agency, an extremely charming and well dressed man and, more importantly, one of the smartest guys in show business. I said, "Dan, I have a bunch of letters here that I think could be some kind of book if you could get enough of them." So Dan got an outfit together and a lunch was arranged.

I had now taken on the role of a Clark Kent figure. I may not have been Superman himself, but it became known that I was able to contact him. There wasn't much else I had to do after that. When you give something good to Dan Strone, it's like handing the ball off to Gale Sayers. You just know it's going places.

As far as Ted L. Nancy himself goes, I'm really still pretty much in the dark about him. From his Vegas shrimp costume to his dog play, "Cinnamon, A Life in Progress," to

his lost bag of otter hair, it's hard to figure out what's driving this guy. I will say that Ted L. Nancy definitely possesses many of the qualities I consider essential for a good life. He enjoys the simple things, like fine busboy service, Bon Ami cleanser, and steamboats. He is extremely courteous and complimentary to his correspondents and will go to any length to find a kind word to say. "You make great horseradish sauce," he writes the Excalibur hotel.

On the other hand, he does not travel well or easily. Always requiring special arrangements or permission to be made in advance for his various costumes, furniture, draperies, and vending machines. Mr. Nancy is also apparently a gifted and versatile live performer, offering many types of freak and celebrity impersonations. Unfortunately, the shows are inevitably derailed by poor advance booking commitments.

I guess I would like to say that in many ways Ted Nancy is a lot like you and me. We all have peculiar problems and often have to deal with faceless strangers to resolve them. But it's just not true. Ted Nancy is not like you and me. Nobody has problems like this guy. Nobody travels with a Prussian military sword and then loses it. Nobody is writing fan letters to Max Schmeling. Nobody is going to hotels asking if they can wet the bed and bring their own ice machines. And nobody, but nobody, is in contact with a real African king trying to locate his girlfriend's lost mail.

But this guy is. And I knew from the beginning that I had to do everything I could to let as many people as possible read the hilarious truth about what has been going on inside the mailbox of Ted L. Nancy, whoever he may be.

Jerry Seinfeld

# LETTERS FROM A NUT

HELP ME!

560 North Moorpark RD.  
# 236  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

July 12, 1995

MANAGER  
RITZ CARLTON HOTEL  
160 East Pearson Street  
Chicago, Ill. 60611

Dear Sir:

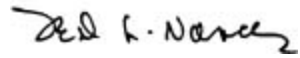
I wanted to know if you possibly found a Prussian military sword that I think I may have left in your hotel restaurant the night of Saturday, July 7th? I was in your men's room when I loosened the sword to go to the restroom.

I am with a traveling group and was in costume the night I used your restroom. When I was washing my hands I noticed that your paper towel rack was empty. With wet hands I went over to a stall to get some tissue (Your hand dryer was not working!)

I had to loosen my trousers to use the facility. In doing so I loosened the sword (actually took it off) and somehow forgot to put it back on when I pulled my trousers up again. That's how I think the sword may be in your restroom.

The sword is a standard size sword in a jeweled (fake) encrusted sheath. The sheath is crushed velvet (also fake). It was on a sword belt, size 36. It has no value other than as part of a costume I wear.

Please contact me at the following address:



Ted L. Nancy

560 N. Moorpark Rd #236

Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

Thank you very much for your help in this matter, Ritz  
Carlton.

P.S. You have great sea bass!



26JULY95

Mr. Ted NANCY  
560 North Moorpark Rd. #236  
Thousand Oaks, Ca. 91360

Dear Sir:

Upon receiving your letter on 17JULY95, the Security Department started investigating your loss of the Prussian Military Sword.

Sir, the Security Department is sorry to inform you that we were unable to locate your sword.

Sir, if you have any questions or further information, please give me a call at 1(312)266-1000 Ext#4040. I would be happy to assist you.

John ALMANZA  
Ritz-Carlton Hotel  
Security Department  
160 East Pearson Street  
Chicago, Il. 60611

160 East Pearson Street • Chicago, Illinois 60611-2124 • USA • Telephone  
(312) 266-1000 Hotel FAX (312) 266-1194 • Sales/Catering FAX (312) 266-9498

EXECUTIVE OFFICES  
NORDSTROM DEPARTMENT STORES  
1501 Fifth Ave  
Seattle, WA 98101

Aug 4, 1995

Dear Nordstrom Dept Stores.

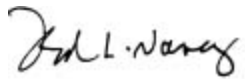
I am a regular shopper at your Nordstroms store in Glendale. In the last few weeks I have noticed that a new mannequin you have out in the store looks just like my deceased neighbor. I have passed this mannequin from many directions and the resemblance is uncanny. In every way - nose, cheekbones, hair, etc. Look at it from any angle. It looks like the neighbor I was friendly with. Even the clothes that the mannequin was wearing is the kind of lightweight windbreaker jacket my neighbor would wear. It is UNBELIEVABLE that this mannequin looks so much like my neighbor.

