



Bennington College
July 10, 1943.

Dear Aaron:

I am not lost completely although I have almost been lost in the writing of this piece. I have wanted a definite thing which is hard to get... a gentleness without sentimentality and a sense of the universal without being symbolic. Whether I will succeed is whether this possible to do in so far as I have done this script. It is hard to do American things without either becoming pure folk or else appearing a little like a mural in a middle western railway station or postoffice.

You may object to some of the things, such as the use of the Indian Girl. But please read it through and tell me if you think we can do it or if it defeats the end. I have thought of the use that Hart Crane made of her and also the "American Grain" of William Carlos Williams. I have as you will see taken out the Uncle Tom's Cabin episode altogether. I think you were right that it was dragged in by the hair of the head and I did not seem to be able to fix it so I started on a different aspect.

I have used the word poem several times in this. I know you will understand that I do not mean a tone poem but that I mean something nostalgic in the lyrical way and yet completely unsentimental and strong about our way. It has to do with the roots in so far as people can express them, without telling an actual story. I do want to remember that it is for stage and that it will have certain incongruities that will make it at times delightfully theatrical if I can make it work.

All of this is subject to your approval. I know this is late. I know that I will have to work like a demon. I do not yet have the Chavez score. I hope it will come soon so that I can have a clear stretch for yours. I know that I have hampered you by this lateness and I can only say that I have thought of it constantly but that the piece would not jell. There are a few lines out in one place and I have to find them. As you will see I have still kept the Bible lines. But I thought I would get some one to write some lines that would express the idea with out using the actual quotation.

Well, Aaron, off it goes today. I will be anxious to hear from you. I hope your picture work is going well, and that you have liked it and been able to do some work that you like. I have a performance here this week, a preview of the work I started this winter. It will be in the nature of a dress rehearsal. Someday I will tell you about the agonies of this little piece. The country is so beautiful But I have no time to look at it just now.

I shall be here until the third week in August, or at least so I plan. With best wishes always and the hope that you will forgive the lateness and like some of it.