

cb

Curtis Brown, Ltd. 575 Madison Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10022 PLaza 5-4200

From the office of Maureen Walters

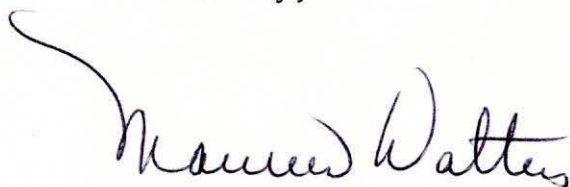
December 7th, 1978

Mr. Peter Abrahams  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P. O.  
St. Andrew,  
Jamaica

Dear Mr. Abrahams:

As I'm sure you realize, there have been no sales for the past several years on THIS ISLAND, NOW and A NIGHT OF THEIR OWN. Therefore, we requested cancellations of the contracts and I am enclosing herewith, for your records, letters from Alfred A. Knopf formally reverting all rights back to you.

Sincerely,

Maureen Walters

Enclosures

# Alfred A. Knopf Incorporated

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

Cables: KNOPF NEW YORK  
Telephone: (212) 751-2600

201 East 50th Street  
New York, N.Y. 10022

November 20, 1978

Mr. Peter Abrahams  
c/o Curtis Brown, Ltd.  
575 Madison Avenue  
New York, New York 10022

Dear Mr. Abrahams:

In accordance with Paragraph 15 of the contract dated September 18, 1964 between you and Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. for the publication of THIS ISLAND, NOW (the work), Alfred A. Knopf's, Inc. publication and licensing rights in respect of the work are hereby reverted to you, subject to any licenses heretofore granted and subject to Alfred A. Knopf's, Inc. right to dispose of any copies previously printed.

A copy of the original Certificate of Copyright is enclosed.

Sincerely,

ALFRED A. KNOPF, INC.

By 

Ashbel Green  
Vice President

enc:  
certificate: A 938114  
publication: August 7, 1967

JR:err

# Certificate

FORM A

## Registration of a Claim to Copyright in a published book manufactured in the United States of America

CLASS	REGISTRATION NO.
<b>A</b>	<b>A 938114</b>
DO NOT WRITE HERE	

This is To Certify that the statements set forth on this certificate have been made a part of the records of the Copyright Office. In witness whereof the seal of the Copyright Office is hereto affixed.

*L. Kaminstein*  
Register of Copyrights  
United States of America



1. Copyright Claimant(s) and Address(es):

Name Peter Abrahams  
 Address c/o Faber & Faber Limited, 24 Russell Square  
London, W.C. 1, England

2. Title: THIS ISLAND, NOW

(Title of book)

3. Authors:

Name Peter Abrahams Citizenship England  
 (Legal name followed by pseudonym if latter appears on copies) (Name of country)  
 Domiciled in U.S.A. Yes  No  Address c/o Faber & Faber Limited (above)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Citizenship \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Legal name followed by pseudonym if latter appears on copies) (Name of country)  
 Domiciled in U.S.A. Yes  No  Address \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Citizenship \_\_\_\_\_  
 (Legal name followed by pseudonym if latter appears on copies) (Name of country)  
 Domiciled in U.S.A. Yes  No  Address \_\_\_\_\_

4. Date of Publication of This Edition:

August 7, 1967  
(Month) (Day) (Year)

5. New Matter in This Version:

Copyright is claimed in new text from pages 278 to 298.  
Work originally published in England and registered Af 25819.

6. Book in English Previously Manufactured and Published Abroad: If all or a substantial part of the text of this edition was previously manufactured and published abroad in the English language, complete the following spaces:

Date of first publication of foreign edition \_\_\_\_\_ (Year) Was registration for the foreign edition made in the U.S. Copyright Office? Yes  No

If your answer is "Yes," give registration number \_\_\_\_\_

Complete all applicable spaces on next page

EXAMINER

# Certificate Registration of a Claim to Copyright

FORM A-B FOREIGN

CLASSES	REGISTRATION NO.
A-B	Af 25819
DO NOT WRITE HERE	

In a book or periodical manufactured outside the United States of America (except works subject to the ad interim provisions of the copyright law)

This is To Certify that the statements set forth on this certificate have been made a part of the records of the Copyright Office. In witness whereof the seal of the Copyright Office is hereto affixed.

*[Signature]*

Register of Copyrights  
United States of America



**1. Copyright Claimant(s) and Address(es):**

Name Peter Abraham

Address c/o Faber & Faber Limited, 24 Russell Square, London,  
W. C.1 England

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

**2. Title: (a)** THIS ISLAND NOW (Title of the work)

(b) If the Work is a Periodical Give: Vol. No. Date on copies \_\_\_\_\_

**3. Authors:**

Name Peter Abraham (Legal name followed by pseudonym if latter appears on the copies) Citizenship England (Name of country)

Domesticated in U.S.A. Yes  No  Address c/o Faber & Faber Limited, 24 Russell Sq.,  
London, England

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (Legal name followed by pseudonym if latter appears on the copies) Citizenship \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of country)

Domesticated in U.S.A. Yes  No  Address \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_ (Legal name followed by pseudonym if latter appears on the copies) Citizenship \_\_\_\_\_ (Name of country)

Domesticated in U.S.A. Yes  No  Address \_\_\_\_\_

**4. (a) Date of Publication of This Edition:**

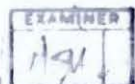
September 29, 1966  
(Month) (Day) (Year)

**(b) Place of Publication of This Edition:**

London, England  
(Name of Country)

**5. New Matter in This Version:**

Complete all applicable spaces on next page



# Alfred A. Knopf Incorporated

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK  
Telephone: (212) 751-2600

201 East 50th Street  
New York, N.Y. 10022

November 20, 1978

Mr. Peter Abrahams  
c/o Curtis Brown, Ltd.  
575 Madison Avenue  
New York, New York 10022

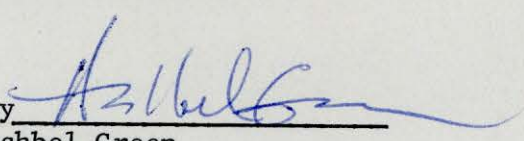
Dear Mr. Abrahams:

In accordance with Paragraph 15 of the contract dated September 18, 1964 between you and Alfred A. Knopf, Inc for the publication of THIS PASSING NIGHT published under the title A NIGHT OF THEIR OWN (the work), Alfred A. Knopf's, Inc. publication and licensing rights in respect of the work are hereby reverted to you, subject to any licenses heretofore granted and subject to Alfred A. Knopf's, Inc. right to dispose of any copies previously printed.

A copy of the original Certificate of Copyright is enclosed.

Sincerely

ALFRED A. KNOFF, INC.

By   
Ashbel Green  
Vice President

enc:  
certificate: A 756029  
publication: March 15, 1965

JR:err

# Certificate

## Registration of a Claim to Copyright

### in a published book manufactured in the United States of America

FORM A

CLASS	REGISTRATION NO
A	A 756029
DO NOT WRITE HERE	

This is to Certify that the statements set forth on this certificate have been made a part of the records of the Copyright Office. In witness whereof the seal of the Copyright Office is hereto affixed.

*W. J. ...*  
 Register of Copyrights  
 United States of America

## 1. Copyright Claimant(s) and Address(es):

Name Peter AbrahamsAddress Coyaba, Red Hills P.O., St. Andrew, Jamaica, B.W.I.

Name

Address

2. Title: A NIGHT OF THEIR OWN (Title of book)

## 3. Authors:

Name Peter Abrahams Citizenship United Kingdom  
(Legal name followed by pseudonym if latter appears on copies) (Name of country)Domiciled in U.S.A. Yes  No  Address Coyaba, Red Hills P.O., St. Andrew, Jamaica, B.W.I.Name Peter Abrahams Citizenship United Kingdom  
(Legal name followed by pseudonym if latter appears on copies) (Name of country)Domiciled in U.S.A. Yes  No  Address Coyaba, Red Hills P.O., St. Andrew, Jamaica, B.W.I.Name Peter Abrahams Citizenship United Kingdom  
(Legal name followed by pseudonym if latter appears on copies) (Name of country)Domiciled in U.S.A. Yes  No  Address Coyaba, Red Hills P.O., St. Andrew, Jamaica, B.W.I.

## 4. Date of Publication of This Edition:

March 15, 1963  
(Month) (Day) (Year)

## 5. New Matter in This Version:

6. Book in English Previously Manufactured and Published Abroad: If all or a substantial part of the text of this edition was previously manufactured and published abroad in the English language, complete the following spaces:

Date of first publication of foreign edition                      (Year) Was registration for the foreign edition made in the U.S. Copyright Office? Yes  No If your answer is "Yes," give registration number                       
 Complete all applicable spaces on next page

EXAMINER

# 10,000

# Alfred A. Knopf Incorporated

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK  
Telephone: (212) 751-2600

201 East 50th Street  
New York, N. Y. 10022

January 17, 1979

Mr. Peter Abrahams  
c/o Curtis Brown, Ltd.  
575 Madison Avenue  
New York, New York 10022

Dear Mr. Abrahams:

In accordance with Paragraph Third (e) of the contract dated June 12, 1953 between you and Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. for the publication of MINE BOY (the work), Alfred A. Knopf's, Inc. publication and licensing rights in respect of the work are hereby reverted to you, subject to any licenses heretofore granted and subject to Alfred A. Knopf's, Inc. right to dispose of any copies previously printed.

Sincerely,

ALFRED A. KNOFF, INC.

By *Ashbel Green*  
Ashbel Green  
Vice President

JR:err

Alfred A. Knopf *Incorporated*

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

*Cables:* KNOPF NEW YORK  
*Telephone:* (212)751-2600

*201 East 50th Street*  
*New York, N. Y. 10022*

August 22, 1979

Mr. Peter Abrahams  
c/o Curtis Brown, Ltd.  
575 Madison Avenue  
New York, New York 10022

Dear Mr. Abrahams:

In accordance with Paragraph Third (e) of the contract dated June 12, 1953 between you and Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. for the publication of A WREATH FOR UDOMO (the work), Alfred A. Knopf's, Inc. publication and licensing rights in respect of the work are hereby reverted to you, subject to any licenses heretofore granted and subject to Alfred A. Knopf's, Inc. right to dispose of any copies previously printed.

A copy of the original Certificate of Copyright is enclosed.

Sincerely,

ALFRED A. KNOPF, INC.

Ashbel Green  
Vice President

enc:

Certificate: A 235697  
Publication: May 8, 1956

10,000

# Alfred A. Knopf Incorporated

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK  
Telephone: (212)751-2600

201 East 50th Street  
New York, N.Y. 10022

August 22, 1979

Mr. Peter Abrahams  
c/o Curtis Brown, Ltd.  
575 Madison Avenue  
New York, New York 10022

Dear Mr. Abrahams:

In accordance with Paragraph Third (e) of the contract dated June 12, 1953 between you and Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. for the publication of TELL FREEDOM (the work), Alfred A. Knopf's, Inc. publication and licensing rights in respect of the work are hereby reverted to you, subject to any licenses heretofore granted and subject to Alfred A. Knopf's, Inc. right to dispose of any copies previously printed.

A copy of the original Certificate of Copyright is enclosed.

Sincerely,

ALFRED A. KNOFF, INC.

Ashbel Green  
Vice President

enc:

Certificate: A 146176  
Publication: July 21, 1954

MACMILLAN PUBLISHING CO., INC.  
866 Third Avenue, New York, N. Y. 10022

October 16, 1979

Mr. Peter Abrahams  
c/o Curtis Brown Ltd.  
575 Madison Avenue  
New York, New York 10022

Dear Sir:

Reference is made to agreements dated June 6, 1969, June 23, 1969 and June 23, 1969 (the "Agreements") between Alfred A. Knopf, Inc. (the then "Proprietor") and The Macmillan Company, now Macmillan Publishing Co., Inc. (the "Publisher") for paperbound reprint editions of MINE BOY, THIS ISLAND NOW and A WREATH FOR UDOMO by Peter Abrahams, respectively (the "Works").

Publisher has agreed to the cancellation of the aforesaid agreements and you have advised Publisher that Proprietor has irrevocably transferred, assigned and set over to you all of its rights in the Works effective as of \_\_\_\_\_ without limitation or restriction.

The following will constitute the official acknowledgement of the cancellation of the Agreements and the return to you of all publishing rights granted to the Publisher in the Agreements. It is understood and agreed that, upon cancellation, neither you nor the Publisher will have any further obligation to each other with respect to the Agreements, except as specified below.

It is understood and agreed that the Publisher may continue to sell the copies of the Works which it presently has in stock, and to pay you royalties thereon in accordance with the following: a royalty of seven and one-half percent (7½%) of the retail price on each copy sold.

It is further understood and agreed that the Publisher retains all rights in and to the Introductions to the Works which were copyrighted in the name of the Publisher.

You covenant, warrant and represent that you alone are authorized to enter into this agreement and that payments to you shall satisfy in full all of Publisher's obligations in respect thereof.

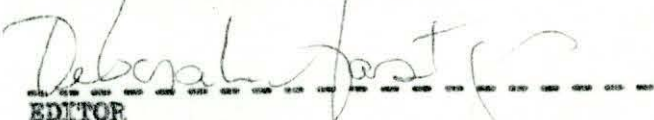
Please sign and return both copies of this letter. A copy signed for the Publisher will be sent to you for your records.

Agreed to and accepted by:


Sincerely yours,

MACMILLAN PUBLISHING CO., INC.

  
-----  
Peter Abrahams

  
-----  
EDITOR

MACMILLAN PUBLISHING CO., INC.

  
-----  
PRESIDENT

Coyaba,  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica.

January 30, 1967

Dear Miss Hutchins,

I have now had the question of my citizenship clarified, following your letter of December 28.

It transpires that I now have dual citizenship - that of the United Kingdom as well as that of Jamaica. I am advised that it would be perfectly in order for your people to file for copyright on the same terms as for all my other books.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Abrahams

Miss Betsey Hutchins,  
Afred A. Knopf Inc.,  
501 Madison Avenue,  
New York 22, N.Y.  
U.S.A.



