



# GULF SPECIMEN COMPANY

P. O. BOX 206  
PANACEA, FLORIDA



August 19th, 1963

Dear John,

I appreciate your post card, thought I'd let you convalesce a while before answering and in the meantime get some of my own work done. I have been building up a library of reprints and even managed to secure a copy of "Between Pacific Tides" which is quite an achievement in the State of Florida. The state library refuses to recognize California since there is competition in the sun tan and orange grove industry. Separates are great for identification, but they are singularly lacking in natural history and make dull reading, something about as lively as a Betty Crocker's cook book.

A few days ago I confirmed Ed's suspicions about the nefarious activities of hermit crabs. The "clown of the tidepool" is a bastard! I watched one drag his stolen Crown Conch shell, Melongena Corona up to an unsuspecting Fig Shell, Busycon pyrum, latch his claws into the gastropod's flesh and over a period of two hours, kill and eject the animal. In my aquarium the fun began: the hermit crab couldn't make up his mind as to which shell he liked best. He was popping back and forth from one shell to another and kept it up all night long. He was like a man shopping for a new pair of shoes, fussing and complaining for hours that this shoe pinches a little, that one doesn't fit, or have the right style, nor color, and finally decides there's nothing like his old pair. The stinker hermit crab finally ended up wearing his old, but comfortable Crown Conch.

While I was in Boston, Arthur Humes of Boston University (a parasitic copepod fancier) had invited me to collect specimens for American biologists on the Indian Ocean Expedition at Madagascar Bay. I visited Woods Hole and further discussed the possibilities with John Ryther, director of the expedition, and after all the fuss and fury had dissipated and nothing more was said, I forgot about it until I received a letter just the other day, asking if I was still interested. Apparently all the arrangements have been made and there's a good chance I'll be leaving for Africa in November to work with Dr. Humes-- something that I'm all excited about. If it weren't for the collecting I have to do, I wish it were November now.



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Rather than ramble on and tell you all about my future plans, ambitions and struggling efforts, I would like to know how well you are coming along, and if you're back into normal activity again. The weather here has been pleasantly bearable with enough showers to cool things off. If you're up to it, mid September is an ideal month for collecting.

Kindest regards to your charming wife,

Sincerely,