Is it possible to buy this mannequin (after its use) so I may present it to my neighbor's family? They would think this would be a VERY sentimental gesture. I think his co-workers would also like to have him remembered, so having him "there" would be good, therapeutic behavior for all.

I was told to write to your store's HEADQUARTERS OFFICE after I inquired about buying this mannequin to the saleslady (Very, courteous, I may add.) She suggested that only the stores main office could assist me in this purchase. But she was very helpful with my socks purchase.

Thank you, Nordstrom, for being a store that cares about its customers. I am a long time shopper. I keep lots of things in your Nordstrom bags. Fishing gear, etc. I have a garage full of Nordstrom bags full of old shoes, wire hangers, etc. That's how I know I've been to your store so much. Let me know about the mannequin. This family is in some need of good loving. This will help!

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ted L. Nancy".

Ted L. Nancy  
560 N. Moorpark Rd. #236  
Thousand Oaks, Ca 91360



NORDSTROM

August 14, 1995

Mr. Ted L. Nancy  
560 N. Moorpark Road, #236  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

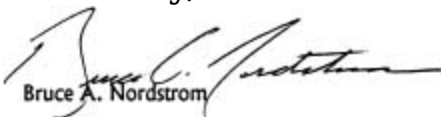
Dear Mr. Nancy:

Yours is one of the most interesting requests I have ever received. Candidly, I can't imagine any family who has lost a loved one wanting to see a mannequin that resembles that person.

Of course, we want to respond to our customers as positively as possible, but we definitely do not sell display materials while they are being used by the company. I see no reason why (when it comes time for a change of mannequins) that we wouldn't sell it to you at the same price we would get from our normal resources.

If you should be interested in that, simply talk to our store manager there at Glendale, Diane Kantor, and she will let you know when the time comes. Unfortunately, mannequins are used for a number of years before they are phased out.

Sincerely,



Bruce A. Nordstrom

BAN/ks

cc: Diane Kantor, Store Manager, Glendale  
Roland Thiele, Corporate Display Manager

1501 Fifth Avenue, Seattle, Washington 98101-1603 (206) 628-2111



## NORDSTROM

August 24, 1995

Mr. Ted L. Nancy  
560 N. Moorpark Road, #236  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

Dear Mr. Nancy:

Your letter was forwarded to me by Mr. Bruce Nordstrom and I am aware of your request for a particular mannequin resembling a deceased friend. After reading your letter I was somewhat perplexed as to which mannequin you were talking about as our store does not use Male mannequins in our display area, including the window and departments.

As Mr. Nordstrom shared with you, we generally do not sell display materials while they are being used; however, I would be more than happy to work with you once we are able to isolate which mannequin this could be and once it is phased out.

Mr. Nancy, please do not hesitate to call me and hopefully together we can decipher exactly which mannequin you are referring to. I can be reached at (818)502-9922 or you may leave a message with our Store Secretary, Amy Tiner.

Sincerely,

NORDSTROM

*Diane Kantor.*

Diane Kantor  
Store Manager

DK/at

cc: Bruce Nordstrom, Director  
Roland Thiele, Corporate Display Manager

200 W. Broadway, Glendale, California 91204-1332 (818) 502-9922

**NORDSTROM**  
200 W. Broadway  
Glendale, CA 91204-1332



Mr. Ted L. Nancy  
560 N. Moorpark road, #236  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360



Ted L. Nancy  
560 N. Moorpark Rd., #236  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

July 10th, 1995

MR. ALBERT H. MEYER, PRESIDENT  
AMERICAN SEATING COMPANY  
901 Broadway  
Grand Rapids, Michigan  
49504

Dear Mr. Meyer:

I had a seating question and I was referred to you because I understand you manufacture stadium and arena seating. My question:

When entering or exiting a seat in a stadium which is the proper side to face the person sitting down? Rear to them or crotch to them?

I am always at a quandry when this problem comes up. To hence: last week at a sporting event I had to leave my seat. There were a row of people - ALL FROM THE SAME FAMILY - that were sitting down the row. I exited my seat,

stood up and faced away from this family. Then I moved down the row realizing my buttocks were not 2 inches from this whole guy's family. I had shown an entire family my rear end! But then again If I had turned around and moved down the aisle THAT WAY, wouldn't that be worse?

Stadium seating is the only situation in life where you can show whole rows of people your butt or crotch. And it's acceptable!

Can something be done about this seating? Should the rows be changed? I suggest a single row straight up to the top. You walk into the stadium you simply find your seat number and go up until you get it.

Question: Is there a gracious way to exit?  
Thank you, Sir, for your response.

