

Milano, october 31st, 1950

My dear Mister Papa,

just now I achieved the reading of 'Across the river and into the trees' with the emotion you may imagine and with the admiration you already know. Needless to say that you can't expect from me a review, since I'm not a critic; however I wish to tell you some impressions of mine, having nothing to do with my personal feelings, but being expressed with the utmost serenity.

First of all I wish to tell you that your Venice is even more beautiful than your Milan, more lively, more convincing. Besides, the Colonel and Renata are - if possibile - even more veritable than Henry and Catherine. This is how I'm seeing and feeling these characters of yours.

I read many reviews, appeared here and abroad, and I see that the opinion are quite different ones: this is of course inevitable by an Author of your standing. As for me, I agree with Newsweek and John O'Hara, and with me sided also the whole staff of EPOCA, charging me to convey to you - as their old friend - the warmest regards.

Please find enclosed and examine some reviews appeared in the most important papers over here. After having read them you will see that now it is useless to wait two years, as foreseen. The scandal exists already: Pacciardi, Brusadelli, the Dannunzians are already advised. We might as well publish the book at once, that is as soon as possible, say within 1951. (Nanda's translation is not yet achieved). Meanwhile I could start the serialization in EPOCA: do you agree upon it?

If so, then have the kindness as to grant this request of mine; I would like to publish a few pages of yours when starting the serialization. But I would not like them to be meant as an answer to the reviews appeared in the papers over here: in my opinion you ought simply to say why and how you wrote this novel, how and by what sufferings it grew in your mind, making clear a sole point: denying that you wrote it for fear of dying from your eye-disease and stating that you did it for far deeper reasons.

If you agree, then have the kindness as to forward me about ten pictures of your life in Cuba: I'll use them for a most effective launching of the book.

You know the deep affection, admiration and humility with which I'm following your marvellous activity, and how I have at heart that your works may be comprehended and loved in this Country which is, to some extent, also your Country. If you can, give me therefore a helping hand by granting my request. Also from the editorial point of view I think that my proposal is quite acceptable, since it represents a really splendid launching base.

I have to convey to you the warmest regards from all of us - in particular loves from Virginia to Mary - and am, with the feeling of my best friendship

affectionately Yours

Alberto

Mr. ERNEST HEMINGWAY

FINCA VIGIA

SAN FRANCISCO DE PAOLA (Cuba)

Mondadori Arnoldo
e Alberto Mondadori