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Dear Dan,

Well, my notes say I finished it in early July, and I have been allowing my thoughts to simmer before writing you with a reaction. I recall I read through it in three days of fairly continuous reading, so it certainly held my interest. It seems to me, if I may humbly say so, that you have progressed enormously since your last novel. The plot is carefully, even brilliantly, constructed, and everything holds together very nicely. The story carries one along, and the momentum is excellent. On the negative side, if pushed to express negatives, I would say that you do not have the natural gift for dialogue of a born novelist, but the dialogue is good, and it is astonishing to me that you are able to do it at all having started so late in life. Likewise, the construction or creation of character could perhaps be improved. After finishing the novel I went back to the first chapters of *Anna Karenina* and *Pride and Prejudice* to remind myself how the masters do it. All in all, you have written an amazingly good novel which I read with deep interest and pleasure. I sincerely hope that you have another one turning in your head.

I am enjoying my practice once again and seem to have recovered from the mild bout of ennui that afflicted me during the past year or two. I sent you an article that I wrote which I think is the best thing I have done for awhile. If it catches your interest, let me know what you think of it.

With warmest regards.



Ronald P. Sokol

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