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105 MADISON AVENUE, NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10016

February 27, 1989

Dear Ross,

Feeding into the fax machine are the pages I noted, incredibly few for such a massive ms. I've worked on the second draft, not the one you recently sent, so some of my points may be moot.

The pages with only a circled phrase means I think these are anachronisms.

The politics which so puzzled me are absolutely clear. You accomplished that beautifully, through the interplay of the characters rather than background.

You have Ragan whine less about family honor and allow her cunning, sly and very clever character to come through. She's more interesting this way.

I like very much what you did with William and Waleran in the confessional, but object strongly to a characteristic you gave Waleran late in the book.

William is still the blackest of villains but maybe because the politics are clearer his actions now fit a pattern and a purpose, nefarious as it is. I have a suggestion about William to which you probably won't agree, but I thought I'd make a last stab.

There are a couple of paragraphs I'd like you to cut and one I think is better earlier.

There are less fights between Alfred and Jack and that's good. Also you show that Jack can be a devilish tease and often gets what he asks for.

This time around William's obsession with Aliena can be seen as much from frustrated desire as from savage revenge. And thanks for the death scene -- it was quite satisfying!

There were a couple of places where I still had some confusion about time.

You made more of the outlaw army, defined Richard more sharply, clarified King Henry. All the changes in the last section particularly, illuminate the complicated plot, which now proceeds with ease.

You imbued the whole tale with the building of a cathedral in a passionate and awesome way which is truly unique and truly unforgettable and then closed the circle.

You outdid yourself -- and everybody else too. ALLEGIANCE is magnificent.

Love,

P.S. In looking over my notes, most of them are congratulatory!

P.S.S. Pat's signature is forged because she had to run off to Tully Plessner's market research thingding.

jh