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK

December 28, 1966

Dear Mr. Abrahams:

We don't seem to have any very recent information on one thing we need to know about you: your present citizenship. I find our people in charge of copyright need to know about that so they can file properly for you on the new book. Could you drop me a line and let me know?

Sincerely,

*Betsey Hutchins*

Betsey Hutchins  
Mr. Strauss's secretary

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrews, Jamaica  
B.W.I.

28 December, 1966

Dear Harold,

Herewith the copy-edited twenty-two pages, which I received this morning (as Monday and Tuesday were public holidays here and hence no postal service).

My only quarrel with your copy editor and his punctuation is on page 247, eleven lines down where he inserted a comma to make the last part of a sentence read: 'knowing or not knowing, this is the real gap..' etc.

Well, that is not what I intended. I have therefore removed the comma which restores the sentence to what it was. Apart from this everything else seems all right to me.

Yours ever,

Peter Abrahams

Harold Strauss,  
Alfred A. Knopf Inc.,  
NEW YORK.

# Alfred · A · Knopf *Incorporated*

501 Madison Avenue



NEW YORK (22), N.Y.

December 21, 1966

Dear Peter:

I'm sending you the copy-edited manuscript of the twenty-two new pages for *THIS ISLAND NOW* only because I promised to do so. The copy editor's changes, other than punctuation, are practically non-existent.

Please return this manuscript to me as soon as you can.

With all best wishes at Christmas,

As always,

  
Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, B.W.I.

HS:aa  
Enc.

Coyaba,  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew.  
Jamaica.  
December 9, 1966.

Dear Harold,

I am very glad you feel a little better about the novel now. I promise to get the 22 edited pages back in the post to you within no more than two days of receiving them; and I shall of course be glad to be spared the chore of reading galleys.

Best regard.

As ever,

Harold Strauss, Esq.,  
Alfred A. Knopf Inc.,  
501 Madison Avenue,  
NEW YORK 22, N.Y.



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Cables: KNOPF NEW YORK

December 1, 1966

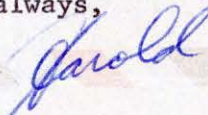
Dear Peter:

I like very much what you have done in adding twenty-two pages to THIS ISLAND NOW. It seems to me that by dramatizing the final scenes between Joel and Martha and Joel and Clara you have put more emphasis on the emotional lives of three of your leading characters, and therefore made the novel a more novelistic novel than it was. It is still something of a political tract in parts, but I think the emphasis is now so changed that this is no longer so important.

There are a considerable number of typographic and other small slips in the new manuscript material. I'm going to have this gone over by a copy editor here, and send you the edited manuscript (the twenty-two pages only) for your final approval. If you will go over this carefully and return it to me quickly, I think we can spare you the chore of reading galley proofs--that is, if you so desire. Please let me know about this as soon as possible.

I am very grateful to you for the fine job you have done on the revisions.

As always,

  
Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Red Hills P. O.  
St. Andrews, JAMAICA

HS:es



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Cables: KNOPF NEW YORK

November 21, 1966

Dear Peter:

The two copies of THIS ISLAND NOW have arrived safely. I'm impressed with the amount of work you have done on the book. I'll read the book through in its new form just as soon as I can, probably within ten days, and write you again.

As always,

*Harold*

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P. O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, BRITISH WEST INDIES

HS:es

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RECOGNIZABLE - MAIL

Harold Strauss  
21. Village  
Red Hills P. O.  
Coyaba  
Peter Abrahams



NOV 21 1966  
NEW YORK

FIRST CLASS

November 12, 1966

Mr. Harold Strauss,  
Alfred A. Knopf Inc.,  
501 Madison Avenue,  
NEW YORK 22. N.Y.

Thanks Harold,

Following the information contained in your letter of November 8, I enclose herewith the worked on page proofs of the Faber edition, but as this is printed on both sides I am also sending you a copy of the Faber edition of the book itself for you to break up and so get over the business of the printers not turning over pages. I hope this meets the bill.

As ever

P.S. The additional matter is to follow immediately at the end of the Faber page 247 matter and run right through. And this in turn will be followed by page 248 beginning 'Albert Josiah could not sleep..'



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK

November 8, 1966

Dear Peter:

It was very good to have your letter of October 31st. I hope that all goes well, and that I'll have the manuscript or the Faber page proofs on schedule.

The question of setting from Faber's page proofs is a little complicated. We would much rather have page proofs to set from than the carbon manuscript if the page proofs are not printed on both sides of the paper. If they are, we can still work from page proofs if you have two sets to send me. The reason for all <sup>this</sup> is that our printers will not turn over pages. If we send them page proofs printed on both sides of the paper we have to paste up each page on a sheet of manuscript paper, and this of course requires two copies. On the whole, this would still be preferable to setting from a carbon manuscript.

As always,

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Red Hills P. O.  
St. Andrews, JAMAICA

HS:n1

# Alfred·A·Knopf *Incorporated*

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

*Cables:* KNOPF NEW YORK  
*Telephone:* PLAZA 1-2600

*501 Madison Avenue  
New York (22), N.Y.*

March 1, 1966

Dear Peter:

One of the reasons for the delay in reaching a decision about A PASSAGE IN TIME is that I have been in touch with Peter du Sautoy about it. I felt that it would be awkward if he were to push you in one direction, and I in another. He tells me that although the characters are not developed in the way that one might hope, basically he and his readers like the novel and plan to publish it as it stands before the end of 1966.

In view of this, we have agreed with Miss Winston to publish the book in one form or another, but feel that we cannot do so in good conscience until we have put our criticisms to you. You may then decide that you want us to publish the book as is, and we shall do so. Or you may decide to meet some of our criticisms. If the latter, I see no categorical objection to publishing a version somewhat different from the one published in England, although I cannot speak for Faber on this point. In considering our criticisms, please remember that it is a good deal easier to publish fiction successfully in England than it is here.

And now for the criticisms, most of which were briefly summarized in my letter of February 8th. The first problem is the shift in emphasis from one set of characters to another, and then to still another. The novel seems at first to put the relationship of Clara and her husband into the foreground; later it is but a minor sub-plot. Martha Lee's private life simply dwindles away, and there is no real resolution for the Isaacs family. And the end of the book seems very hurried, as if when you reached page 300 you decided you must close the

narrative quickly, and then compressed the events of four years into ten very impersonal pages.

It is much too late even to suggest the drastic revisions that would be the ideal solution. But certain things could be done that would tend to give the book greater unity. First of all, to bring in Josiah in person much sooner. As it is, it is difficult to accept the evaluations that the characters in this book make of Josiah, since he remains nothing but a shadow through most of it. The conversation between Andy and Martha about the nature of man's ambition, in Part II, Chapter II, is almost meaningless since the reader may not interpret Josiah the way they do. There is too much talk about Josiah. Some of this should be cut, and a few short scenes added in which Josiah would be seen manipulating people or clashing with them.

Secondly, Joel Sterning should not be allowed to fade away as a character, as he now does. A major scene or two near the end of the book involving him (and indirectly the Isaacs family) would help a great deal.

Third and last, Martha Lee's private life should not be allowed to dwindle away as it now does. The end of the book could be greatly strengthened by keeping her alive and vivid and human.

My second major criticism, as I wrote you on February 8th, is that political conflicts are not really transmuted into personal conflicts, as they should be in a first-rate political novel. There are potentials for personal conflict throughout the novel. You have only to develop them. And this does not mean the use of abstract political talk, as in the scene between Josiah and Max Johnson. You had the opportunity of a great personal clash here, but you give us what amounts to a political essay instead. And I certainly don't mean that all conflicts should be between Josiah and the people who oppose him. Certainly the other important characters in the book do not agree with each other, and there

are many possibilities from which to select. You need only replace a good bit of the political exposition with a few such scenes to give the novel a more novelistic quality. This also would help the narrative pace of the book a great deal. Such tension as you do build up is a frozen, immobile sort of tension--frozen while the problem is talked out at great length. Showing people in action would also strengthen your characterizations, some of which are shadowy. I have a hunch that only a few revisions of this kind would have a very marked effect.

And now I'll pass on some detailed criticism from another editor, some of which may be of use to you.

Page 5: the author goes on too long about the reaction to the old man's death. It strains the credibility of the reader to believe that the death of a very old man would shock people.

*cut out* Page 6: the last sentence seems to me a gratuitous editorial point.

*cut out* Bottom of page 33 and top of page 34: line starting with "when things go bad we sometimes wish ...", another piece of editorializing that should be cut. ~~out of this.~~ *change to: "No thank you sergeant, it's kind of you"*

Page 44: repetition of the word "sweet" in two lines of dialogue about two different things is careless.

*have* Page 55: Stanhope's remark that the politicians wouldn't resolve the problem of succession seems rather odd, since the old man was obviously going to die sometime. This would have been cleared up, *by the politicians*, or you should clarify why it wasn't.

*have* Page 54-58: the conversation between Martha and Stanhope seems unreal since it is exposition done in the form of dialogue. Is it necessary for the action of the novel?

Page 62: what is the meaning of the term "margin gatherers", used here for the second time?

Page 69 to 70: Max and Martha have dialogue here which again is exposition already fairly clearly understood by the reader. Certainly not very essential to the narrative.

His general comment on Part I is, "It takes over a hundred pages for much to happen in this book. The old man is dead at the beginning, Clara and Joel have their marital problems, Martha is introduced as Joel's mistress in a variety of situations, as a newspaperwoman as well, and yet there seems to be no forward movement of the action at all. What suspense is generated at the beginning because of the death of the old President is slowly dissipated."

About the characters he says, "There is no real pull of opposit~~en~~ to create suspense or tension."

In Part II, at the beginning of Chapter III, Clara, Stanhope, and Joel discuss the meaning of the political activities which have been already clear to the reader since the preceding chapter. This tends to diffuse whatever point you want to make.

Page 161 and following: too much abstract dialogue about political attitudes.

Page 164: Simpson thinks that Martha "is too old for him to do anything about".his feeling for her. This is rather odd, in view of the fact that this woman is having an affair with Joel and seems to be quite attractive.

Page 200 to 201: again the author lectures at length after the point has already been made.

Page 218 to 219: the characterization of Josiah is constantly being diminished by these long explanations of the people and what they need on the island. This is not very fruitful as far as fiction goes.

(To follow on on page 247 of the Faber page proofs with only a spacing to show the passage of time)

Martha Lee decided to spend the evening alone, and at home. Sterning had <sup>telephoned</sup> ~~xxxxxx~~ her at the office shortly after she had spoken to Stanhope. He had sounded disturbed, unhappy and she had been aware of his need for comfort. All she had to do was ask him to pick her up and he would have jumped at it and they would have driven up into the quiet hills to watch the sun set or else to some secluded beach to swim and then to lie and be at peace and talk a little. She had not asked him; and his pride had forbade him to beg. So he had told her - and she was aware of his ~~disappoin~~ disappointed withdrawal - that he had an important business dinner that evening.

She had relented a little, in spite of herself.

"You can come by afterwards, if you like."

"It might be late," he said. "We are negotiating with an Eastern Trade Delegation on behalf of the government; and you know how these things can go."

"I'll be up."

"Allright. Martha -"

"Yes?"

A pause, then: "Nothing."

She said, making her voice cold and impersonal: "My story on Mr. Justice Wright has been killed because truth is relative and with a point of departure. So my new editor says."

"I see." His voice, now, had grown cold too.

"And your friend, John Stanhope, will soon be in the same position as Mr. Justice Wright. I may not even bother to write about it when the time comes."

Sternung had remained silent at the other end of the line so Martha had said, harshly: "Later then, unless you change your mind" and hung up on him.

Lydia, the maid was off for the evening, gone to the pictures with the latest boyfriend; but with the great Labrador bitch, Sheba, for companion, Martha Lee was neither afraid nor alone.

When darkness fell she flooded the little house with lights, turned off the music she had been listening to, and switched on the television to catch the early evening news. It was all very carefully selected and edited and the presence of the Eastern Trade Delegation took up about half the film footage shown. Then there was a new list of things put on specific licence, things that could not be imported without the permission of the trade ministry. This one was longer than all the previous ones had been; it included all brands spirits, cigarettes, chocolates, perfumes; shoes above a certain prices and a ~~great~~ long list of fresh, tinned and frozen food and vegetables.

"Its getting drabber," Martha murmured.

For answer Sheba bounded up and dashed barking to the door: then there was ~~xxxxxx~~ knocking at the door. The woman switched off the television, lit a cigarette and went after the dog.

"Who is it!" she called, not opening the door.

"Simpson, Miss Lee: Andrew Simpson."

"What do you want?"

"May I come in?"

"No. I don't want to see you; I don't want to see anybody."

"Please."

"I'm not opening. Tell me what you want and then go away."

Reassured, though not entirely disarmed, Sheba retreated six feet from the door but in line with it and went down on her belly in the position heraldry describes as couchant.

Martha remained silent, waiting, for the space of half a minute then said "Well?".

"Its alright, Miss Lee," Simpson said from the other side of the door. "Sorry to bother you."

She heard him turned away; and without knowing why she opened the door. Then she herself turned from the door and walked back to her sitting<sup>room</sup>. Sheba remained quietly on guard, watching the man.

"Shut the door behind you," Martha called from the liquor cabinet.

Simpson came slowly into the well-lit room, escorted by Sheba who only considered her job done when Martha murmured "Allright, girl", permitting her to relax completely and curl up on her favourite rug.

"I can only offer you rum," Martha said without turning: then added with a sting: "Unless you've brought your own whisky. I hear that's the fashion under your new dispensation."

"A little rum, please," Simpson murmured.

She poured two drinks then turned to him. He seemed unchanged, not ~~invested~~ with the cockiness of victorious youth she had expected to see in his face, his eyes, his bearing. If anything, he seemed a little sobered by the responsibilities of power.

