

Verbundkatalog Kalliope

Mann, Klaus

New York, 1941-03-31

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DECISION

a review of free culture

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March 31, 1941

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Miss Jean Gould
2524 Lawrence Avenue
Toledo, Ohio

Dear Miss Gould:

I am afraid you will picture me now as "a stern editor with the great NO written across his brow" — which, of course, is a rather depressing idea for me. Yet, there is nothing I can do about it — not because I am not interested in principle in unsolicited material, but particularly because we are so jammed with manuscripts that I have, for the time being, to refuse almost everything we get. Besides, your story does not represent the ideal sort of material for our magazine. By saying this I do not think primarily of its literary standards; for I feel that it is nicely written, concentrated and plastic, and the whole atmosphere of the hospital comes out in a lively way, but I think that a story such as yours should not be published in a magazine whose editor bears a German name and is still half-counted among the exiles, although he has lived in this country for quite a while. If a story of the kind you have written can have any moral effect at all, then certainly in a hundred percent American publication rather than in an international magazine such as ours. Besides, I must tell you quite frankly that I am not quite sure if your Dr. Torpes is likely to arouse the undivided sympathies of the majority of your potential readers. I cannot help feeling that he is, indeed, a little arrogant and not very tactful when he is criticizing the American democracy in the circle of his colleagues. The fact that he is right, perhaps, in what he says about the American institutions and certainly in his medical diagnosis, speaks of course, in his favor, but it does not make him necessarily more attractive. In any case, I am pretty positive that this is the kind of thing people would feel when they find the story of this type in my magazine. It may be very well that the reaction would be entirely different and that everybody would think Dr. Torpes perfectly O.K. if he appears in Colliers or in some Middle West magazine, the name of which I do not know.

I wonder if you understand exactly what I mean or if I seem confused. However, I have a feeling that I am right. I congratulate you on the nice things you have been told about "Carnival" — particularly as I think they are justified. I wonder on what kind of a subject your new story may be. I too am playing, from time to time, with the idea of venturing on something dramatic. But the goings-on

Miss Jean Gould

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here on Broadway are not very encouraging. Just now a little play based on an early short story by my Father ('Tristan') -- (the name of the play was "Gabrielle") had to close after two performances -- killed by the critics. I do not think that it was really good, but certainly not as bad as all that.

I hope to hear from you again and do not want you to think that I am not interested in seeing any more of your manuscripts just because I had to refuse to accept "The Patient in Room #231". With my best wishes and regards,

sincerely yours,

Klaus
Mann