

5/11/71

Dear Js,

Remember the story of the Moon Cursers, those east-coast pirates whose work required the night be dark? Well, we this morning and all night, had the exceptionally bright moon that, in our Thermopane home, is like the sun. Although I've been trying hard to get more rest, this made it impossible, so I'll catch up on the balance of the accumulated mail before leaving for Washington.

First, however, I want to ask the two of you to get a book, read it and check me on what I consider possible from it. The book is now being remaindered by Marboro for \$1. It is Dorman's, "King of the Courtroom/Percy Foreman for the Defense". I'm half-way through it, aided and abetted as I have been an increased physical fatigue that in turn was augmented by one hour of mowing the grass. That crippled me for a day! I've really got to find some way of rebuilding this aging frame this summer, as I've also got to get back to writing.

The most striking thing from the book so far is that in the Ray case Foreman violated all his cardinal principles, did everything he never did, and didn't do what he always did. In fact, I have a deposition he made in the Ray civil suit which says exactly the opposite Dorman's basic tenet of Foreman's method, that he always makes the most detailed professional investigation prior to any case, including even the jury. He made none at all with Ray, one of the things that set me on edge. It would, if your copy of F-U has reached you yet, have been one of his easier cases.

This is a strange man, strange as he is sharp. One of the quirks of his character is that when he long has had no need for money, having much more than he can ~~waste~~ waste if he spends the rest of his life in that endeavor alone, he is greedy as can be about it. He'll take some cases without fee if they interest him, but for the most part he can't get enough and has, in fact during the period of his Ray representation, been so excessive about this that there is a stinging ~~stinging~~ ^{appeals} court decision against him on just this in Florida that was issued after I finished the book (Singleton case).

I find that throughout his life he has represented Mafia people. I think you will remember my hunch on this. True, in spades, including Civello and dope-importers, which fits, perfectly.

So, one of the things I should now do is research these cases. One to which Dorman draws particular attention is a Hartford case. I have no way of tapping the Hartford morgues except through the most undependable, paranoic man who works there and has been in touch with me. I'd rather not than use that means. Have you any ideas? But, if you could get this book and see if it gives you any ideas, it could be helpful to me. I expect one of my youngest fans this weekend. He can ransack the Times for me this summer, if he hasn't laid out a summer of his own work. At least, I'll know by the end of the week. But there will be places where the local morgues should have more. Practices vary from paper to paper, so I do not know what direct approaches may yield in any one case. And, I've not finished the book. I have marked these pages, though. Others have read this book, but what I suspected before beginning it seems to have escaped them, bright as one in particular is. I dare not trust them with this suspicion, for my recent experiences with that tribe have been shattering.

Meanwhile, I seem to have established the kind of rapport I hoped would be possible with my bird whose cage is not gilded. He has written of his trust to another, from whom I have learned it, and apparently the first thing he did after his recent misadventure was to sit down and pencil me his longest letter yet. There is a bit of as-yet unfathomed ellipsis, I think, but with him one can't be sure, and it includes an indefinite reference

to something he regards as presenting some kind of problem to him for the past two months, a period that exactly coincides with one you may remember for a news story describing his escapade. Among the things this tells me is that nothing he does is really secret, whether or not he thinks otherwise. That is, while the moment he may think he will do something may be unknown, that being entirely within him, the fact of any ideas he may have is not unknown. I suggest, if this is correct, that you give it a broad reading. I think the machinery is working as he does not understand.

There have been broad hints that I ought be seeing him again, but nothing really certain. Going along with this is an unusual concern for my expenditure of more money and time and energy than I have.

His timing was particularly bad because the day after the fiasco someone tried to see him with information he had been awaiting (as had I) and was denied access. The question that I wonder about immediately is will it reach me by other means? Those who developed it are among the world's least dependable and among those most likely to be interpretative in a special extremist perspective.

One of the parts of my past, really, my youth, of which I've thought several times recently is a period when I lived (literally) with FBI and DJ people in what for that period was a famous incident, the government's case against the Harlan County coal operators and their deputy/thugs. We lived first in Harlan town, then a little over 100 miles away at the seat of the trial, in London. During this time, while my function was to represent the Senate, to make our info available to the DJ, and to be their expect in duces tecum suppenas and on the facts of the case (as well as devils-advocate them), I also ran the liquor. We were in a dry county and we all drank. So, periodically, they let me have their armored Buick and I ran up to Lexington or over the Tennessee line to Jellicoe and brought back the booze. The markup of the local bootleggers was high.

During this period I also became so close a friend of a man old enough to be my great-grandfather that whenever he got to Washington he always visited me at my office, for them as now, I kept excessive hours at work. Each morning I'd meet him at his quarters at three a.m. and we'd walk in those harsh mountains until about nine. He had never been in a school except to speak, was entirely self-educated, including in the law (he had been lt-gov of W Va and was then district counsel for the UNW), and I learned, I think, much wisdom in this fine old gentleman. And I amde local friends, so true that I learned when the jury was fixed and how, which prompted me to bring my assignment there to an end. When we are again together you may be interested in how I left and its immediate consequences. Six of the things killed each other within two days, which kept the trial from being a complete waste of the taxpayers money and helped make Brian McMahon (father of the atomic-energy act) a Senator.