"Well? What does the great Josiah and his faithful Presidetal Secretary want of me this time?"

"May I sit down?"

"Of course~~seem~~." She waved an arm to embrace the house, the land and everything on it. "Of course. You may sit or stand or take or

reject or imprison or release by simple Presidential decree. You are the new gods of power, so why ask! You want to sit? So you sit. Its all a matter of power, isn't it? D'you think I want you in my house? But you represent power so I open the door and you walk in. So let us cut the social crap. What do you want?"

"I came to see you; personally, privately, socially, as a man, as a friend."

For a moment Martha Lee <sup>stared</sup> ~~stared~~ at him in speechless bewilderment, then she threw back her head and let out an ugly, derisive snort. "You what!"

"I came to see you."

"Privately? Socially? Not to tell me the great Josiah wants this or that? Not to try out your latest idea? Or parade your latest victory?"

"No. Personally, privately; nothing else."

"Well, well," said Martha Lee. "This is something and I'm flattered. And now that you've seen me personally and privately and for nothing, will you kindly get the hell out of here. I don't want to see you!"

"I love Mona Wright," Andrew Simpson said quietly. "I love her desperately."

A stillness as physical as a cool breeze swept over Martha Lee dispelling the harsh and strident anger within her. And now, freed of the blindness of her anger, she saw and felt the new sombreness about the young man.

"You'd better sit down," she said.

"It changes nothing," he said. "Josiah had to do what he did."

"And you love the judge's daughter."

"Yes."

"Sit down," she said again, taking his glass and going to

liquor cabinet for a refill. Without turning she asked: "Have you seen Mona? I mean since -"

"No; she won't see me and I can't force myself on her."

She turned and carried his drink to him. He sat relaxed and calm; a man reconciled to a cruel necessity, suffering its cruelty but ~~XXXXXXXX~~ not fighting it.

No longer Young Andy, Martha Lee told herself: never again You Andy.

"What do you want me to do?"

He mustered a smile, but not with the dashing charm of old. He raised his shoulder slightly, gestured deprecatingly with his right hand; a very Jewish movement that brought the image of Joel Sterning to Martha's mind.

"Nothing," he said lightly.

Only comfort, she told herself. And that is what I do not have for you.

"Have you eaten?" She forced herself to be brisk and business like.

"I'm not hungry."

"Well, I am! Give me a hand and let's make a quick curry, Indian style. Come!"

She led the way into the little kitchen. By the time he got there she had taken a piece of steak out of the refrigerator and was now down on her knees in a corner picking out onions from a vegetable box. "Better take off your jacket. There's an apron behind the door. You'll have to do the onions; they always make a mess of my eyes." She looked up briefly and noted the slight wry smile that tugged at one corner of his mouth. It tugged at her heart. It would have been easier if he had wept for it was a time

to weep. "Please fetch me my drink and help yourself to another."

When he returned with the drinks she was sitting at the kitchen table cutting the eat into neat little cubes. She took a long swig at the glass he handed her, then waved him to the sink where a small mound of onions were ready for peeling. "It's less devastating if you do it under running water."

"All of them?" he asked.

"All of them."

For the space of ten minutes they worked in silence. When the woman had done dicing the meat she went into the sitting room, piled a stack of records on her player and switched it on. She reduced the volume so that the folk songs of the island, sung by native singers, swept softly through the little house. Then she gathered up her bottle of rum and container of ice and carried them into the kitchen.

Simpson had nearly finished <sup>preparing</sup> ~~peeling~~ the onions with only the faintest hint of wetness about his eyes.

"My eyes would have been running like taps by now," she said, refilling their glasses.

"A racial weakness," he laughed. "Not enough black in you."

"Liar," she retorted. "My black Lydia is even worse."

"That's because she doesn't feel black," he teased. "I think I'll do a scholarly tome on race and reduce everything to a matter of feeling. And you know something, if science goes on as it is now doing with people able to reshape their features and lighten or darken their complexion at will race will, in a relatively short time, be largely a matter of feeling."

"And of loyalties," she said, thinking of Max Johnson, wondering how he was making out in the land of his birth but ~~which he was a~~

to which he had returned as a stranger.

She made<sup>a</sup> quick, abrupt gesture of face, eyes, body, hands, mind, turned away from Simpson, scooped up the plate of diced onions and poured it into the saucepan of hot coconut oil. There was the sudden hiss of the explosive meeting of boiling oil and water. A wave of hot steam replaced the almost invisible bluish haze the boiling oil had given off. And the smell of onions browning permeated the kitchen and spread through the little house.

"Yes, of course; and of loyalties," Andrew Simpson said, caught up in Martha Lee's new mood; thinking of Mona Wright and her father, the great judge now in detention. Then, a hard unhappy edge to his voice, he added: "The question is loyalties to what, Miss Lee?" And without waiting for an answer he took his drink and went quickly into the other room.

She stood over the onions, stirring them so that they browned evenly, making a little ritual of it which helped to blunt the edge of thought and feeling. When the onions were done she squared her shoulders as though for some hard effort then, without turning and making her voice louder than all the other noises of the house, she called: "The onions are brown."

And when she sensed his presence back in the kitchen she said: "The red tin on the top shelf. It says pure Madras curry." Then "You know I didn't mean to get at you."

"I know," he said. He gave her the curry and she put two heaped spoonsful on the brown onions and kept up her stirring.

"Now the meat," she said; and when he handed it to her she put it in cube by cube, ensuring that each piece was completely covered with curried onion goo before putting in the next; and all



But I didn't lie. I remember warning John Stanhope about his friendship with Joel Sterning and the Isaacs crowd. And it wasn't simply because Josiah told me to do so. I believed in it and I believe now that public officials cannot have personal relations with people whose interests are opposed to public policy."

"The Isaacs crowd are agents of public policy, on your side, so you were wrong."

"Not at the time. At that time they had to be frightened into becoming agents of public policy. But that's not what I'm getting at. The point is that it was very simple for me then. I saw things clearly and simply." He emptied his glass in one long draught, got up in one uncharacteristic jerky movement and went to the little liquor cabinet for a refill. There was the faintest hint of a sway in his movement.

So you're bawling because you can't see things as simply and clearly any more."

"Yes!" he said harshly. "Yes!"

"And you are angry with God and with man. And upset and unhappy because you can't have your woman and be a hero of the revolution too! Well, it would seem that's how it is, Mr. President: Secretary! Perhaps you now understand how John Stanhope and Max Johnson felt."

"But what we did was right, had to be done, if we were to get things moving. You know that!"

She turned her back on him then and walked across the room to the open window. Outside, the night was black and moonless; but the sky was clear of cloud and the stars hung bright and low over the earth.

From inside the room Simpson spoke again, insistently: "You don't dispute that we had to do what we did?"

"I dispute nothing," she retorted without turning. "You've ~~xxxx~~ ensured that no dissenting view is heard loud and clear. You've muffled me so it is silly to come here and ask what I think of any view you or your master put forward. In the silence you've created there are no voices except your own to listen to. Is that what you find so hard to live with?"

"No! We can live with that because it is an unhappy necessity. What is hard is that the necessity should have arisen; what is hard is that selfishness and vested interest made such drastic measures necessary."

"Then you ought to be happy, Andy," she swung about and looked across the room at him. "You should find comfort in being right and having the strength to strike down those who are selfish."

"I come to you for comfort and you mock me," he said, but calmly, almost light. He remembered how it had been on that night that seemed a lifetime away now when he had taken her to Josiah and there had been that flash of intimacy between them.

The timer went off in the kitchen.

She said: "The food is ready", pointed to a drawer and added, "You lay the table and I'll get it." Then she went briskly to the kitchen.

Simpson opened the drawer and found the tablecloth and the knives. It was the ~~an~~ memory of the intimacy of that night that had brought here now. There was the irrational hope that that long remembered moment might be recaptured and with it some of the assurance and inner tranquility that had been part of his make-up

They ate in silence, washing down the hot rich curry with a chilled light lager produced in the island. Martha used her fingers to break the bread and dip it in the curry goo and after a while Simpson abandoned his knife and fork and followed suit. The measure of his enjoyment of the food surprised him: the last time he had experienced this kind of sensual pleasure was the night Mona had made him make love to her. The remembrance of it was an arrow of sweet-bitter grief.

When they had eaten Martha rose and cleared the table. And it was while she passed close to him that Simpson reached out and got hold of her, one hand on her thin bony arm, the other on her waist. She pulled away. He held on, lightly but firmly. She became very still, very calm, very relaxed, very remote. She cocked her head to the right and looked into his face with expressionless Chinese eyes.

Whatever Simpson's original impulse, holding on to the woman, feeling the warmth of her flesh, evoked a sharp undercurrent of sexual desire. The look in his eyes became a pleas.

For a wild moment the woman was possessed of a strong urge to comfort this unhappy young man with her body. She had done as much for other men at other times, and not all of them as worthwhile as this one. Then the moment passed. Not this one. The expressionless eyes came to life, looked at him with a hint of mockery. She let out a coarse gurgling laugh, tinged with teasing vulgarity.

"So that's it: belly full, now a piece of tail! Sorry, me love, that's not part of my plan. Loyalty or whatever else you want to call it ends here. I'm no substitute for your Mona and no comforter of lonely young men, not even if they are Presidentia

Secretaries! No piece of tail from me, ducky! Not now! Not ever!" Then she let out her cruel deliberate laugh again.

All expression went from Andrew Simpson's handsome face. The normally vibrant black-brown skin became tinged with a ghastly hint of green. His eyes seemed lifeless and suddenly sunk far back in his skull. He let go his hold on Martha Lee as though burnt by the touch of her. Then, without a word, he pushed back his chair as he rose from the table and walked out of the little house.

Martha Lee closed her eyes and held on to herself and let him go.

Outside, at the gate, Andrew Simpson all but collided with Joel Sterning, coming in to call on Martha Lee.

As soon as Sterning looked into her face he knew that ~~what~~ she was all knotted up, and because he was <sup>tired and</sup> ~~stirred~~ the dinner for the Eastern Trade Delegation had bored him to the point of irritation, it angered him that Andrew Simpson's presence could have so affected her that she did not respond to his need.

"And what did he want?" His irritation broke through.

"Comfort," she said coldly. "And being a man it meant one thing.

"Not giving it to him seems to have upset you."

She choked down the quick retort that sprang to mind. He's tired and ~~exas~~ fed up and I'm not helping, she told herself.

"It wouldn't have really comforted him," she said mildly.

He poured a drink for himself and moved restlessly about the room. She thought: I should have done that for him; any such gesture would help ease his bloody-mindedness.

"And that's the only reason why you didn't give it to him?"

"Please, Joel," she murmured.

He turned and stared at her with head cocked to one side. Spoiling for a fight, she thought, registering the challenging posture. I should have been more demanding earlier; I should have made him come to me; it was wrong not to.

"What's happened to the proverbial Lee honesty? Come, tell me: would you have bedded him had you been certain of the comfort part? After all, he 's one of your people, entitled to the special compassion you reserve for those born here."

"Drop it, Joel, please."

"Is it that hard to answer?"

She sighed. "All right, Joel; since you are determined to have it: I might have."

"Is 'might' the best you can do?"

"All right! I would have!"

"That's better! That's how the public knows the great Miss Martha Lee: straight and honest and upright!"

Looking into his eyes, very sensitive now to his mood, she realised he was enjoying himself, that this verbal violence on her was a pleasurable release as needed as is cursing to the inarticulate. Had he been a different man, a man of the island perhaps or one from a different cultural background he might have sought this release by knocking her down.

"I think you better go, Joel."

He threw back his head and laughed; it was a mirthless, mocking sound.

"Just like that! When she wants she says come, when it ceases to please she says go. Just like that!"

She lowered her head so that she should not see his face.

"Forgive me," she murmured: she hesitated then added "I thought you'd done and not being a Semite myself I do not have the semitic capacity to appear nobler for being kicked." She felt the change of mood in the room; it was as if a current of electricity had been turned off. There was no need to look up to see the changed expression on his face. In place of the bright hint of human cruelty of a moment ago the eyes, now, will be guarded and calm and with a touch of <sup>the</sup> sombre desolation which is part and parcel of the knowledge of just how alone each one of us really is on this earth: knowing or not knowing this is the real gap between innocence and experience. And the racial thing is still the easiest weapon with which to force each other back into our particular aloneness.

He said: "I'm sorry. Perhaps I had better go."

She looked up then and Stening saw the hint of tears in her eyes; but he knew she would not allow them to take over. She chewed at her upper lip.

"It's my fault," she said. "This wouldn't have ~~xxxx~~ happened if I'd asked you to come here to eat. Instead you had your Eastern traders and I had Andy Simpson."

"Whom you would have bedded had you been sure it would work." But he could not, now, revive his anger at the thought.

She nodded. "Yes."

He turned to the liquor cabinet then, but she moved more quickly, got there first and fixed a drink for him.

"I should have taken a chance," he said musingly, recalling that far-off day nearly five years ago when he had suggested in this very room that they live together openly and so force Clara

to divorce him.

Martha Lee made the connection immediately.

"I had something to say too, remember."

He shrugged slightly. She gave him the drink; they looked into each other's eyes and there was the intimacy of knowledge shared. And he knew that she also remembered the quickness with which he had welcomed her rejection of the suggestion. The gesture had really been a bit of mental strutting, a showy piece of shadow boxing for her benefit, not to be taken seriously. And she had done the expected thing. She was again doing the right thing now. The difference was the mutual awareness this time that it was part of the show.

"But I didn't have the guts." He turned from her and walked to the open window. "We both know I didn't intend to do anything, even if you'd agreed. I would have found some way of wriggling out."

"We must stop this, Joel." She went to the table where she and Andrew Simpson had eaten and sat down, overwhelmed by a sudden weariness of body and mind. "This is what husbands and wives do to each other and still live together because they have to. Friends and lovers cannot go in for this type of spiritual striptease without ceasing to be friends and lovers. You know, my dear, I never thought very much of the cult of showing guts and I never thought of you in terms of having or not having guts. So there's no need to lacerate yourself or to savage me."

