

2/17-As you will notice, rightly or wrongly, for the first time I have tackled Stoner head on and if with less vigor and point than I would have liked, with enough to make that crazy bastard crazy enough. He is relatively strong near here, his closest cell perhaps 20 miles or less, unless there is a local one of which I have no knowledge, and that is not unlikely. He is strong in Baltimore, an hour away. I said less than I might in the enclosed letter to Larry, who is unknown to you but a good fellow and a fine young reporter who enticed Foreman for me to where Foreman just blurted out a prediction that Ray would not live. Fits, huh? There is ample reason to suspect the involvement of Stoner's people in the killing, and to his knowledge. There is no rational explanation of his failure to do the simple things he was to have done for James outside this context or wanting to keep him in jail. His legal work was bad, and he never ever does any real preparation. Even Jerry says he doesn't like to work and never investigates. I am writing this because you may see the nazard in the letters I have written and be concerned. I am aware of them, was when I did it, am not worried, and I threw a few things into the letter to Jerry that he will read as preparation for any eventuality. My references to his presence at the jail are more pointed than they seem. He was there right before James' first attempt. We discussed those

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hills. Now the warden is satisfied James expected someone outside. At least I heard this early yesterday a.m. from Chicago. I think it may have been UPI copy. Larry can get that for me and will send me both A wires, so if you haven't already, don't bother....And please don't worry. Besides, as I quote JFK in the beginning of a chapter of PM, "A man does as he must....and that is the basis of all human morality."... It is and has been snowing here, Ho. boy, and it was especially beautiful on the strangely twisted branches of the bare, mature dogwoods, where the wet white is piled for up to 2". It is warm enough so that if it doesn't turn to rain, traffic will cleanse the roads by a.m....The CDN National Desk man who was here apparently was not only thoroughly impressed but has been telling that to the home office and battling them for more time so he can do more. This is all confidential. When I detected it I told him mine is a cursed name in publishing, but my stuff stacks and when given the chance sells, that what the syndicate would pay me for my stuff that he longer for wouldn't pay for the fare it required to collect. I suggested to him that he suggest to them a joint book, joint sharing of all right, them to have subsidiary rights. He said he is a slow writer and enjoys his free time. Natch. So, I've suggested it to Larry, who likes the idea, if his people are impres-

sed with what Gurenberg turns in, Larry to come here, and in two weeks we have a written and edited book. As Larry did when he was here and saw what I have, ~~XXX~~ Gurenberg feels there is enough to break the case. My terms were enough attention to be insurance and enough \$\$\$ to make it worthwhile. Obviously, that can't come from syndication to 100 or so papers. But at least I have two people on the same beam with me, in itself a rarity....

How strange that NBC, in its own name, did a first-rate job on China and the Yugo's did it like they are the ghost of Khrushchev. There is another tonight, and I may take it in. Don't remember what. But here, enormous attention on TV. What special stuff the Post has carried, other than rehash of what you know, I'm sending. They had more than a quarter of a page of obit on Snow, also extremely rare for them. His death also got heavy radio and TV news play. By all the superficial measurements here, where there is least desire (or should be) for a hollowness, it is being like no less big a thang than Tricky-Dirty wants it treated. Best, HW