So, I got to know the land and its people, a people many of whom still spoke almost pure Elizabethan English and who lived by the more violent parts of the old code of the frontier. They had been pretty much locked in by their inhospitable mountains. From this knowledge and more recent observation, I am confident that a man who wanted to lose himself there would find it impossible without it being pre-arranged. That land, those mountains, are so rugged that dogs would have no trouble finding ~~an~~ man who had a long lead on them unless he had assistance, as with a car. Without such assistance, he would have almost no chances of survival if he were a man whose end were desired by anyone, less if it were desired by many.

So much for the flashback to my youth. There is little new, save that I think some of the more difficult and to this point unsuccessful approaches to the abdicators of whom I write in F-U show promise. In fact, had I not had the terrible need of trying to frustrate (amicably) a stupidity of the CTIA and its director above all, I'd have had a appointment with one of them right before I left for NYC, when he was in DC. But the

disaster that would have followed any use, esp. then and by Doggs, of that incompetent and frighteningly inaccurate and doctrinally wrong theft of my idea was so great I had to be unselfish, first in an attempt to abort it on as friendly a basis as possible and then by direct communication. It is aborted, the prospects of our achieving anything in that direction, never too good, now, I think lost, and I missed my appointment, arranged by a black Congressman. Worse, my professionally-incompetent publishers have returned to me only that part of my material this congressman wanted that I already had, and not a single page of the originals he wanted and desired to use! So, not having discovered this until last night, when I packed the bag for this morning, I again go empty-handed. To this moment, they have not done a single thing right, a rather exceptional record. However, and despite the total suppression by the major media, we seem to be making slight progress. I did a show with a youth-oriented man I'd known from three years ago in a different city- he was then turned-off conservative and was radicalized by Chicago- and it went well. My new friends are making time with some of the blacks. In fact, I now have an award from a group of black intellectuals, professionals, writers, artists, etc., for my investigations and writing. Considering that for two years I was never able to get them to in any way even respond on this, that marks some advance. I think the radicals have come to understand two things: that Kigs was their brother and that he had shifted in their direction. I hope this can go forward. I do expect that in time a sufficient number of them will join me, publicly and out loud. I think you can understand the size of this endeavor and the basic changes it will require. But one tries.

The press conference at which the award was made was to have been attended by some of the Establishment press. I think the absence of several, like the Times and Newsday, is attributable to the kind of exigencies you know so well, not anything sinister. However, the NY correspondent of the London Telegraph, who was there, filed a long story on the London end. It should have been a sensation. It was killed on the desk. The rep of the city-owned station had his story killed, too, later telling a friend it must have been too hot. But the conservative Amsterdam News, largest ~~paper~~ black paper in NYC, gave it p. 1, col. 1, above fold. Ebony and Jet and Essence covered. Sepia has been in touch since. The Brazilian Chateaubriand papers covered (their correspondent wants to give a party for me, would have given one Friday had I been able to be there, and gave it anyway when I couldn't, having to be in fed, court in Balt. then). And CBC taped almost an hour in their studios in NYC. I was interviewed by the National Enquirer, which then changed format to a first-person story, written for me and not too bad (and I get paid). It was while I was out to lunch with the articles editor that the news of Ray's attempted break reached his desk. The problems have to do with no attention and the depressing effect this has on shelf-space. The book can disappear before it can take off. One of the disturbing signs is that not one of the old media friends phoned for any comment on this break, a bad sign. And not one of the old friends has done anything with this book. Not one like Eason, has responded to repeated inquiries, written (for which I've no time) and phone. I do miss Dolan, who would have done something and gotten it started out there.

I have an approach out on AGENT OSWALD, which is not quite topical and shows signs of staying that way, and one I have doubt about because of its character and how it might make me look, THE MARDI GRAS SOLUTIONS TO POLITICAL ASSASSINATIONS. It is I would ridicule the opportunists and paranooids, all first-erson stuff, the sycophants, and try to restore our credibility by casting them out. It would be difficult for me to do this as lightly as it should be done, but with good editing it could be an entertaining as well as an informative work. If either is accepted, and the odds are against it, it would be a package deal. I've been working on two other commercial things having no relevance to this work, but in themselves attractive. In one I've provided five hours of taped interviews with a woman with an exceptional love story (white/black) blended with unusually tragic events, and may represent another Citizen Kane. If none blossom, I may do AGENT OSWALD on prospects alone, and at least get it off my back. The first deep-red traces of sun appear between two white pines and over a leafing Russian live, telling me I must get to other things.

Best,