"I can't take it any more, Martha." Then, explosively: "I've decided to go! To leave."

Martha's body jerked upright, all weariness forgotten. She stared at Joel's stiff back, <sup>knowing</sup> ~~knowing~~ as a passing thing that he was holding on with all his might. She waited till she felt calm, till

the tension left her body, then she spoke, making her voice flat, impersonal: "When?"

His body relaxed visibly.

"I don't know; haven't decided yet."

"I meant when did you make the decision?"

"I don't know; I thought of it just now but I probably made it a long time ago."

"Alone?"

"It was you who warned against this kind of stripping."

"Too late. Is she going with you?"

"I expect so."

"Do you want her to?"

"Yes. I think so." He turned then and looked across the room at her. "Would you come?"

She smiled and a rare tenderness showed in her face.

"No."

He nodded at this bit of knowledge confirmed. Now they were as close as they had ever been.

"What would you have done if I'd said yes?"

"Gone into a blue funk, I think; and then, blue funk and all, I would have taken you with me."

"And your Clara and your children?"

"Why speculate? The question doesn't arise."

"It could have, very easily, a moment ago."

He shook his head, making it a gentle motion of denial. A terrible sadness was mingled with the love he felt for this woman who had not tried to bind him to her. In some odd way that he himself could not understand she had helped him make this decision.

"And you," he said, caught in the mood of the moment, "what will you do?" How would she fare under the new dispensation? Would she end up one of the victims? Something he wanted to promise her, some commitment that would show the nature of his love.

Again the soft smile flitted across her face.

"What I did before you came, dear Joel. Live and work and survive. And perhaps, with luck, there will occasionally be a man with whom there will be moments of intimacy and companionship."

"That all?"

"That is all"

"What can I do?"

She was deliberately obtuse. "Do what you decided. Take your Clara and go."

"I meant for you."

She swallowed hard.

"I want you but you'd be a fool to stay; they'll break you so badly that in the end I may stop wanting you."

"You know I didn't come here -"

"I know," she cut in quickly and he <sup>felt</sup> ~~heard~~ the ~~rikkkk~~ weariness in her voice.

He came towards her, uncertain and self-conscious suddenly despite the years of intimacy. She rose and put a hand on his arm.

"Don't blow it up in your mind, Joel. It wasn't a thing of high passion. I'll miss the quietness between us - and the talking much more than the bedding. Think of me sometimes, and if you can do it without messing up things between yourself and your Clara write me."

In a sudden, wild, impulsive gesture, Joel Sterning flung his arms about Martha Lee and held her tight.

"Come with me!" he urged over and over again.

Martha Lee willed her body into total relaxation and waited calmly for the moment of passion to pass.

At last Sterning stopped pleading; the tightness of his grip relaxed, then he let her go.

"I wish - " he began; then he turned away from her and walked stiffly to the door.

Martha followed him out to the veranda. He turned to her, awkwardly. She tilted her face up for him to kiss her. He did so, tenderly, lingeringly.

She said: "Go now, Joel. Goodbye."

He left her quickly. He looked back when he reached her gate. She waved to him; then he turned and went to his car.

Martha Lee went back into the house, locked up and then poured herself a nightcap. It startled her a little that she should feel so calm, so composed, so self-possessed. But she knew herself, knew that reaction would set in later, slowly, when loneliness and need for a man came on her and fastidiousness made finding the right man difficult. That, she knew, was when she would really miss Joel Sterning and the rare kind of man-child he is. She tossed down the drink, called the dog, Sheba, and went into her bedroom, utterly weary but knowing sleep would be a long time coming. For the present her mind shut out all thought of Joel Sterning or the affairs of the island. She thought, instead, of the black father of her deaf-mute child. He had been the first, and in a sense the only one, who had aroused her physical passions fully. He had also taught her the reality of loneliness. Those

others who came ~~later~~ after had only reach a small part of her, the fringes of her being: all of them, except this last one now gone. With him there had been a strange kind of understanding to which sex was a small physical overtone. And because this had been something new, a thing of the mind, its end carried the promise of a greater loneliness than she had known before it... But that other one, the first one, the man who had made a woman of her, where was he now? Alone? Unhappy? At the end of one situation, as she now was? Or gay and happy and taking everything some other woman had to give?

She stripped; got into bed, lit a cigarette, turned out the light and lay on her back relaxing body and mind and allowing a confused and jumbled pattern of thought and feeling to course through her mind. After many hours and many cigarettes and just as the first signs of light appeared in the eastern sky she slipped into an uneasy, restless sleep that made her toss and turn all the time. And the uneasiness of the mistress passed to the dog, and it too spent a restless night.

Clara Sterning woke in the small hours and was instantly aware that Joel was not in bed. Since the Old Man's death she had slipped back into the habit of crawling into Joel's bed whenever he was out late at night. This had made of the physical thing between them a strong bridge on the way back to where they had started from.

She turned her head and the luminous dial of the bedside clock told her it was eleven minutes after four. She remained

still for a minute or two longer then she flung the blankets back and swung out of bed. What remained of the night was a world of discernable shadows so there was no need for light. She left the bedroom and padded, barefooted, across the thick carpet to the living room.

It was as she had hoped. He was home; deep in his favourite chair by the picture window. She thought he was asleep and had forgotten to turn off the little side light. Then she saw the liquor on the side-table and her heart sank a little.

"Clara - ?"

"Yes, Joel. I thought you were asleep."

"Or drunk?"

"No," she lied. "Not that."

"I didn't want to disturb you, and I needed to think. Come; let me give you a drink. I have something to tell you."

Something about his voice made her feel peaceful. She remained at the door.

"Not that stuff. Let me hot up some chocolate for both of us."

She left without waiting for him to agree; and when she returned with the hot chocolate he was as she had left him. She looked out of the picture window and Mosesville was a city of twinkling stars on the face of the earth.

He said: "I'm going, Clara; I'm leaving the island."

She braced herself and forced her eyes to focus on the twinkling stars down below.

He went on: "I want you to come with me. I would very much like you to come with me but I think you should also know that I'm going in any case"

She relaxed, and now she could not see the stars on the earth, and there was a weakness in the pit of her stomach, like that nightmare weakness after the big black girl had hit her, but without the accompanying terror now.

"I will go with you if you want me, you know that, Joel. When do we go?"

"The sooner, the better."

Now the stars on the earth were in focus once more.

"Where will we go?"

"To Europe, of course. London, Paris, Rome. Not Germany: not Germany for a very long time; perhaps never. I'll have to find something to do. We must go where we'll both be happiest. I rather suspect we'll end up in London. But we'll see."

"And the children?"

"I was thinking about them. I know your family would prefer them to finish their education in the States..." He paused for so long that she turned from the window and came to him and knelt beside his chair.

"It is what you want, Joel. They are our children, yours and mine."

He slipped his hand behind her neck and massaged it gently.

He said: "All you have to do is look at me to see all the weaknesses in a European education."

"But that is what you want for them."

"Yes, especially for the boy."

"Then that is how it will be. They will come with us."

"It won't be easy, Clara. You'll miss many things."

"We'll set things in motion tomorrow - I mean today. You

know the family's going to be very upset."

"Especially your father."

"But he'll understand too."

Under the influence of his gentle massaging a drowsiness began to spread through Clara's body. She removed his hand.

"If you go on I'll fall asleep at your feet."

She rose, reached down to his hands and pulled him up. "We have much to do so let us rest while we can."

Side by side, hand in hand, they looked down at the twinkling lights of the city.

He said: "I saw Martha Lee last night. It's over. I told her we were leaving."

So many things we are going to miss, Clara told herself.

"Come," she said, and led the way to their bedrooms.

Red Hills P.O.,  
St. Andrew.  
Jamaica.

October 31, 1966

Dear Harold,

I will certainly see that the manuscript gets<sup>to</sup>/you  
by mid-November.

Sorry you had to wait so long for it and for the fact that I have inflicted nothing but a series of delays on you: first there was the trip to Guyana and then, shortly after my return here there was the emergency situation in West Kingston. This latter which was basically the creation of a couple of over-ambitious young politicians involved urgent questions of civil liberties which I did not feel I could stand aside from. All of which meant my being involved rather deeply in things other than literature. But the emergency ends in two days' time and I'd like to believe that the efforts put in by a number of people here helped to keep the liberty of the subject reasonably intact during this time. In any event the revised matter will reach by mid-November.

One question: I am working on the Faber page proofs. Would the page proofs be acceptable for the printers or would you prefer a manuscript? I do have my own carbon of the ms so I could let you have either.

I envy you your planned Japanese trip. It is one of the places I would very much like to see one day.

As ever,

Peter Abrahams

Mr. Harold Strauss,  
Alfred A. Knopf Inc.,  
501 Madison Avenue,  
New York 22, N.Y.



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N. Y.


Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK

October 25, 1966

Dear Peter:

I wonder if, as a personal favor, you could tell me when you expect to deliver the revised manuscript of your novel. I am planning to go to Japan for two months at the end of January, and I shall be extremely busy during December and January with other contracted manuscripts coming in at that time. If you manage to get me yours by mid-November, it would help a great deal. If not, do let me know when I may expect it.

As always,

  
Harold Straus

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P. O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica,  
BRITISH WEST INDIES

HS:es



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

Cables: KNOPF NEW YORK

July 7, 1966

Dear Peter:

Many thanks for your letter of July 2nd. I am sorry you are so troubled by the problems of revising **THIS ISLAND NOW**, but please remember that we have put ourselves entirely in your hands, and will abide by whatever decisions you make regarding revisions. We do think that the criticisms we made will also be made by reviewers, and that is why we felt obliged to pass them on to you. I feel certain from past experience that the novel will be reviewed first and foremost as a novel, and not as a political analysis, no matter how valuable the political is.

I do wonder if you are not exaggerating the importance of what you call the structural balance. And if it is important, it can be improved by fleshing out the now seemingly telescoped ends.

The question of publishing "radically" differing versions of the novel here and in England is an interesting one. But I personally don't see why we have to be conventional about it. And aren't you exaggerating a bit when you use the word "radically"? You yourself have ruled out changes so radical as to make it another story, and of course we agree. I might add that there have been other cases of novels being published in several versions, which makes an interesting part of literary history.

By all means take two weeks or so to make up your mind. And then please do let me know not only how you plan to revise, but when I shall have the final manuscript.

As always,

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
"Coyaba"  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew, JAMAICA

PUBLISHER OF BORZOI BOOKS

HS:sr

Coyaba,  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew.  
Jamaica.

July 2, 1966

Dear Harold,

I have now gone over the book very carefully in the form of the Faber page proofs and it has left me with a very mixed reaction. It is a very political story, in fact the politics is the story. I see and take your criticism that the political dominates, and yet any other approach would have changed it so radically as to make it another story. Of course another story might have been very much better and more successful, I don't know. The trouble is that this was the one I set out to write, including the gradual fading into unimportance of the private personal problems in the face of the unfolding political reality. I have already had a couple of goes - trying to meet one of your basic points of criticism - at bringing the Martha Lee-John and Clara Stening emotional situation back into the foreground of the last part of the story; but so far all I have succeeded in doing is to upset the structural balance of the book and of the story. Anyway, I will try some more.

There is another point I'm not too happy about which is the question of publishing radically differing versions of the same book, and this, I suspect, contributes to a kind of psychological resistance to the making of changes.... Please don't misunderstand me; all this is by way of thinking aloud; I would of course much rather you publish the same version as Faber, but I will certainly try and meet those of your objections which do not require radical changes in the story. The trouble is this 1

is this is unlikely to really satisfy either of us. But I'll do the best I can.

So please give me another two weeks or so and I will try and let you know something final.

As ever

Peter Abrahams

UWI LIBRARIES



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK

June 21, 1966

Dear Peter:

Just a note to tell you that I believe I have settled everything with Martha Winston. The letter of agreement should be on its way to you by this time.

I was quite worried for a long time at not hearing from you, because I was not aware of the Jamaican postal strike. But I am now particularly glad to hear that it is over, and that you are seriously considering our various editorial suggestions.

As a personal favor, so that I can plan my time, would you make a rough estimate of when you think you will be able to send the manuscript?

As always,

Harold Strauss

HS:bh

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P. O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, B.W.I.



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison A.

Cable XXXI

April 7, 1966

Dear Peter:

Not having had an answer from you to my letter of March 1st, I phoned Martha Winston yesterday. She told me that you were uneasy about our lack of enthusiasm for A PASSAGE IN TIME, and had asked her what to do. This makes me think you must have misunderstood the purpose of my criticisms.

We are enthusiastic about publishing you. We hope to do so for a long time to come, as I have already told you. That we see some weaknesses in A PASSAGE IN TIME is of course quite evident; the purpose of my letter of March 1st was to give you an opportunity to respond to what we thought were sound criticisms, or to decide that you want the book published as it is. If we did not give you a chance to consider our criticisms, we would have been doing you a disservice.

By the same token, it is not quite right to measure our enthusiasm by our criticisms. You are an author whom we have been publishing for a long time, and hope to continue to publish for a long time, so editorial criticisms cannot possibly be allowed to influence the way we publish the book. Perhaps I should add that enthusiasm or the lack of it is not as important as it seems in launching a novel. You know how enthusiastic I was about A NIGHT OF THEIR OWN. We distributed about 4,400 copies at the peak, but about six hundred came back. This leaves a net sale of 3,800, just about the identical figure for the total sale of A WREATH FOR UDOMO.

Do let me hear from you soon in any case.

Cordially,

HS:nl

*Dictated by*

Harold Strauss

PUBLISHER OF BORZOI BOOKS

*but signed on his behalf by  
Sylvia D. Allen*

March 1, 1966

Page 268: another lecture by Josiah.

The reader I have been quoting made the most severe criticisms. I pass them on to you with no idea that you will follow all of them; but perhaps some of them will be useful to you.

