From: Ed < ██████████ >

Sent: Sunday, January 20, 2013 2:43 PM

To: Epstein, Jeff

Subject: Happy Birthday

Hi Jeff

   Happy Birthday. Also thanks for the coffee (Jennifer is a superb =rewer). In looking back at my class notes, you may be interested in =abokov's first-day of instructions to the students in Lit 311 on =onday, September 14, 1953, the first day of his day of teaching at =ornell. It was also my first lecture course. After telling us to =ake (and stay in) numbered seats in the lecture hall (which had about =00 seats), and introducing Vera Nabokov. Who sat on a chair on stage =acing him. as the course assistant, he said what we, readers, needed =o read novels was 1)a good memory 2)artistic feelings, and 3) a good =ictionary. He then said it was a fatal mistake, though a current =rend in academia, to search for historical or social meaning because a =reat novel is a pure invention by the author, and like nature, a =eception. He also warned against identifying with any of the =haracters/ Instead, he said we should be looking for "a tingling in =he spine." The author were enchanters, and created their effects by =rchestrating details that evoked pictures in our head.

PS. I don't think I ever got through The Gift, though, fdollowing his =nstructions, I bathed myself in the details Best regards Ed Epstein www.edwardjayepstein.com <?xml version=.0" encoding=TF-8"?> <!DOCTYPE plist PUBLIC "-//Apple//DTD PLIST 1.0//EN" "http://www.apple.com/DTDs/PropertyList-1.0.dtd">

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