

March 15, 1959

Maura D. Wilck Literary Agency,
14647 Dickens Street,
Sherman Oaks, Calif.

Dear Mrs. Elliott:

I have been expecting to hear from you daily as to what is next to be done to the College Life material, Sorority Row that was sent Feb. 16.

It seems that if it is unsatisfactory, there is nothing to be gained by keeping it and letting it gather dust. And whether it is possible to redo it into the kind of a namby-pamby "Little Colonel" story to suit some publisher's taste, I do not know. I know only what my own extensive research and that of my collaborator into college life has shown, and that extends to the University of California at Los Angeles, which my own brother attended and which later friends attended. It also includes U.S.C. and various sorority girls there who I have been associated with in my profession. It does not say that everyone in the universities come out that way, but the evidence is there.

I expect to be conferring with my collaborator by this weekend and should have useful information by that time to guide both of us. Of course we will be agreeable to a partial re-do of the manuscript, but I'm afraid it will have to be put aside for the time being if a complete change of pace is desired. Neither of us are qualified or competent to write to "specifications." We write as we see things and we are trained to see and observe things. Our career is not writing by direction of publishers to fill certain needs. If it falls short, it is just because we are not capable of producing what is wanted.

As for The Lonely Road, it is coming along on schedule and should be in the mail by the middle of this week.

Perhaps you do not realize it, but since the first of January there has been complete re-dos on both manuscripts. Not only was the original manuscript broken down, but much of it was eliminated and much other material was added and it was completely revised and rewritten into two manuscripts. We then are "fresh" manuscripts. That would have been impossible for anyone in that period of time, 130,000 words in two and one half months or less.

We will do the best we can according to your advise and desires, and upon hearing from you and upon conferring with the collaborator later this week, I shall be able to tell you what can be done. There's no use tackling the impossible. We are not perfectionists, nor do we intend to waste month after month getting no where.

I am still wondering if we didn't set our sights too high in embarking upon these projects? But I can tell more about that when I receive your promised commentary on the manuscript.

The completed manuscript, as noted, will be provided you for The Lonely Road in the same length of time it has taken you to evaluate Sorority Row. That is why I mention that if it does not have possibilities, there is no use in retaining it.

The return postage is guaranteed for its shipment. Also, I think we should head directly for one kind of a market or another. Television is not our field. It is profitable for writers, sure, but we are not television writers. Whether that comes in time or not depends upon many things.

Again, sincerely believe I appreciate your help in this matter and that the time you have spent will not go without reward. Please give me an estimate of the time you have spent on this "dead" manuscript so I can make provisions for compensating you.

Sincerely

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