I hope you will understand the spirit in which these comments are made. From your previous books we know you to be a very good and skillful novelist, a talented writer, as Orville Prescott called you. I think for once you have let your absorption in political ideas overcome your instincts as a novelist. As I said in the beginning of this letter, it is probably too late to remedy this completely. Or at least we think it would be asking too much of you to do so. But a few steps in the direction of my main criticisms would certainly help a great deal.

Do let me know your decision as soon as possible. Martha Winston has asked me to hold up the publication agreement until I hear from you.

I cannot end this letter without adding that we want to continue to publish your books for a long time to come.

As always,



Harold Strauss

cc: Miss Martha Winston  
HS:bh

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, British West Indies



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK

February 17, 1966

Dear Peter:

You must be wondering why you have not heard from me regarding A PASSAGE IN TIME. We see problems in the manuscript, and it has had three readings to date. I have in fact six pages of notes from one reader. But even now I am not yet able to tell you what we will suggest. I am writing you now so that you will not think we are neglecting the manuscript. Quite the contrary.

I'm not prepared to go into details now, but on the other hand I don't want to seem too mystifying. The chief criticisms here are that different individuals seem to become the central characters in different parts of the novel; and that the political conflicts are not worked out in terms of personal conflicts, as should be done in a novel.

More soon.

As always,

Harold Strauss

HS:bh

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, British West Indies



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK

August 17, 1965

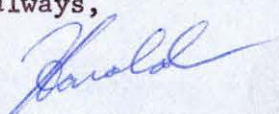
Dear Peter:

I know you won't receive this letter for some five or six weeks, but I do want to acknowledge your most welcome note of August 9th. I'm delighted that you have finished a new novel and that you will probably be able to send it to me in October.

It will be interesting to hear what you have to say about Kenya after you return. The problems of tribalism and nationalism in the new African countries do not seem to me to be diminishing at all, even though, except for the Sudan, things are relatively quiet.

By the way, we may once again have a little title trouble. There are several books with the title THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY, at least one of which, that by Val Gielgud, John's brother, is still in print.

As always,

  
Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew, JAMAICA

HS:sr

Coyaba,  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew,  
Jamaica.

August 9, 1965

Dear Harold,

I thought you would be interested ~~xxxx~~ to know that the new book is done. I call it THROUGH A GLASS, DARKLY and it is now being typed. I would like to go over it before sending it out and as I am flying off to Kenya a little later this morning and will be away for six weeks, I will not be able to look at it before October. This is not so bad as I am rather close to the story now and a little detachment might lead to improvements.

I look forward to revisiting West Africa after all these years.

As ever

Mr. Harold Strauss,  
Alfred A Knopf Inc.,  
New York



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK

June 24, 1965

Dear Peter:

I confess that I delayed answering your interesting letter of May 27th in the hope that I would be able to pass on some good news about sales. I'm sorry to tell you that to date they have reached a total of only 4250 copies, and that does not take into account possible returns of unsold copies from booksellers. Sales are continuing in a very modest way, and may balance out against returns, but even so, the total leaves me disappointed.

My hope now is that we can cash in on the wonderful press which A NIGHT OF THEIR OWN received when we come to publish your next book. That often happens. We can perhaps work for a bigger advance sale and more intensive promotion--although I must say we spent quite a bit more in advertising A NIGHT OF THEIR OWN than we were entitled to by orthodox publishing formulas. That was based on our enthusiasm for the book and the fact that you told me that you were going to devote more time to writing fiction.

And what news is there of your next novel? I do look forward to reading it.

As for your remarks about the situation in the Dominican Republic I have much the same mixed feelings that you have. I am opposed to our policy in Vietnam, but I think the situation in the Dominican Republic is quite different. It's just possible that the O.A.S. may be prodded into becoming a vigorous, viable peacekeeping organization, which is more than one can ever hope for as far as SEATO is concerned.

As always,

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills, P.O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica

PUBLISHER OF BORZOI BOOKS

HS:tbs

Coyabe,  
Red Hills P.O.,  
St. Andrew.  
Jamaica.

May 27, 1965

Dear Harold,

Very many thanks for the information contained of May 12. I am grateful to you and Mrs. Wilkins and Mrs. O'Leary for keeping me in the picture.

I hope you are right and that sales do pick up.

I found myself with very mixed feelings about developments in the Dominican Republic. It would have been best in terms of 'self-determination' and the U.S. not being abused to let the Dominicans stew in their own juices. The trouble is I feel reasonably certain there would have been greater bloodletting and this might have been followed by a savage dictatorship or either the left or the right; and both are equally dreadful alternatives to contemplate. So where do we go? I think somebody had to do the dirty work which made possible the O.A.S. coming in otherwise it might not have come in at all. Every now and then I find myself harbouring such dreadfully reactionary thoughts as that perhaps the one way out of the depressing Haitian deadend is a period of benevolent occupation from outside. Which is the more moral, the more progressive posture? I often wonder whether there is only one such or whether I'm becoming intellectually flabby.

As ever

*[Handwritten signature]*

# Alfred·A·Knopf *Incorporated*

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

*Cables:* KNOPF NEW YORK

*Telephone:* PLAZA 1-2600

*501 Madison Avenue*

*New York (22), N.Y.*

May 12, 1965

Dear Peter:

I have been away for a few weeks, which is the reason you haven't heard from me recently. Yesterday Mrs. Wilkins sent you a copy of a quote ad that appeared in the New York Times. I am not sure whether you have seen a copy of the first ad, which also appeared in the New York Times, and I send you a copy herewith.

I promised you some sales figures. We now seem to have re-educated (the technical word is "reprogrammed") our computer, and I now have reasonably accurate figures. The advance sale before publication was somewhat less than I expected or the book deserved--about 3,000 copies--but the rate of sale since publication is moderately good, and to judge it in the short period of time, it seems to be improving. The total sale is 3,700 copies to date, but last week alone we sold 308 copies. It's impossible to make any predictions at this stage, but I can at least hope that the rate will accelerate.

You seem to have had first-rate instincts in setting your next novel in the Caribbean. I wish we had left the Dominicans to stew in their own juices, but for better or worse, events have certainly attracted the spotlight to that area. (All I meant by my remark about the Dominicans is that if we had to intervene at all, we should have done so through the OAS, not unilaterally.)

At any rate, I'll look forward to reading your next novel very much.

As always,



Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrews  
Jamaica, West Indies

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B O R Z O I B O O K S

*Cables:* KNOPF NEW YORK

*Telephone:* PLAZA 1-2600

*501 Madison Avenue*

*New York (22), N.Y.*

March 24, 1965

Dear Peter:

Here is another excellent advance comment from a trade organ, THE LIBRARY JOURNAL. Of course I have seen no general reviews of A NIGHT OF THEIR OWN, but when I do, I will send them to you.

As always,

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrews  
Jamaica, West Indies

HS:SCW

"Coyaba",  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew.  
Jamaica.

February 18, 1965

Dear Harold,

Very many thanks for the airmail copy and the Publishers Weekly review. I like the look of the book and I agree with you that the photo on the back of the jacket has come out very well; the first review, too, seems pretty promising. So all we can do is wait and see and I hope the enthusiasm of your sales department pays off.

I had not thought of going back to Richard Nkosi but certainly is an idea to keep in mind. I am working on something now - set in the Caribbean - but until there is a lot more shape to it there is nothing to tell. I am trying to finish a first draft by about April and hope that by then either sales or a few journalistic commissions would make possible a six to eight weeks visit to East Africa. Another Richard Nkosi might come out of that visit though I want to break away from only writing about Africa.

The N.Y. Times Sunday magazine has bought a piece they asked me to do on the problem of communication between the lighter and darker people. Chap handling it is Gerald Walker incase your're interested. I don't know when they'll publish it but its the sort of thing you'd like to read.

As ever



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N. Y.


Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK

February 5, 1965

Dear Peter:

A NIGHT OF THEIR OWN is off press, and we sent you one of your author's copies by airmail and the remaining nine author's copies by book post. I do hope you like the appearance of the book. The photograph on the back of the jacket came out pretty well, I think.

As always,

  
Harold Strauss

P.S. Publication date is April 12.

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrews  
Jamaica, West Indies

HS:SCW

# Alfred·A·Knopf *Incorporated*

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK  
Telephone: PLAZA 1-2600

501 Madison Avenue  
New York (22), N.Y.

February 3, 1965

Dear Peter:

There is a good deal of enthusiasm in the sales department--hard-boiled fellows, those--for A NIGHT OF THEIR OWN. And now the first of the trade journal reviews has appeared, one in Publishers' Weekly. The trade journals comment on books about two months before publication, and have some influence. I send you a copy herewith, and I am delighted with it, of course.

It's too early to say much about sales, but I am somewhat optimistic.

I do hope you are at work on a new novel, and will let me have some news about it soon.

I don't want to constrict your creative ideas in any way, but I do wonder whether it has ever occurred to you to use the character, or at least the name, of Richard Nkosi again?

As always,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Harold". The signature is cursive and somewhat stylized.

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrews, Jamaica W.I.

HS:SCW



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK

November 24, 1964

Dear Mr. Abrahams:

Just a word to tell you I am returning the original "laughing picture" to you by airmail, under separate cover. As soon as our copies are made, I will mail a dozen to you and two to Mr. du Sautoy for the British edition.

Faithfully,

*Sophie Wilkins*

Sophie Wilkins

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, West Indies

December 4, 1964

P.S. As you see by the above date, I thought better of it and waited till I had the requested twelve prints to send you, <sup>as well</sup> Two of the same are going to Mr. du Sautoy. We think they turned out remarkably well and hope you are pleased with them too.

*Steve*



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Cables: KNOPF NEW YORK

November 20, 1964

Dear Mr. Abrahams:

Just a word to tell you I just mailed page proof of front matter, including the list of names etc., in great haste by air first class, trusting you will return it as quickly as possible as we need it by the first of December.

Faithfully,

*Sophie Wilkins*

Sophie Wilkins

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P O  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, West Indies

Coyaba,  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew,  
Jamaica.

November 23, 1964

Dear Harold,

I am today returning to you by airmail parcel post  
the galleys and the manuscript.

The whole thing was remarkably clean with no more than  
~~xxx~~ a handful of small typos. The one big thing I would  
like you to look out for is a piece of transposition that  
needs to be made on pages 169, 170, 171 of the galleys.  
If you look at my manuscript you will see page 219 (of my  
page numberings) was set before page 218. There is not any  
work involved beyond the bodily shifting of one page. I have  
indicated where on the galley. This error, incidentally, is  
not of our making. The printer's numbering (in red) shows that  
the fault lies with them.

As ever

*John*

Coyaba,  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew.  
Jamaica.

November 19, 1964

Dear Harold,

The galleys arrived last night. I will try to get through the bulk, if not all, over the weekend, and mail them back to you during the course of next week.

Mr. Gervasi should have received the pictures by now, which should answer your rather urgent last note.

As ever,

UWI LIBRARIES



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Cables: KNOPF NEW YORK

November 19, 1964

Dear Peter:

Just a note to let you know that we have tentatively  
set April 12 as the publication date for A NIGHT OF THEIR OWN.

As always,

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P O  
St Andrew  
Jamaica, West Indies

HS:SCW  
cc: Martha Winston



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK

November 16, 1964

Dear Peter:

My last letter to you must have crossed yours to Mr. Gervasi of November 9, enclosing the two glossy prints, the retouched enlargement of the snapshot, and what you call "the little laughing picture." I like the last one by far the best and so does everyone else here. We are using it for the jacket; as soon as it is reproduced, our publicity department will make copies. Then we'll send two to Faber and Faber and a dozen to you, and of course return the original to you. I am keeping the other prints and the two negatives in case of emergency. But I'll return them to you in a few months, unless you need them earlier.

As always,

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, West Indies

HS:SCW

*And thanks for your later note to me.*



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK

November 10, 1964

Dear Peter:

I have just received word that the printer is expecting to mail galleys--i.e., page proof--to you on the 12th. Needless to say, the sooner we can have them back here at the office, the better.

As always,

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, West Indies

HS:SCW

November 9, 1964.

Dear Mr. Gervasi,

I am sorry about the delay in letting you have the enclosed pictures but I had a little trouble with the studio which re-touched the pictures (removing every wrinkle wart and mark) into a sort pretty and smooth face that was faceless. They have now removed the re-touching from the negative and the two prints stamped 'Wally Allen' are the result. Frankly, while I think they will reproduce well I find them only so-so.

I also enclose a smaller picture which was used somewhere a couple of years back and which you might like to consider.

Finally, Mr. Strauss sent me prints of the two snapshots he developed and I am enclosing the one in shirtsleeve with the heavy background of foliage eliminated. I feel reasonably certain that you will have thought of this yourself, but I wanted to bring it to your attention just in case you have not. This print stands out much more sharply without the foliage and it is much more characteristic of me than the studio effort. The real problem is of course one of reproduction and on that one you must be the final arbiter. If, however, you feel something can be done, Mr. Strauss has the negative, which I sent up to him.

Whatever you decide to use, I should be most grateful if you would send prints to Faber & Faber in London who are my English publishers, and a dozen or so that I can send on to the French and the Belgians and the Germans and Italians and so forth who usually publish translations of my stuff.

Yours sincerely

Eugene Gervasi, Esq.,  
Publicity Manager,  
Alfred A. Knopf Inc.,  
New York.

P.S. Please return the little laughing picture as I  
'borrowed' from my wife!

Coyabab  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew, Jamaica.

November 9, 1964

Dear Harold,

Very many thanks for your two prints which we all here like very much. In fact my wife is of the opinion that the one in shirt sleeve is vastly more like I really am than are the two studio pictures I have today dispatched to Mr. Gervasi. But there is of course the problem of reproduction, and to try and get over it she has painted out the rather heavy background of foliage and the result seem to use a very much clearer definition but we are not experts and only the experts can say whether that will make it good enough for reproduction purposes. I have included this as well as another rather nice laughing picture we have discovered in the family album, so Mr. Gervasi will have quite a range to choose from.

