



WILLIAM
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105 MADII

Wolf
— please call Pat
Goldbitz tomorrow
on (215) 862 0427

Bugs.

September 27, 1989

Dear Ke

Well -- the fact that there was no new archbishop of Canterbury until 1189 does wipe out your political background and motivation. Until I hit that fact in your fax I refuted your claim that you'd have to write another book if you placed it beyond Pillars time frame.

- Because, 1) Your main story about Matthew and Judith need not change.
- 2) William is better left dead and you can easily substitute another baron to carry out his part.
- 3) Philip may be too old for an identity crisis but that's not the same as falling in love.
- 4) Waleran could slither back to power some way. Even a humble monk could keep some connections and perhaps he could do a favor for Henry II who was always putting down rebellions in France, Scotland, etc.

Thomas was harder and I'd hate to lose that lovely story. Do you think you could slip in a younger son of Aliena and Jack? Do you think readers would hare back to Pillars and find he wasn't there? Would they really care if they did? I hate to suggest artistic license to you -- I'll never forget the photograph of that mountain which wasn't where it should be! But a younger son who could play Tommy's role verbatim is such an easy solution. Tommy's too wonderful to give up and too much part of the story.

But what to do about Waleran. Without Canterbury to vie for what other prize would he covet? What could give him as much power as the bishopric? How about a Grey Eminence to King Henry -- something like Philip's brother Francis was to the Earl of Glouchester? I don't know how Waleran could manage this, but I can see that he would want to stage the "miracle" (and then hide the evidence) to show that God had forgiven him his past transgressions and that he still had spiritual power to sway the masses.

Now it may be that none of this can work, too contrived, artificial, overwrought, etc, etc. So for a minute look at a whola other set of characters.



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105 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10018

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Jonathan -- he is now running the priory, has assumed the mantle of his spiritual father who has more or less retired into the background. He could play Philip's role pretty much as you've written it in the outline, love affair with the mother abbess and all.

Instead of Waleran, the new villain could be one of Waleran's young clergy henchmen who hovered about him (Dean Baldwin?). He could play Waleran's role but the motive needn't be so urgent as Waleran's. With the new set of people you may not even need a Waleran but you still need an evil priest to play out the "miracle," murder, and so on.

William's role could be assumed by another baron, but Jonathan remembers William, and Philip can give him points on how to deal with the new villain by remembering William too.

The new Tommy could be Jack's grandson instead of his son.

Matthew's and Judith's story could be exactly the same.

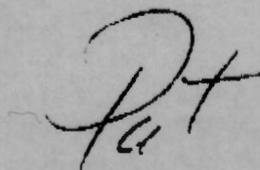
Your readers would have the happy experience of learning what happened to the people of Pillars afterwards, just what Al M. and Jill wanted to see.

You don't seriously diminish your suspense by having villains whose fates we already know. With brand-new villains anything can happen!

You don't have to use tricks, box yourself into one-day action. You can take it wherever you want.

What do you think?

Love,



P.S. I talked to Al Zuckerman about this. He likes it.

*P.S. Pillars continues to sell
splendidly.*