

Friday

1970 ?

Dear Murray:

I assure you that I have not been idle. The waste basket has been amply fed during these two weeks of silence; and I submit these enclosed chapters with trepidation.

It seems to me that I wandered away and got lost miles back, about the time I left Kansas. I either jog up and down in one spot or ride frantically away in all directions. If there are cases, and I am sure there must be, where entire chapters should be eliminated as contributing nothing, please tell me. There's nothing sacred about any of it you know.

I have been wondering. The chapters which seem to me to come to the most (and obviously you share the feeling) are strictly on the farm. I wonder if I should have remained there. (In my book I mean. There's no question but that that's where I belong, personally.)

A lot of this is first draft and can be smoothed a lot if it is acceptable at all.

I think Ragsdale is right about the importance of poetry to a novelist. Have you ever happened to read a small book called, "Now In November"? Pulitzer prize winner 1934. By a Missouri girl by the name of Josephine Johnson. She has had very good poetry published in Harper's and I think teaches poetry at Colorado U. The book had a downbeat, farm during depression. Mary thought it immature. (The author was only 24 at the time) But the sentences are pure poetry, dragged up out of the soil by the roots. So far as I know she has only done one book since, a collection of short stories called "Winter Orchard."

Have you and Rosa launched your new Kayak yet? I saw Ruth Derby at the Boze wedding and she was under the impression you were going last week.

As for the class: I have contacted all of the old members except Mrs. Brokaw, who is in Arizona. Shelley won't say "yes" or "no" yet and of course Dabroe is still in Texas. Of the others, you will have them all with the exception of Lola Leighton, who says she is in financial difficulties because of an operation for her mother and would like to count on coming in for a second half. And Mrs. Taylor has not said definitely. Rega McCarty would like to come in,