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16th January 1992

Ken Follett
92 Cheyne Walk
LONDON
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Dear Ken

RE: ALL THE PROUD AND MIGHTY

I very much like the shape of the new outline and in the main think it much stronger than the first draft, but I have to say that there were certain good things in the first draft that I rather miss here:

- 1) The set piece opening and ending, both of which were colourful, dramatic and vivid.
- 2) Sidney Miller, and the greater opportunity he gave for the change of scene to Boston. I hope we'll be allowed to follow Hugh there briefly and watch him in action.
- 3) Hugh's family. There was too much of them before, but they are totally shadowy here, and I'd like a bit more of him as the responsible son and elder brother. It increases his stature. (See my comments about his sister Rose on the attached list, P 22 of outline.)
- 4) Maisie - I know Al wanted her actress career dropped, but I think she's become a trifle dull. She was more independent in the first draft. She shows great spirit in leaving home, joining a circus. Then her ambition dwindles to only wanting to be a rich man's mistress or wife. She's a brilliant horsewoman. What happens to that? The Foundling Hospital's a good idea, but how about introducing Maisie's interest in it earlier, while Solly's still alive? It could be an interesting source of tension between them, Maisie wanting to do something for herself, and strengthen her character and independence.
- 5) Maisie and Hugh seemed sexier in the first draft. I liked Al's idea that Maisie could be carrying Hugh's child, not Edward's or she's not sure, and later discovers that Edward's sterile so he must be Hugh's. The sexual bond/longing needs to run throughout the novel, always baulked by something. If they don't become lovers again after Solly's death, I think we need a convincing reason why not. Which brings me on to:

/cont...

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- 6) Dolly/Nora. Dolly takes on Nora's role as well as her 'uncouth' role from draft one. I suggested that you recast Nora in my comments on the first draft, and I still think Hugh's wife should be a good woman and a bit of a tragic figure. Suppose Dolly desperately loves Hugh and he can't return her love (because of Maisie)? Maisie takes the uncouth Dolly under her wing and turns her into a lady. They become friends. This gives Hugh/Maisie a terrible dilemma after Solly dies. What keeps them apart is the fact that they both feel shits two-timing Dolly. Nobody dies of natural causes in the novel. Instead of Dolly turning into a bit of a monster, and disappearing into thin air after the bank's collapse, why not have her die in childbirth or of consumption? If her health is weak, Hugh's guilt about her is all the greater and provides a nice conflict in the Hugh/Maisie relationship, keeping them frustrated and out of each other's arms until the end.

Apart from the above, I'm attaching a list of queries raised by the outline. Some of them are small and hardly worth raising at this point, but others are pretty fundamental. I'm sure that many of my questions about characters' behaviour will be answered as you build them in the novel's first draft, but I do think we need a more resonant ending, that justice must be seen to be done regarding the murderous Micky, and that there should be more passion and conflict bubbling under the surface of Maisie/Hugh's relationship.

When do you think you'll finish the first draft?

That was an excellent piece in the Independent on Sunday I thought. Congratulations to you both, and all the best,

Yours



Jane Wood
Editorial Director

PS Written before we spoke yesterday.
Do call if you want to talk it through.

ALL THE PROUD AND MIGHTY - Queries from Outline

Page	Line	Comment
2		Fair enough, but Granada was a former Kingdom of Spain. Don't you think it might be safer to invent the name of the S. American republic?
3	bottom	Did Edward intend to murder, or was it simply a joke that got out of control? I feel it should be the latter, through Edward's sadistic streak, first revealed here.
4	10 up	You say <u>seems</u> a dilemma. Surely it <u>is</u> a dilemma, an appalling one at that?
4	6 up	Surely a matron or maid should pack Hugh's trunk, not his mother?
5	10	Augusta and Hugh's parents are not close. How and in what circumstances (a visit?) would Hugh's mother impart this shocking information to Augusta? It seems odd to me that 1) Hugh would tell his mother unless circumstances force him to blurt it out impulsively and 2) that Hugh's mother would rush round to Augusta the same day. Does Hugh's family live in London too?
5	4 up	This is Victorian England. Micky's behaviour seems too outrageous to be believed. Wouldn't just a kiss full on the lips be bad enough and have the same effect on Augusta?
15	top	David Middleton's appearance asking questions is very sudden. How have the rumours reached him? What happens to David's enquiries? They are dropped.
17	4	You say Micky asks Tonio to recommend him as a replacement for Tonio, but you never said that Tonio actually got the job, only that he had approached the minister (P 9, top).
20	9 up	What happened to Augusta and Micky's relationship? Consummated?
22	bottom	What happens to Micky and Rose's engagement? It's dropped.
25	14	Who makes Hugh a partner? Joseph? Isn't Augusta furious? You don't say.

Page	Line	Comment
27	6	Emily's behaviour is hard to believe. How are you going to convince the reader that she will humiliate herself for the sake of sex with Edward? He's a creep. He's not kind to her and he's not even attractive. (I had the same worry in the first draft.)
27	12	Does Edward put Micky up to the murder of Solly, or is it his own idea? You don't say.
29	bottom	What happened to Hugh and Maisie's relationship in the intervening 11 years? How is Hugh's marriage to Dolly faring? Is the irony that having turned her into a lady, Maisie has also turned her into a grasping woman who craves the trappings of wealth? You don't say this, but you imply it on P 33, line 6. (See Point 6 of my letter.)
31	top	The drama over the annulment of Edward/Emily's marriage is a red herring. It doesn't change events; only allows Augusta to make a scene. Seems unnecessary.
32	6	Wouldn't Hugh have advised Maisie against investment in Granada Bonds?
33	7	Dolly would only leave Hugh <u>for</u> someone, if she likes the good life. Who's going to keep her? (Again, see Point 6 of my letter).
33	bottom	Why does Augusta suddenly decided she can't stay in Kensington Gore when earlier she was insistent that she could? Why does she beg Micky to take her to Granada? Because she loves him? Because she can't stand the humiliation of being poor? Are these the reasons she commits suicide (after Micky has rejected her?) Were they lovers at an earlier juncture, when she was younger? (Incidentally, I think you should make Augusta a beautiful woman who ages badly, thus increasing her bitterness.)
34	11	If it's common knowledge that agents of the Marcus regime murdered Tonio, how come Micky isn't arrested?
35		The ending seems rather weak after the ending of the first outline (which I loved). Micky, especially, and Edward have both got away with murder (literally). Shouldn't they both have a more dramatic comeuppance?