

MACMILLAN LONDON

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Ken Follett
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Dear Ken

First of all, thanks for the lovely champagne - the perfect way to launch the Clipper.

As you know, the outline for ALL THE PROUD AND MIGHTY has been received very enthusiastically here by everyone who's read it - ie at least eight of us. That's not to say I have no comments or suggestions, but the general feel and scope and idea of the novel really excites us. Your readers are now quite used to the idea of your writing a big historical novel, and to my mind this combines some of the best elements of THE PILLARS OF THE EARTH and NIGHT OVER WATER: the group of characters with different motives locking together (of NIGHT OVER WATER) with the greater scope you employed so well in PILLARS. I agree you might find it constricting to cover all the elements in 150,000 words.

I like the four point of view characters. The only one I'm slightly uncomfortable with is Augusta - is she too obviously a monster and therefore one-dimensional? She is magnificent and I wouldn't want to change her too much, but should she be even more cunning, showing a charming exterior when she wants to, hiding her nastiness and manipulative behaviour from Hugh and the reader at first. Her true character reveals itself gradually as the story unfolds.

Overall, I think the women characters need more attention than the men, though I'd like you to bring Hugh a little more to the forefront - he shares 'heroship' with Miller, but at the moment Miller is stronger. Maisie, Nora and Emily are not quite consistent in my view, and I've suggested a fairly radical change to Nora. You'll find all this in the notes attached.

/cont...

M

Sorry I can't come up with any more criticisms Ken! I promise to do better if I'm lucky enough to see the first draft. I do hope this will be the case. We all love ALL THE PROUD AND MIGHTY and we relish the prospect of publishing it.

Hope the US trip goes splendidly.

My very best wishes

Jane

ALL THE PROUD AND MIGHTY (Queries to Outline)

| Page | Line | Comment |
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| 11 | 10 | Does Sidney have to be ugly? I'd prefer him to be imposing, swarthy, piratical - but not actually ugly. |
| 11 | 9 up | Lord Nicholas Peckham would be addressed as the Earl of Peckham I think. |
| 24 | 1 | Maisie would no longer be a 'sexy working-class woman' at this stage in the narrative. She's clever, resourceful and by now a great classical actress. She wouldn't be out of place in these surroundings in her manner or mode of speech - but her vivid, sexy beauty might make other guests look a little pallid. Incidentally, who would have invited her to the wedding? |
| 2 | 9 | I don't see Hugh as the 'semi-outsider'. He's his own man certainly, but he's very much part of these surroundings, and close to Sidney who's the host. |
| 8 | 2 up | See comments above about Augusta. I'm not sure that her painful condescension towards Hugh should be too obvious at this stage. After all, the more she hides her true nature, the more she can use people. |
| 10 | 4 | Do Hugh and Solly form some sort of bond here, or is Solly too far gone for conversation? |
| 10 | bottom | Why do most of the Pilasters, who are anti-semitic, have biblical names? Daniel, Joseph, Joel. Also the similarity of some names could cause confusion, particularly when Joseph (Joey) is added later. |
| 11 | 6 | Here I think Augusta is as she should be: she gets exactly what she wants through subtle manipulation of people who are probably less intelligent than she is. |
| 12 | Para 3 | This behaviour seems too submissive for Maisie. Also, Hugh is our hero. Is a porno novel a bit tacky for him? If you keep it, perhaps you'll need to justify it by showing Hugh to be passionate but sexually innocent and unconfident at this stage. |
| 13 | 6 up | Don't understand what you mean by the line 'Hugh begins... their misery.' Surely he's too sensible and strong-willed for such thoughts? His embarrassment will come from |

| Page | Line | Comment |
|------|--------|---|
| | | the fact that he has good manners and doesn't know how to tell Rachel he doesn't fancy her. Luckily she puts him out of his misery. |
| 14 | 1 | I assume Aunt Amanda will have been introduced by name earlier in the novel proper? My first reaction was 'who is she?' |
| 14 | Para 3 | Yes, but let's introduce sexual tension between Hugh and Maisie from their first meeting. He can discover her in his room going through his things, but they don't actually touch each other until now. <u>QW</u> . |
| 16 | Top | Would a servant even <u>try</u> to take an employer to court for rape? Wouldn't dare, and who'd pay the fees? Was rape an indictable offence in those days? |
| 16 | 6 | Tearfulness, submissiveness are not part of Maisie's character as I see it. She'd agree proudly with her head held high, not tearfully I think. |
| 16 | 12 | Crime punishable by imprisonment? See query above. |
| 18 | 11 | The idea of Maisie going from music hall to Shakespeare in one jump is hard to take, or am I imposing modern standards here? But what of voice training etc? A Glasgow accent is one of the strongest and hardest to shift. |
| 18 | | Maisie's too intelligent not to have realised she's pregnant before now. She'll have missed at least two periods before putting on noticeable weight. |
| 18 | Bottom | If Sammler is as physically repulsive as you describe him on p 10, she won't feel nothing; she'll feel disgust. Make him a bit less repulsive perhaps? |
| 19 | 9 | How much would Augusta know about Sidney Miller at this stage? Needs setting up. |
| 19 | 13 | him, not his |
| 20 | 7 | Is 'Pa' OK? American? Did the Victorians use it? |
| 21 | 12 | Surprised |
| 22 | 14 | Miller, if not Joseph, would see the enormous risk here. Having Edward come a cropper is |