I have asked Mr. Gervasi to let me and Peter du Sautoy have some prints of whichever he considers best for reproduction purposes - this following his offer to let me have prints of the studio portrait.

As ever

Harold Strauss, Esq.,  
Afred A. Knopf.

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P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

*Cables:* KNOPF NEW YORK

*Telephone:* PLAZA 1-2600

*501 Madison Avenue*

*New York (22), N.Y.*

October 27, 1964

Dear Peter:

There was so much confusing background in the snapshots of you that I felt they had to be cropped severely. This meant an enormous enlargement, which I did myself. I enclose some prints herewith. Please forgive the stamp on the back which I do automatically when I finish a print.

Meanwhile Mr. Gervasi has already written you asking for a studio portrait. At the same time Peter de Sautoy has written me for prints from the two negatives you sent me. I am sending him another set of prints but I am also telling him that we have asked you to have a portrait done, and that you will undoubtedly be sending him a print of that.

Cordially,

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, West Indies

HS:SCW:ENCS.

# Alfred·A·Knopf *Incorporated*

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

*Cables:* KNOFF NEW YORK

*Telephone:* PLAZA 1-2600

*501 Madison Avenue*

*New York (22), N.Y.*

October 26, 1964

Dear Mr. Abrahams:

Mr. Strauss has made available to us the photographs he took of you, and it is our feeling that these do not quite come up to our hopes. Mrs. Wilkins, his secretary, told me you would be willing to go to a studio and have a photograph taken if it should come to that. I fear it has, and hope you will forgive my asking that you go to this additional trouble. I think it would be worthwhile, however, and am sure a studio would turn up with something we would be happy to use. May I ask you, then, if you would do this at your earliest convenience? If you could airmail to me the photographs the studio makes, I'll send you as many copies as you like, and will see that the photographs are used on the jacket of the book as we had hoped.

With apologies, and all best wishes.

Faithfully yours,  
For ALFRED A. KNOFF, Inc.,

Eugene Gervasi  
Publicity Manager

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew, Jamaica, West Indies

EMG:mk



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Cables: KNOPF NEW YORK

September 29, 1964

Dear Peter:

Everything is rolling smoothly, and now I have a firm production schedule. As you know, we are going straight into page proofs, and these should be airmailed to you directly from our printers on or about November 4 (give or take a day or two). Because of the distance, I suppose you will need a full two weeks to read them and return them to us, but anything better you can do will be welcome. The manuscript was in such splendid shape that the proofs themselves, other than strictly typos, should raise no problems.

We are planning to publish in April, although I cannot give you the exact date yet.

As always,

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, West Indies

HS:SCW  
cc: Martha Winston



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Cables: KNOPF NEW YORK

September 17, 1964

Dear Peter:

The photocopying of the manuscript worked very well,  
and the corrections came through beautifully. I therefore today  
airmailed the photocopy to Peter de Sauty.

As always,

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, West Indies

HS:SCW

UWI LIBRARIES



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Cables: KNOPF NEW YORK


September 15, 1964

Dear Peter:

Many thanks for your conscientious work on the copy edited manuscript, which has arrived safely. I think everything is in order now, and you will next see page proofs which should present few if any problems. We want to move things along fairly rapidly, and publish in May.

We'll have a go at photocopying the manuscript for Peter de Sautoy. We'll have to see if the handwritten corrections come through adequately, but I think they will.

As always,

  
Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, West Indies

HS:SCW

P.S. Many thanks for sending the snapshots, also, and may we please have Nos. 3 and 4 negatives?

14 Sept. 1964

Dear Miss Winston,

Herewith the Knopf contract duly signed. I also return the questionnaire, though I have already given Harold Strauss most of the answers as well as some pictures.

Two things I would like you to do for me, please. Arrange for the manuscript of the book to be returned to me when the publishers have done with it; and please ask Miss Sukerman not to send me any money till she receives a letter which I will write her later today (the local mail service is sometimes funny and sends off letters posted on the same day a week apart).

Yours sincerely

September 11, 1964

Dear Harold,

I am today returning the manuscript under separate cover.

Your reader did a thorough and painstaking job which has impressed and teased me into making a few more cuts to tightened up still further. I think they're all right but I think it might be a good idea for him to just look over the script again.

From his marginal notes I saw he was worried about the continuity from page 39 to page 42 - which is the section where I made my main earlier cuts. I am enclosing a sheet herewith which should tidy up that section.

As the ms now stands there should be no need for me to see galleys and I am quite happy to let you go straight into page.

I understand from London that the Faber ms has already gone to the printers so they are without the tidied-up version which I'm sending back to you today. I further understand that you may run off copies of this version on your magic machine. Is it possible to let Peter du Sautey have one of these copies, or a set of galleys? I think it would help greatly.

Yours

Harold Strauss Esq.,  
Alfred A. Knopf Inc  
501 Madison Avenue,  
New York 22, N.Y.



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Cables: KNOPF NEW YORK

September 3, 1964

Dear Peter:

Separately, I am sending you the copy edited manuscript of A NIGHT OF THEIR OWN. I'm afraid that there are a lot of stylistic and other suggestions which will need your careful attention, although of course yours will be the final decision in these matters. I am sorry to put this extra burden on you, but you will see for yourself that there are a good many rough spots in the manuscript. The novel is so exciting that it's worth whatever extra effort is required.

Since you will have a chance to go over the final manuscript very carefully, I now suggest, to save time, that you authorize us to go straight into page proofs, which will be airmailed to you, omitting the usual galley proof stage. This means that any author's alterations--that is, any change other than the correction of printer's errors--will be very expensive. But since the manuscript will have had such careful attention, none should be necessary. Will you let me know?

As always,

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrews, Jamaica  
West Indies

HS:SCW

Sept 2, 1964

Harold Strauss, Esq.,  
Alfred A. Knopf Inc.,  
501 Madison Avenue,  
NEW YORK 22, N.Y.  
U.S.A.

Dear Harold,

I enclose herewith eight prints for you to look at and see if you would like any for reproduction purposes. My wife took these and we have the negatives so if you think any are useable we can let you have the negatives. They are numbered 1-8 on the backs so all you have to do is indicate which numbers you want. If on the other hand you don't like any of these or find them technically unacceptable let me know and I will go into Kingston and have a proper studio thing done.

The only information additional to what you have on the jacket of A Wreath For Udemu should read something like this:

"Since 1955 he has lived in Jamaica with his wife and three children. He was editor of the WEST INDIAN ECONOMIST which came into being with the birth of the West Indies Federation and which died with the Federation. Also during the period of the Federation he was Controller of the West Indies News, a daily radio link-up news link-up between the islands that made up the Federation. In addition he did daily news commentaries on Jamaican radio and television. During this period he has also written pieces for Holiday magazine. At the beginning of 1964 he gave up most of his other activities to make more time for the writing of fiction."

All things being equal I plan to finish something I'm writing now early next year and go travelling in Africa about February or March. Holiday has already commissioned a short 'Africa Revisited' sort of piece. But all this is of course not for the blurb. I'll let you know about the new thing when there is more shape to it.

Your ever

Peter Abrahams



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Cables: KNOPF NEW YORK

August 31, 1964

Dear Peter:

I trust you survived the hurricane in reasonable comfort and safety. I have your letter of August 24, mailed just before it. You have not heard from me since August 5th since actually I have been on holiday, more or less, since August 14 and just back in the office today. Furthermore, there was nothing really pressing.

We shall certainly let the passage beginning on p. 89 stand, as you request.

I am delighted with your new title, and so is the other editor who has read the manuscript. So it will be: A NIGHT OF THEIR OWN. The only remaining question concerns the quotation page. I don't think it would be very attractive to quote something from Time, and probably a quotation page is not necessary.

Meanwhile the manuscript has been in the hands of a very skillful copy editor. You are an experienced and polished writer, but there are some signs of haste and <sup>a</sup> little carelessness in the script as we have it. There are not only a few typographic errors and words left out, as I myself noted, but there are a few passages in which there is a rather oppressive repetition of words or conjunctions or adjectives. We have taken the liberty of querying a good many of these, and sometimes suggesting alternatives. But this means that the manuscript will have to go back to you. The copy editing is not quite finished, but when the typescript is available we had best send it to you for your approval of the copy editing and for you to respond to the queries on style as you choose.

As always,

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew, Jamaica

HS:SCW

PUBLISHER OF BORZOI BOOKS

Coyaba,  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew,  
Jamaica.

August 24, 1964

Dear Harold,

I have not heard from you since your letter of August 5th so I do not know your reaction to the half dozen or so cuts I proposed to you in my letter of August 6th. On the assumption that these satisfy all your major objections I am informing Peter and Sautoy at Fabers that he can go ahead after incorporating all the changes you and I have so far agreed on as well as those contained in my letter of August 6th addressed to you. In addition I have told him to change Gruff Voice to patrolman Louw. The first time Gruff Voice appears is on page 13 of your ms in the ~~maxima~~ para following "Suddenly he was wide awake....." Then we have: "A gruff voice said;....." this should now read:

"The gruff voice of patrolman Louw said: 'So you are alive.. etc'. In all subsequent passages replace Gruff Voice by 'Louw'.

In your letter of August 5th you also said that one of your readers thought the passage beginning on page 89 should be cut. I hope that in the light of the cuts indicated in my letter of August 6th you will let this passage stand. I agree that it is polemical but it does not hold up the business of the story a fraction as much as the first passage where I have tried to meet you half way. And this is something I find myself wanting to say again and again in a multitude of different ways so that perhaps one day I will say it completely successfully.

In the current (August 21) issue of TIME magazine the cinema section is on page 38 and it begins with a delightful description of Rita Fushingham. The last sentence of the first para says of her eyes: "They shine in a night of their own like stars in a dark pool." I thought A NIGHT OF THEIR OWN would fit our story perfectly: the South Africans are living through a very peculiar night of their own; and there is a quality of mystery about it as a title.

My letter to you of June 30 should fill the bill as my version of a description of the novel.

I want to get this off before the hurricane hits us later today just in case our postal service goes to pieces. I'll send photograph and answer to questionnaire as soon as possible after the storm.

Yours ever

August 6, 1964

Dear Harold,

I think the only really useful comment I can make on your letter of July 30th, is to suggest that you look up the copy of your letter to me dated July 16th. In that letter you wrote: "I seem vaguely to recall some press reports about the sabotage trials in South Africa, but I'm afraid that most American's readers are far too ignorant of the details of the racial conflict in South Africa to take this as a topical novel."

I have now worked out the cuts you asked for. The section you were particularly concerned with, and on looking over it I agree with you, was the conversational passage between Richard and Dee from page 42-44 on your copy of the ms. I have already told you that your copy and the Faber copy have the same page numberings but that my the pages of my copy are differently numbered thanks to a misunderstanding between my typist and me, so I have to give you the actual story context in which to make the cuts.

The first cut is about midway through chapter #2- of part one. Dee has fed Nkesi; they are sitting at table and she is telling him of seeing, from the back of a taxi, a skinny little Indian being clubbed to death by a Zulu. She tells him that in the anti-Indian riots their district was nearly burnt to the ground and the casualty rate was high. Start cutting with para beginning: "I've had you alone here in this house...." and end cut after: "I wish I could repudiate being part of my people and therefore responsible to and for them, she said".

Second cut IS ABOUT A PAGE AND A HALF LATER. He tells her there are places in Africa where being black has ceased to be a burden, where if there is a burden it is to being white. Or Indian, she adds. He tried to explain to her. She cuts in: "But I'm South African. Supposing everything you say is true, how does it help me and my situation?" End what Dee says right there and cut from: "Another thing....." down to where Richard says: "All I'm saying is that it shows up your ambivalence".

Leave in the para beginning: "She noticed, as though for the first time...." and start the Third Cut with " But what's the connection between....." and cut to the end of: "You cannot choose your mother or your father or your country or your race or your colour or your sex".

Leave in the para: "I think your emphases are wrong....." and make the fourth cut BEGINNING: "Even that is determined for you...." and ending a little over a page later with: "In the half light Dee Nunkhee shook her head gently. Nkesi saw it."

The foregoing represents the major cutting.

We turn now to chapter -3-, still of the first part of the book. "Dr. Nunkhee arrived back from Johannesburg...." etc. The last sentence of the rather long second para begins: "Nunkhee smiled

bitterly at the thought...." and ends "simply on the basis of colour." Cut out the whole of this last sentence.

About a page and a half later in the same sequence there is the paragraph beginning: "But of course the Marxian proposition...." and ending: "These dangerous thoughts could lead to impotence..." Cut out the whole of that paragraph.

We turn now to the last few pages of chapter -4- of the book. Richard has been disguised to look like an Indian and he and Dicky Naicker had got past the police and caught up with the procession of Indians going down to the river to worship. There is a para: "They caught up with the procession and worked their way into the thick of it...." etc.

This is followed by the para beginning: "This, Nkesi thought, is uniquely Indian..." Start the cut with: "This, Nkesi thought," and eliminate the whole of that as well as the following para, so the cut would end after: "The sounds that reached them came subdued and muted, as though gentleness had been enforced even on sound."

I think this should meet all your main objections.

I'm afraid the title is still causing me trouble. I suppose the most thrillerish would be something like

THE HUNT FOR NKESI or THE HUNTER & THE HUNTED.  
or, which is my preference, THE PERILS OF THIS PASSING NIGHT.  
Shades of the perils of Pauline!

If you can think up anything better in the line of titles, please do.

Yours

Peter Abrahams

# Alfred·A·Knopf *Incorporated*

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

*Cables:* KNOPF NEW YORK

*Telephone:* PLAZA 1-2600

*501 Madison Avenue*

*New York (22), N.Y.*

August 5, 1964

Dear Peter:

Many thanks for your letter of July 29th. We'll try to keep up with Faber's publishing schedule, but I can't be sure about that yet. I'll write to you again about this.