  
Ted L. Nancy



August 3, 1995

Ted L. Nancy  
560 N. Moorpark Rd., #236  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

Dear Mr. Nancy:

Your letter on crotch or butt first was most interesting. In fact, in all 38 years which I have been in this business it is probably the most interesting question I have ever been asked. I have shared your letter with numerous of my colleagues, and they have also found it most interesting.

But alas, we have no good answer. Your idea of a single chair has merit, but unfortunately would greatly reduce the number of chairs which could be put in the building.

The only suggestion we could come up with is for you to come early before anyone has arrived, stay in your seat for the entire time, and wait until everyone else has gone before leaving. This, of course, could cause an even more embarrassing problem.

If you come up with any solutions we would welcome hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Albert H. Meyer

American Seating Company

901 Broadway, N.W.

Grand Rapids, Michigan 49504-4499

Telephone 616/732-6600

Printed on Recycled Paper

560 North Moorpark Road #236  
Thousand Oaks, CA. 91360  
Sept. 10, 1995

GENERAL MANAGER  
LUXOR HOTEL & CASINO  
3900 Las Vegas Blvd. South  
Las Vegas, NV 89119 - 1000

Dear Luxor Hotel & Casino General Manager,

I am building a house that's in the same shape as your hotel and wonder if it would be ok if I came by your hotel and took some pictures of the outside? I think your hotel is the perfect design for my house. I would stand on the far corners of each sidewalk and take a few pictures.

This is a private house; 2 bedroom, 2 1/2 bath; family room, breakfast nook, den, patio, dog walk in the back. There are some orange trees. And a big front yard. This is not a commercial venture. I am not building a hotel or gas station or mini mart. I am not building a place like your Hotel where there is wear and tear on the carpet. It is just a house for myself. I was told to write to the Hotel General Manager when I inquired about this to the HOUSEKEEPING DEPARTMENT. They directed me to you.

I wanted to come by and take a few pictures of the outside of your Luxor Hotel. One picture would be of your long gray wall. The other is also of the wall but on the other side facing the other street. There's some bushes there. I would use a Polaroid. I was told I needed to get permission from you.

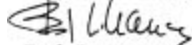
Thank you, Luxor. I have long admired your hotel. I have always thought it would be a perfect design for a house. Although I would do it a different color. I'm thinking beige. And not that glint. I love the slanted walls!

So ... please let me know If it would be ok if I took some outside pictures of your hotel. I will make little commotion as I would just take the pictures and leave. My car is across the street. This would help the stucco and plasterer guy on my house.

Or

If you already have a picture of the outside of your hotel that you could send me, that would be ok. Anything that shows those outside walls off. Thanks very much.

Respectfully,



Ted L. Nancy



*Circus Circus Enterprises, Inc.*

TONY ALAMO  
Senior Vice President

September 18, 1995

Mr. Ted L. Nancy  
560 North Moorpark Road, #236  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

Dear Mr. Nancy:

I am in receipt of your recent letter.

It is perfectly all right for you to take exterior pictures of the Luxor Hotel and Casino during your next visit to Las Vegas as long as you do not jeopardize the safety of yourself, the Luxor or any guests of the Luxor. If you are unsure if you are allowed to be in a particular location during your picture session, please contact Andy Vanyo, our Chief of Security.

Good luck with your house!

Sincerely,

Tony Alamo  
Senior Vice-President

TA:ps  
file

Copy: Andy Vanyo, Chief of Security

2880 Las Vegas Boulevard South Las Vegas, Nevada 89109 Telephone 702-262-  
4853 Facsimile 702-262-4857

560 N. Moorpark Rd. Apt 236  
Thousand Oaks, CA 91360

Mr. Gordon Beshar, PRESIDENT  
Bon Ami Cleanser Company  
Kansas City, Mo.  
64101 - 1200  
1995

July 11, 1995

Dear Mr Gordon Beshar,

I think that's your name. Your signature is muffled on the side of my Bon Ami cleanser. It could say Gordon Burkar the third, so my apologies to you and others in your family that may have your name.

I am writing to you because on the side of the product (Bon Ami Kitchen and Bath Cleanser) it says - followed by your signature -

"I personally warrant this product to be of quality and integrity. If you are not satisfied, please return to me with your comments for refund and postage. We wish to continue earning your confidence." Signed Gordon Bruckar the third (possibly the fourth).

These are your exact words. So, my question to you, Sir, is what do you mean by this product being of integrity?

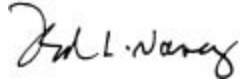
Don't get me wrong, your product is very, very good. I have cleaned a lot of things with Bon Ami over the years. It is the

best at stains I have ever seen since Bab-O. The “quality” is there. Just what is the “integrity?”

So, these are my comments. I look forward to hearing from you.

I will continue to use Bon Ami.

Your loyal customer, (No more stains!)

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ted L. Nancy".

Ted L. Nancy