

Charlotteville
June 11, 1978

Dear Red,

It was wonderful to hear from you and to have news of you and yours. Eleanor and I keep saying that one of our chief justifications for attending that Big Meeting in New York is that it will give us a chance to see you and Eleanor. We always say that. I don't know why we can't learn that it is impossible to get in a reasonable visit with anyone on that occasion. And this time we took along six people from Charlottesville, including Jim McPherson and his wife. We had a good time but we wish we could have seen you all and could have got you for lunch the next day.

By the way, Jim McPherson and I have become good friends since he came here to teach. Other members of the Department were worried about how

he and I would get along. Now he and I are probably the two closest friends in the place. We spend hours talking about the South. We grew up in the same world but with different points of view. (He is from Savannah.) We are planning to make a trip to Memphis together this fall and explore that world with my old friend Tom White, who is a jazz musician, playing mostly in Black music spots, but who is also a doctor, practicing mostly among the poor and down-trodden. (Fortunately, he inherited a lot of money.) Anyway, Jim's uncles were Pullman porters and dining car waiters. He has some good short stories about it, and there is nothing he doesn't know about that world. He and I intend to write a play together, of course using our common subject and setting.

How I do wish we could come to see you and Eleanor this summer. But I am writing away on a long story, as usual, and dare not do anything so frivolous as see my desert friends. After

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the Fourth, will transfer activities to Sewanee, where I have my summer study all set up and waiting for me. It will hardly constitute a change.

But still it will be a different atmosphere and one I am more congenial with. In fact, we had hoped to get out there in time for Jimmy's and Lou's anniversary, but my writing has ^{been} going too well to risk an interruption at this point. Moreover, this is the time of year when our children come home for visits, and we do miss having them around.

Ratie, who runs a dairy farm with my son-out-law, is deep in a novel she has been writing for some time.

Peter is in school in Maryland and goes to Iowa for the writing workshop in the fall. He writes poetry that Eleanor understands. They both are in good health and good spirits and are very affectionate with the old folks. I also have a daughter-out-law.

Sam Mount lives just up the road and is about to move even closer to us. He is quite

4/ unhop py about having to make the move. I sincerely wish that I could have bought the house he was in and kept him from being disturbed. We are going to try to get him to stay in our place while we are in Sewanee and while the move is being made. But since we have no downstairs bed room, I think it won't be possible. - He is the delight of my students, several of whom have acted as his paid companion and chauffeur.

I was glad to have your description of your place in Vermont, with the hide-aways for different writers in the family. As my mother used to say, now I can visualize you there. I do wish we could occupy the guest cabin. Maybe some day I will give up writing and enjoy other aspects of the good life. Meanwhile, this summer I mean to take a day off and go to see your \$100,000 stone barn, which I believe will not be far from us at Sewanee.

I enclose something that ^{is} intended to press for a reprint permission. I am not filling in the price. Would you do so? - whatever is convenient in your budget.
Love to Eleanor and yourself from both of us
Peter