

Sag Harbor

I think it's March 18

Dear Jack: Your letter was forwarded. I am sorry about Linda. In many ways this hurts more than a human death, I think because there is an objectiveness about another human but a dog is purely subjective. I've mourned over so many dogs that you would think I would get used to their going but I never have. It's just as bad every time. When, very young, my first dog was killed by a fire engine and the world came to an end, my father said - Get another dog quick, and I thought him a heartless wretch not to have known that there were no other dogs. But he was right. There are and no two are alike. Angel doesn't take Charles's place but he takes a place left vacant. And he does very well. You do well to look for another dog and even better perhaps of a different breed.

There's nothing wrong in killing - only in the reason for it. The most dedicated animal lovers rarely pass up a steak. What you must not do - or rather try not to do is to ~~not~~ inform the subject with your own feelings which are compounded of your self plus your experience. Subject may have equal sentiments but it cannot be the same. Only a primitive empathy is valid.

I've been cleaning up the wreckage remaining on the point and have neglected everything else. Elaine is in Texas attending her mother through a gall bladder operation. I stay out here as

much as possible. Increasingly desolate the city.
It makes me unhappy. And I don't have a copy
of Lammy Row out here. I'm not sure I have one in
town. They get taken. I don't have many of my own
books left and that's all right. I know how they
came out.

But with all the leaf raking I neglected
the pile of mail some of which has to be answered.
And I guess I'd better get to it.

Yours
John

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Dear Jack: Your letter was forwarded. I am sorry about Linda. In many ways this hurts more than a human death, I think because there is an objectiveness about another human but a dog is purely subjective. I've mourned over so many dogs that you would think I would get used to their going but I never have. It's just as bad every time. When, very young, my first dog was killed by a fire engine and the world came to an end, my father said - get another dog quick. And I thought him a heartless wretch not to have known that there were no other dogs. But he was right. There are, and no two are alike. Angel doesn't take Charley's place but he takes a place left vacant. And he does very well. You do well to look for another dog and even better perhaps of a different breed.

There's nothing wrong in killing - only in the reason for it. The most dedicated animal lovers rarely pass up a steak. What you must not do - or rather try not to do is to inform the subject with your own feelings which are compounded of yourself plus your experience. Subject may have equal sensitiveness but it cannot be the same. Only a primitive empathy is valid.

I've been cleaning up the wreckage winter leaves on the point and have neglected everything else. Elaine is in Texas attending her mother through a gall bladder operation. I stay out here as much as possible. Increasingly dislike the city. It makes me unhappy - and I don't have a copy of "Cannery Row" out here. I'm not sure I have one in town. They get taken. I don't have many of my own books left and that's all right. I know how they came out.

But with all the leaf raking I've neglected the pile of mail, some of which has to be answered and I guess I'd better get to it.

Yours,
John
