

July 28, 1962

Dear Louis,

Thanks for your notes on the poem. I'm turning them over in my head. Meantime I've sent copies to a bunch of people -- whose opinions I value in varying degrees -- and am waiting for some of them to come back. There seems to be a general feeling that the thing is too long and gets rather laboriously clever at times, so as to thwart the portrayal of the boy's feelings. That will have to be fixed, and as you suggest, much excision (sp?) is probably the right answer. I don't, on the other hand, feel I can give up my cannibalism section -- for me that would quite emasculate the poem -- if I may commit a compound

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pun, take the meat out of the poem. I've checked with others on this and they didn't feel it was either macabre or frightening. Even if it were, though, I think I'd have to keep it. They doesn't mean, though, that I may not have to do it better!

Anyway, I want to think about it andinker at it some. I'll get another version to you as soon as I can. In September I go to Yaddo for most of the month. I'd like to have something before I go, but if not, I'll surely get something while I'm there.

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