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KILEY

October 31st.

My Dear Nat,

It was nice to get your note, and the cherished copy of your paper, which made good reading. When I dig out my South African cheque book I will send you a subscription.

Thematically, your first issue seemed to me to ~~hover~~ hover rather closely around the miseries of being black in South Africa, and more specifically in Johannesburg, and while I think Can Themba's documentation on this way of life (for example) will easily stand up to Pepys for sheer interest and readability, I am looking forward to a broadening-out from this point. These wordy and unlooked-for efforts at criticism are a punishment which your friends will from time to time insist on visiting upon you, not so much because they want to help as because they want to interfere.

Since I came back from the Congo (in May) I have been working on a novel. As you may know, I spent a year or so coming into contact (shall I say) with the underworld of Johannesburg - the European underworld, anyway. When I got to Katanga and found what a crazy little world President Tshombe was running there, I couldn't help thinking about how all the gangsters I used to know in Johannesburg would come running to take it all over for themselves if they ever found out what a lovely racket they were missing out on. So that is the story - I move them all up there and let them take over, or try to anyway.

So far, I have introduced the main characters and got the plot under way, and as that much is now done and has been typed up ready for the (potential) publisher in the States, it occurs to me that you might like to look at it with a view to running an extract in The Classic? Let me know if you want to see it and I will send along the whole bit (about six chapters) so that you can pull out what you want. Bestest Dennis

KILLY.

November 6, 63

Dear Dennis,

Very nice of you to take so much interest in The Classic. I think we shall for a very long time need criticism if we are to survive and even become a paper of any worth. I agree with you about our contributors tending to fill the paper with their miseries. They will have to regard themselves as writers first and black underdogs later.

About your novel. Yes, by all means, send the stuff down and let us see it. I am very keen on extracts like that. Besides, the 2nd issue is now done with. If printers were just a little less unreliable, our subscribers would have received the paper today. However, I believe we shall be mailing the copies at the end of this week.

What about other writing folk in those parts? Please give them my address if you should come across any. We have to produce the 3rd issue within two months this time.

You say you spent some time in the Congo. Aren't there any chaps writing there? We have someone here who translates from French. It would be nice to get some Congolese material.

If officialdom favours me with a passport I may appear in those parts driving a jeep and wearing a bush jacket as the first black tourist, neo-colonialist, imperialist journalist.

I shall be looking forward to your stuff.

God bless you.

Mat

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