Meanwhile, I'll give you a roundup of all criticisms of the manuscript, so that it can be brought into final shape as soon as possible. It is rather a nuisance that your copy is not numbered identically with ours, but we have an excellent duplicating machine and I am sending you the first page of each of two important passages. In each case they run two pages beyond the one I am sending you. The first one, is the passage on page 42-44 I have already referred to. The second is a passage beginning on page 89 which another reader lumps with the former passage, but I don't feel so strongly about it. He says it is too polemical, but perhaps if you reread it you will think that the real trouble here is in a certain stiffness in the dialogue.

There is one more ~~small~~ difficulty which I put to you for your consideration, without a great deal of emphasis. It is the two scenes in which one of the two policemen <sup>is</sup> ~~are~~ identified only as "Gruff Voice". If

Peter Abrahams - 2

8/5/64


this epithet were used only once or twice, there would be no trouble. But the first passage runs from page 13-17, and the second passage runs from 164-172, and the repeated use of the epithet seems a little heavy-handed and awkward. You could of course give Gruff Voice a name.

Some people feel the word "night" might well be preserved in your title and have suggested either "Night Passage" or "Night Runner". A variant of that has just occurred to me - "Night Falls On Durban". I had already suggested something straightforward such as "Mission to Durban" but that has not excited anyone here. I put these before you simply to stir up your ideas.

I also enclose a new author's questionnaire since it is a long time since we have had biographical information from you. It would help me a great deal if you would fill this out as soon as possible, and particularly give me your own version of a 200-word description of the novel.

You might also look at the biographical note on the jacket of A WREATH FOR UDOMO, and edit that as you see fit, adding as much as is necessary for the new book.

Cordially,



Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica

HS:al

"All right. But there's still my point about the family."

"Very good: let's examine it. You, Miss Dee Nunkhoo, a high caste young Indian woman, are sitting here alone with me. You know and I know and the people behind this door," he waved backward, "know that you are out of character as far as your 'me and mine' are concerned. Their concept of the family, as you are using it, is different from yours and mine. You know that if one of their daughters were out like this with somebody from an African village nearby they would kill her."

"But you are making my point now!"

"I'm not, you know. Class, caste and wealth, forms of power, make it possible for you to break the rules of the so-called family. And somewhere, with one of those people back there, my being here with you has shaken profoundly someone's concepts about the place of Indian women and Indian women sitting out with black men and possibly the nature of black men. So who makes the family?"

In the half light Dee Nunkhoo shook her head gently. Nkosi saw it.

"All you say is beautifully true. But truth is set in time and space. You are here with me because you are not here. There is no record of your being in the country. And still you are a prisoner. You know, sitting here with you, I feel more tranquil and more at peace with myself than I can remember being since childhood. And I think I know it is because you are here and because of your ideas. It's the kind of idealism that lifts one's heart. But you know as well as I do that all we have to do is go outside this garden for all your fine ideals to become meaningless. We are living in a state of barbarism. Remember? You took great personal risks to smuggle money into the country for the underground. Have you forgotten the

Nunkhoo <sup>smiled</sup> ~~looked down~~ at his sister and nodded.

"I rather suspected as much from the moment I met him. The trouble is believing in these things rather complicates matters in our situation."

"Just what I told him," she said, turning ~~away~~ to pour Nkosi's tea.

Nunkhoo thought: And you, little sister, want to believe with him. Aloud, he said: "And what did he say, little sister?"

"Something about the world being a really ugly and brutal and evil place the day we stop believing in these things."

"And she," Nkosi cut in, "she said that it is already all that and more right now, here in this place."

And now, ~~and now~~, Dee sensed, between her brother and this man, that same undercurrent of understanding that had grown up between herself and this man.

"And what did you tell her?" Nunkhoo asked softly.

Nkosi took the tea from her, ~~and an~~ <sup>an</sup> ~~old~~ smile flickered across his face.

"I didn't say anything," he said equally softly. "Before I knew about Westhuizen it might have been easy to answer her. After Westhuizen I was not so sure I knew the answer."

Nunkhoo turned ~~to~~ <sup>to</sup> the window, ~~stopped eating~~ <sup>stopped eating</sup>,

"That is where you were wrong, my friend. Because there are no stars in the sky is no reason for one to assume that darkness is eternal."



Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 501 Madison Avenue, New York City 22

# Author's Questionnaire (For use in preparing jacket copy and publicity releases and in answering inquiries. Kindly use typewriter or write in ink in clear, block letters.

*Do not supply any information that you do not wish us to make public.)*

*Do not supply any information that you do not wish us to make public.)*

*Date filled out:*

*Full name:*

*Present address:*

*Permanent address (if not the above):*

*Present telephone number:*

*Other telephone number:*

*Place of birth:*

*Date of birth:*

*Married?*

*To whom?*

*Children?*

*Brief summary of education:*

*Brief summary of principal occupations, with approximate dates:*

*Honors, citations, prizes, etc.:*

*List your other books. (Please give publisher's name, date, and the type of book: fiction, verse, history, etc.)*

*(over)*

*Are you a regular contributor to any magazines? Has any article/story attracted particular attention? If so, please give particulars:*

*Do you think your book will make a special appeal to any particular group of readers?*

*Please list here (and on additional sheet if necessary) names and addresses of any organizations you belong to whose members might be interested in your book, and the names of people to whom it might be profitable for us to send an advance announcement. Include critics, feature writers, radio commentators, columnists, and opinion-makers who in your opinion would be interested in your book to the extent of wanting to do something to help it:*

UWI LIBRARIES

*On a separate sheet, please describe your book briefly—about 200 words. We wish to be sure that we do not misrepresent it in our presentation of it.*

*PLEASE SEND A GLOSSY PRINT OF YOUR LATEST PHOTOGRAPH. Be sure that the photographer is willing for it to be reproduced without payment of any fee, and send with it his credit line if use of such is requested by him. We would also like to see prints of any recent informal snapshots, if they are reasonably clear.*

# Alfred·A·Knopf *Incorporated*

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

Cables: KNOPF NEW YORK

Phone: ~~MURRAY HILL 8-0600~~  
PLAZA 1-2600

501 Madison Avenue  
NEW YORK (22), N.Y.

July 30, 1964

Dear Peter:

I am very glad to have your letter of July 27, although at the same time I am deeply disturbed at the way you have twisted what I said about the sad South African situation. I did not say that Americans, and certainly not the Americans with whom I associate, are ignorant of the details of the South African conflict. In your <sup>first</sup> letter to me you used a specific reference to the sabotage trials. It was precisely because I think I have followed African affairs pretty carefully--surely you must know the number of books about Africa we have published--that I felt so concerned about your claim that THIS PASSING NIGHT had something to do with a recent event of which I and all my friends and acquaintances here were entirely ignorant. This may be due to a particular lapse in press coverage, but here the key word is "particular." The American press gives a good deal of space to Africa, and someone who is all-knowing might even be able to demonstrate that in this difficult year any racial disturbance is "big news," and that the press gives exaggerated and sometimes sensational coverage to such disturbances. This of course includes Africa as well as Mississippi and Rochester, New York. If your suggestion that I had said that "most American readers are ignorant of the details of the South African conflict" were true, you should have had not a small sense of depression but a large one.

I am perfectly aware that you can answer me by stressing the fact that you speak of details. But what does this mean? I still don't know what the sabotage

Coyaba,  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew.  
Jamaica.

July 29, 1964

Dear Harold,

I have just heard from Peter du Sautoy and it is much as I suggested in my last letter to you. They plan to publish early in the spring of next year. If you want to you can take it from here with Peter and work out some sort of mutual arrangement about publishing dates. Peter seems to understand the point of topicality very much better, but he says, and he's right, South Africa will continue to be topical for some time to come.

Yes, by all means drop the last para on page 294. (I find that the page numbers of my final draft are not the same as that of the two copies that went to you and du Sautoy. My typist misunderstood instructions and gave me one top and one carbon as two copies - which is a nuisance but not terrible. So when I go over the so-called philosophic passages in the light of your last letter I will have to indicate such changes as I make in terms of the text of the story rather than by page numbers).

After referring to page 42-44 you say there are one or two other passages of the kind. Please indicate these to me as I would like to get this thing out of the way now. I am ripe to go onto something new and I do not want to dissipate the tension that is building up in what is after all very necessary but uncreative revision.

Also because my mind has gone on to something else I find the problem of the title a bit of a peser. Anyway, I will think around it and see if I can come up with something else. At the moment I can only think of Ecclesiastes: "A Time to Love and a Time to Hate". But something else may come up later.

Yours ever

Peter Abrahams

# Alfred·A·Knopf *Incorporated*

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

*Cables:* KNOPF NEW YORK

*Telephone:* PLAZA 1-2600

*501 Madison Avenue*

*New York (22), N.Y.*

July 28, 1964

Dear Peter:

I am quite disturbed that I haven't heard from you. We've had a third reading of THIS PASSING NIGHT, and we're all enthusiastic and we want to publish it. But we don't want to override your views on how it should be published without hearing from you. In short, we regard this as a saleable thriller with a significant political or social background. None of us here feels that it would be regarded as a topical novel, as you suggest it is.

There are also the relatively minor questions and the revisions I have suggested--the club foot, the static philosophical discussion, the name of the Moola family, the alertness of the guard, and the title.

In short, if you give us persuasive reasons for publishing in great haste, you will have to deal with these questions in great haste.

As always,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Harold". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hill P. O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, W. I.

HS:bf

July 27, 1964

Coyaba,  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew.  
JAMAICA

Dear Harold,

I have delayed answering your letter till now because I was expecting to hear from Peter du Sautey at Fabers but it looks as though their latest postal strike has created a greater bottleneck than usual in the turnabout of mail. I sent him a copy of the manuscript at the same time that I sent it to you, and he is usually very prompt with these things. Anyway, I expect Fabers to publish in England, and my guess is that they are not likely to do so before next spring, especially as this is election year there: but then it is election year for you too. This, I think, takes care of the 'topical' side of the business both for you and the English publishers. But I must confess to a small sense of depression at your statement that most American readers are ignorant of the details of the South African conflict. It reminds one of the early 1930s when most people didn't have time to be interested in the details of what went on in Germany and Italy and the small bands of anti-Nazis were regarded as queer creatures. But this pattern of ignorance is part of the human condition, not peculiarly American, except that the U.S. largely makes policy for what we call the 'free world'.

Your point about the 'lump of flesh' of Dee's club feet is well taken. I thought I had changed it so that Richard passed his feet over her deformed feet; so lump of flesh should be changed to 'deformed feet'. The question of making her what you call 'normal' is another thing again. I chose to make Dee a cripple because most of us have attitudes to cripples. For instance, you say 'make her a normal woman' which suggests that because she's a clubfoot she is not; and the Africans have this thing to an even more pronounced degree than most other people I knew. So, far from it being a bid for sympathy, it is a repudiation of the generally accepted proposition that a person with a physical deformity is somehow basically different from all the rest of us. I think there are a sufficiently vast number of people in the world with one or another sort of physical handicap for me to want to acknowledge it in one of my books and to say that she is 'intelligent and attractive' in spite of it.

Meela is a very respectable Indian surname in South Africa



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N.Y.

Cables: KNOPF NEW YORK

July 23, 1964

Dear Peter:

I have spoken to Martha Winston this morning, and obviously, she is representing you. *That answers one question.*

But I am still very much concerned as to why you consider the novel topical. We think (and the third reader agrees with us) that it will stand the test of time as an absorbing story, and that the most important thing is to publish it properly.

One reader suggests that you ought to eliminate the last complete paragraph on page 294. It reads: "But the younger guard was not so sure. To him, the coolie had seemed too smooth, too pat, too good to be true. Still..." If this guard were suspicious, would he not have noticed that Joe Moola's driver was a new man, a different driver? The short paragraph serves no real purpose anyway.

There is one further, more difficult point. We all realize the great importance of your philosophical passages. They are the very point of the book. But length is not necessarily synonymous with gravity, particularly in a novel. I think you will make your points more forcefully if you shorten some of these passages, such as the one from page 42-44. They can be made more, rather than less, pointed. Of course a dramatic conflict makes a point even better than a quiet conversation, but perhaps it is not necessary to go to such length in revision. There are one or two other passages of the kind, but this particular one is representative of the rest. Assuming that you do not insist that we publish the book hastily, perhaps you would want to look these passages over once more. If we publish the book in a normal fashion, publication date would be about nine months after we agree about these minor details. Do let me know.

PUBLISHER OF BORZOI BOOKS

Of course I hope the above makes clear that we definitely want to publish the novel. There is one other minor problem, and that is that in 1962 Harper's published a novel by Clyde Miller called THIS PASSING NIGHT. Perhaps a stronger title, for a book of this nature, would be more suitable. What do you think?

As always,

Harold Strauss

SECOND FOLD



Alfred A. Knopf Inc.  
501 Madison Avenue  
NEW YORK (22), N.Y.



Peter Brahmans, Esq.  
Cuyyaba  
Red Hill P.O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, W. I.

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FIRST FOLD

UWI LIBRARIES

# Alfred A. Knopf Incorporated

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

Cables: KNOPF NEW YORK

Phone: ~~MURRAY HILL 8-0600~~  
PLAZA 1-2600

501 Madison Avenue

NEW YORK (22), N.Y.

*Answered 27/7/64*

July 16, 1964

Dear Peter:

Two of us have read THIS PASSING NIGHT, and were pretty excited about it. But before we make a final decision, we want still another reading, which we'll have done in a few days. The reason for this is that your letter threw us off a bit by calling it a topical novel. *seem vaguely to recall* I ~~don't know what to call~~ some press reports about the sabotage trials in South Africa, but I'm afraid that most American readers are far too ignorant of the details of the racial conflict in South Africa to take this as a topical novel. We feel that it is a first rate thriller of a very superior sort, with a strong sociological and political background, as is often the fashion these days. In other words, we think it's all to the good that you have conveyed your serious ideas, which I admire very much, in the form of a thriller which may have a chance of reaching a large number of people. Before we make our final decision, we would like someone who reads a lot of thrillers to have a look. Incidentally, we no longer use the word thriller in any pejorative sense; there are a lot of distinguished novels in this category.