| Page | Line | Comment |
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| | | not enough of a reason to put a bank in jeopardy (when they could <u>all</u> come croppers). Shouldn't Joseph overrule Miller in a furious row? Wouldn't Augusta get her scheming hands onto this one too, and manipulate Joseph? |
| 23 | Bottom | How important is the Pilasters' Methodism? Should you make more of it? I have a hazy recollection that religion and the Barings went hand in hand. |
| 24 | 4 | This Pilaster/Greenbourne antagonism will need to be made more of I think if we are to believe that royalty has become involved. Edward's snubbing of Solly is not sufficient motive. |
| 24 | 5 up | Will Hugh continue to try to see Maisie? Without success? Hope so. |
| 25 | 7 | I think the reader must be made aware of Miller's disapproval and worry over the bonds issue. But he is the outsider - one Miller against all the Pilasters. |
| 25 | Bottom | Augusta <u>and</u> Edward's downfall of course, and Miller has even more motive for wanting this since he has a strong premonition of disaster re: Granada. |
| 26 | | In order that we <u>care</u> about the Greenbournes' ex <u>clusion</u> , I think we need to see more of them. Might Hugh and Solly become good friends? Perhaps Solly could take a shine to Pearl? |
| 27 | 3 up | Hugh and Nora's marriage needs thought. Hugh is too smart not to have noticed that she is selfish and mean etc. But does she need to be? Wouldn't it be more poignant to make her rather nice, but she can't win Hugh's love whatever she does because he loves Maisie? Also, if she were nice, we could understand why Hugh picked her in the first place. |
| 29 | 5 | Is the affair between Rachel and Miller necessary? Doesn't seem particularly in Miller's character. |
| 29 | 14 | Everything points to Edward being a closet homosexual (dominant mother, impotence etc) not just a kinky hetero. Bisexual perhaps? |
| 29 | 6 up | Emily was described as the 'shy pleasant daughter of a Methodist vicar' <u>and</u> we're |

| Page | Line | Comment |
|------|--------|--|
| | | talking about the Victorian age. Hard to believe that she would submit cheerily to sado-masochistic sex, unless you pitch her character differently. Strikes me she's a pretty spirited lass! |
| 31 | 14 | Won't Edward and Joey have to meet at this stage? |
| 31 | 16 | Can Edward withdraw this money if a trust has been set up, even if he's controlling the trust? |
| 31 | 4 up | 'Ghastly Nora'. See my comments above. She doesn't have to be ghastly for them to be miserable: he's full of guilt; her love for him is not returned. |
| 31 | Bottom | Do you think we need the Hugh/Florence affair? |
| 32 | Top | Do Miller and Hugh know about this take-over? |
| 32 | 14 | Won't you need to show us this Maisie/Joey relationship as it builds? |
| 33 | 5 | Don't think you've mentioned suicide in relation to Emily before, so why 'once again'? Shouldn't it be Emily, not the widower, who contemplates murder (see p 35, line 22). |
| 33 | 9 | You'll have introduced Elizabeth Miller earlier and shown us snatches of her growing up, I trust? |
| 35 | 3 | How did the murdered girl's father discover the identity of the murderer so quickly? |
| 36 | 2 | <u>Four</u> children from a loveless marriage? Two would seem more reasonable. If you accept my suggestion to change Nora's character, Hugh would make love to her occasionally out of kindness? |
| 36 | 6 up | Poor old Elizabeth and Nick had a rotten wedding day! Did you pass over that too fleetingly? |
| 36 | 2 up | Edward's funeral? He was shot at the wedding several weeks, even months, before. |
| 37 | Top | Suggest Nora dies giving birth to a third child? Perhaps she was always a frail woman? |

| Page | Line | Comment |
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| 37 | 4 up | Pilasters Ltd: did they have limited companies then? |
| 38 | 3 | Pilasters <u>Ltd</u> now Pilasters <u>Inc.</u> |
| 38 | | Good ending - I like it. |

Jare