

May 5, 1966

Dear Roger:

By my private rules, writing a letter for somebody is the same as writing to him and he loses his place in the notation. The letter went off to Chicago (or wherever it was) by return mail, and I hope to hear shortly that you have been admitted with highest distinction.

Your last letter spoke of a literary evening in the K-room. It sounds ghastly. I approve without reserve of Jane Lewis as a poet, and I am glad to learn that she was willing to read in public. But good god The Waste Land, Mencken, bass-and-stopwatch. All the things that don't need doing. You speak also of two protest rallies but you aren't clear about what is being protested. There must have been some incredible bungling in the Kam's raid if they got no convictions. I dare say, however, that police inefficiency was not the cause of the rallies. I suspect also that it wasn't discontent with foreign policy.

I have yet to meet an English person who says a harsh word to me personally about Viet Nam, but we often hear in the theater echoes of anti-Americanism. The downfall of an American character is applauded. American mispronunciations are always good for a laugh--how do you pronounce Balmoral after all? Stereotyped American females get their just rewards--losing their stereotyped American males to stereotyped European ladies. This last is from the Noel Coward plays, which ~~is~~ <sup>are</sup> ghastly. The word seems to have gone out, however, that NO is so sick that a bad review would kill him--pure fantasy on my part.

The less said about my own reviews the better. The best that can be said of them is that it was hard to take them seriously. One lady objected to my having published in KENYON and having had a Guggenheim. Another was furious because the publisher suggested a similarity to WHO'S AFRAID OF VIRGINIA W

The only reviewer who liked the book nominated the title as the silliest of the year. He may be right. I find I can't get it out myself when I'm asked.

There is absolutely nothing new on the publishing front. The novel is going around in New York and London. The two stories I did are going around in New York. I have just taken a play to my agent here and have two one act plays on my desk to take him next week. I have also done a couple of poems, so I have the feeling that I have been quietly active on a great many fronts. My New York agent speaks of a Curley underground, but at the moment it seems to be very far under indeed.

I hope you have been able to convince the draft board that you are a bona fide student etc, and I wouldn't mind in the least hearing a concrete detail or two about the department. Nobody has much to say. Perhaps it is all too complicated to be gone into. However, a trained reporter should--

Take care of yourself.