While we are going through the final steps, there are a few things I would like to know. First of all, if the book is not to be regarded as a topical novel here, is there any reason for an extreme rush in publishing it? Secondly, in your letter you said you were sending it to me directly to save

trials were, especially since we think of sabotage purely in an economic context. It is damned hard to ferret out the details because of the prevalence of glib clichés. American newspaper reporters and African diplomats, however well educated, are the chief offenders. For instance, it is impossible to learn from any source what is really going on in the Congo. The American press tries to report it as if it were the Democratic Party against the Republican Party. Only every once in a very great while does it leak out that, for instance, Tshombe is touring the provinces in an attempt to pacify tribal rivalries. The details are not reported because educated Africans are unwilling to admit that tribal rivalries are still a political factor; the U. N. personnel does not help; and American newspapermen would have to be quixotic indeed to try single-handed to develop a whole new frame of reference for their African coverage.

And please don't think that what I'm saying applies to Africa alone. I have a strong but completely undocumented suspicion that what is going on in Thailand is attributable to the total lack of communication between French-educated Thai leaders and intellectuals, and the great mass of the people. And one further point. The danger lies not in repeating our isolationist mistakes of the early 1930s, but in over-correcting them, so that we intervene in ignorance.

Forgive me for writing at such length, but I do think that we should understand each other on a matter of this importance.

You also misunderstand my reference to "a normal woman," but I won't debate this at length. I simply intended to refer to Dee's clubfoot as an abnormality in its physical sense. A clubfoot is, ipso facto, an abnormality, and no other implications were intended in the phrase. It seems to me that I have repeatedly read that Africans kill deformed infants--I'm referring to the more primitive Africans of course--and I suspect that your little sermon on Dee is directed at an African audience and will be lost on American readers. But no matter; it's not all

that important. We'll change the phrase "lump of flesh" to "deformed foot."  
We'll also change the name Moola to Nanda.

There are still a couple of minor points to be answered in my subsequent letter. But I shall get in touch with Martha Winston immediately, and make suitable arrangements for publication.

I hope that all this rather theoretical discussion of tangential issues does not obscure our very great enthusiasm for **THIS PASSING NIGHT** as a novel. It makes wonderful reading, and we are all very excited about it.

As always,



Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P. O.  
Saint Andrews  
JAMAICA, W. I.

HS:ab

UWI LIBRARIES



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK

July 7, 1964

Dear Peter:

I had almost given up hope of hearing from you, but it was well worth waiting, since you now are able to tell me that your manuscript is on its way to me. Naturally I look forward to reading it.

Usually one loses more than one gains when one rushes a manuscript through the press, but we'll face up to that problem when we see yours.

As always,

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P. O.  
St. Andrew  
JAMAICA, W. I.

HS:ab

Letter to Harold Strauss June 30, 1964

"Coyaba"  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew,  
Jamaica

June 30, 1964

Mr. Harold Strauss,  
Alfred A Knopf Inc.,  
501 Madison Avenue,  
New York 22, N.Y.  
U.S.A.

Dear Harold,

I can now answer your letter of last September and tell you that I have indeed completed a new manuscript. It is now being typed and I expect to airfreight it to you by the end of this week. I am sending it to you direct rather than through the agents because it is a very topical story, made more so by the recent sabotage trials in South Africa, and you may want to get it out as fast as possible - if you like it, of course.

It is called THIS PASSING NIGHT and is part suspense story and part philosophic exploration of a facet of the human situation. The suspense side is that of a man who has slipped into the country with money for the resistance movement and whose way out is blocked by discovery and so there is a manhunt; the philosophic deals with the problem of minorities, in this case the Indian minority and what it must do to earn acceptance by the Africans when it becomes their turn to exercise power. In any event, you will be able to read the story for yourself soon. It runs to about 80,000 words.

Best regards,

Yours ever

Peter Abrahams



Alfred A. Knopf Inc. 501 Madison Avenue, NEW YORK 22, N. Y.

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK

September 17, 1963

Dear Peter:

Even though we haven't been in touch for quite a while, I think of you often. One of the things I think of is that you wrote and we published *A WREATH FOR UDOMO* about five years too soon. Some of the things you said in it certainly foreshadowed things to come in Africa.

All this leads to the question of what you are writing now, and whether we shall ever have another book from you. Believe me, a new manuscript would find the warmest welcome here. In any case, it would give me a good deal of personal pleasure to hear from you.

As always,

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Coyaba  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrews, Jamaica West Indies

HS:SCW

# Alfred·A·Knopf *Incorporated*

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK

Telephone: PLAZA 1-2600

501 Madison Avenue

New York (22), N.Y.

March 20, 1963

Re: Author - Peter Abrahams

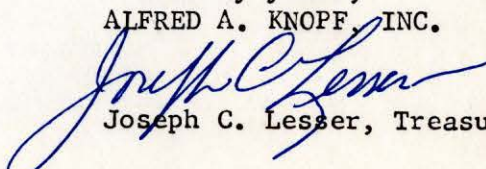
By the advice of our accountants, we have applied to the Treasury Department for permission to advance the close of our fiscal year by one month, to March 31st. This will necessitate a slight change in our contract with you. Presently we render semi-annual statements of account through the last day of April and the last day of October and mail such statements during the months of July and January following. We mail checks in payment of these statements the following September 1st and March 1st.

We now propose to render semi-annual statements of earnings through the last day of March and the last day of September and to mail such statements, together with checks in payment of the amounts due, during the months of July and January following.

In all other respects, our agreement remains. The above modification will be effective with and include the accounting we will render through March 31, 1963 for the five-month period immediately preceding that date. Thus you will actually be receiving this payment, and later payments, a little earlier than the date called for by the contract as it now stands.

So that our agreement with you shall be in perfect order, we are sending you this letter in duplicate and ask you to sign one copy as indicated below and return it to us in the enclosed stamped, addressed envelope. File the other copy, please, with your copy of our contract.

Cordially yours,  
ALFRED A. KNOFF, INC.

  
Joseph C. Lesser, Treasurer

AGREED: \_\_\_\_\_

Curtis Brown Ltd.  
575 Madison Ave.  
New York 22, N. Y.

# Alfred A. Knopf Incorporated

P U B L I S H E R O F



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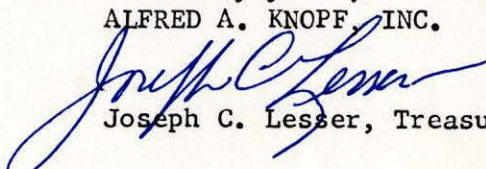
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Cordially yours,  
ALFRED A. KNOFF, INC.

  
Joseph C. Lesser, Treasurer

AGREED: \_\_\_\_\_

Curtis Brown Ltd.

575 Madison Ave.  
New York 22, N. Y.

January 13th, 1959

Mr. Harold Strauss  
501, Madison Avenue  
New York 22  
NEW YORK

Dear Harold:

I don't know if you knew George Manuel as well as Henry Nxumalo in South Africa. In any event if you don't know George Manuel he is the "Cape Coloured" version of the kind of journalist our mutual friend Henry was - a little less daring, perhaps; and he did quite consciously adjusted himself to not fighting the South African regime quite as openly and defiantly as Henry did. That is probably one reason why he is still alive today.

In any event I have just heard from him - a rare annual exchange greeting. He is or was on the Editorial staff of the Cape Times newspaper. An interesting item in his letter was the news that free freedom is now prohibited in South Africa and that he has had to send his copy to a friend in America because it is a punishable offence to possess one.

I don't know if you can or want to do anything about it. It seems rather late in the day to me but I thought that you might want to know this in any case.

Yours ever

  
Peter Abrahams

PA/bid

# Alfred · A · Knopf *Incorporated*

501 Madison Avenue



NEW YORK (22), N. Y.

December 24, 1958

Dear Peter:

Many thanks for your Christmas card. It was good not only to have that, but also the news that the book is growing, if only slowly.

And the season's greetings to you.

As always,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Harold Strauss". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
"Coyaba"  
Red Hills P.O.  
St. Andrew, Jamaica

HS: jr

Alfred A. Knopf Incorporated



501 Madison Avenue, New York 22

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April 30, 1958

• Peter Abrahams •

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*Peter Abrahams*

# Alfred·A·Knopf Incorporated

P U B L I S H E R O F



B O R Z O I B O O K S

Cables: KNOFF NEW YORK  
Phone: MURRAY HILL 8-0600

501 Madison Avenue  
NEW YORK (22), N.Y.

August 31, 1955

Dear Mr. Abrahams:

We formally accept your manuscript entitled A WREATH FOR UDOMO as the second and final option work under our agreement dated June 12, 1953.

All terms and conditions shall be exactly as stated in that agreement except as follows:

1. Corrected British proofs will be delivered to us not later than February 1, 1956.
2. The advance on A WREATH FOR UDOMO shall be \$1,500.00 to be paid to your agent, Sydney A. Sanders Literary Agency, as follows: \$750.00 on your request any time after our receipt of the duplicate of this letter countersigned by you, and \$750.00 on your request any time after our receipt of the corrected British proofs referred to above.

Yours sincerely,

for ALFRED A. KNOFF, Inc.

*Joseph C. Lesser*  
Joseph C. Lesser  
Treasurer

AGREED: \_\_\_\_\_

Peter Abrahams

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
37 Jessel Drive  
Debden, Loughton  
Essex, England

August 31, 1955

Dear Mr. Abrahams:

We formally accept your manuscript entitled A WREATH FOR UDOMO as the second and final option work under our agreement dated June 12, 1953.

All terms and conditions shall be exactly as stated in that agreement except as follows:

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Yours sincerely,

For ALFRED A. KNOPF, INC.

Joseph C. Lesser  
Treasurer

AGREED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Peter Abrahams

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
37 Jessel Drive  
Debdan, Loughton  
Essex, England



CABLES: KNOPF NEW YORK TELEPHONE: MURRAY HILL 8-0600

ALFRED · A · KNOPF INCORPORATED · 501 MADISON AVENUE · NEW YORK 22

OFFICE OF THE VICE-PRESIDENT

January 17, 1955

Dear Mr. Abrahams:

We formally accept your manuscript entitled *MINE BOY* as the first option work under our agreement dated June 13, 1953.

All terms and conditions shall be exactly as stated in that agreement except as follows:

1. *MINE BOY* hereby is substituted for *RETURN TO GOLI*, which shall not be offered to the Publisher as an option work.
2. The advance on *MINE BOY* shall be \$500.00 to be paid to your agent, Sydney A. Sanders Literary Agency, on our receipt of the duplicate of this letter countersigned by you.

Yours sincerely,

for ALFRED A. KNOPF, Inc.

Blanche W. Knopf  
Vice-President

AGREED: \_\_\_\_\_  
Peter Abrahams

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
37 Jessel Drive  
Debden, Loughton  
Essex, England

raf


time. Do you wish me to negotiate the business details through an agent, or will you do so directly (about which there should be no trouble)? Finally who is publishing it in England? And when? If you know.

There <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ a final question I would like to ask you, without putting any serious pressure on you. I wonder why you chose to make Dee a cripple. Is this merely an extra effort at a bid for sympathy? If so, it was not necessary. She is intelligent and attractive, and you characterize her very well indeed. Could you possibly at this late stage make her a normal woman?

There <sup>is</sup> ~~was~~ an incidental problem in this, <sup>although</sup> ~~and~~ this problem is not the main reason for my inquiring about Dee as a cripple. The incidental problem concerns the love-making scene. You describe Richard as passing his foot over Dee's "lump of flesh." I'm not an expert on club feet, but I think you have confused the boot a club-footed person has to wear with <sup>the</sup> club foot itself. Isn't a club foot simply a shortened and distorted foot? It would not be particularly lumpy, and might even be smaller than a normal foot. On the other hand, if it is the boot to which you refer, what a bit of awkwardness that would be! I cannot imagine a person as sensitive as Dee making love with it on.

Certainly no major problem, but I would like to have your views on it. By the way, I would also like to know if you don't think that the name "Mr. Moola" <sup>\*</sup> will strike the reader as a rather cheap pun. Did you by any chance intend this? I hope not, and in any case it would do no harm to change his name.

As always,

  
Harold Strauss

Peter Abrahams, Esq.  
Couyaba  
Red Hill P. O.  
St. Andrew  
Jamaica, W. I.

HS:bf

*\* Slang, in U.S. at least, for money.*

SYDNEY A. SANDERS LITERARY AGENCY

*Marjorie Sanders*

522 FIFTH AVENUE  
NEW YORK CITY 36

Telephone VAnDerbilt 6-4065

Cable Address:

"SANDSCON NEW YORK"

In England:

JOHN FARQUHARSON  
8 Halsey House  
Red Lion Square, London, W. C. I.

September 6, 1955

Dear Innes:

Am sending you three copies of the formal acceptance letter covering Knopf's publication of A WREATH FOR UDOMO. As you will see the terms and conditions are the same as in the agreement covering TELL FREEDOM. Will you please have Mr. Abrahams sign and return two copies to us.

Regarding the Canadian market will quote a letter from William Koshland:

"Many thanks for your letter of August 30, regarding the Canadian market. I note that Faber have requested Canada, but that they are willing to let this stand as an open market. I don't imagine that this will make for too much confusion but we will of course let our Canadian representatives know that Faber's representatives will also be handling the book. The price differential is, of course in their favor as always. It does not seem to make sense to make this Canadian business part of the formal letter of acceptance and we are letting this correspondence between us stand as covering the problem."

Am sending this letter to you in duplicate. It can be attached to Mr. Abrahams' letter of acceptance.

*cc: Peter Abrahams*

Best,

Mr. Innes Rose

JS:ts

enc.

Member of the Incorporated Society of Authors' Representatives