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November 3, 1966

Dear Nell,

What a wonderful full letter from you. How pleased I am that you love the Maritain works. They have been my life's blood intellectually.

I made you a tape yesterday with some talk and some music.

You must not talk about courage with me. Really. It is too wrong. I did all of Black Like Me strictly under religious obedience, something I do not say publically, but which is nevertheless true.

Since Jacques' visit I have recalled all of Scattered Shadows and am reworking it. He helped me with so many points that I had not made properly, points that had not even really been clear to me until he turned that magnificent mind of his on them, with great charity, and helped me. I wrote somewhere, in the preface to one of Dr. Kreyche's books, that Black Like Me was really simply putting into action the things I learned about racism through the writings of Jacques, that I did nothing more than "make flesh" the words and thoughts of another who was much wiser than me; feeling it was better to act on his wisdom than on my own. I am not a fighter really - or at least I am the world's least belligerent one; but my life has always placed me in situations where I had to. At least the more "idiotic" aspects of Don Quixotte apply!

Penn called me from San Francisco. He flew to NYC on a rush trip to make the Merv Griffin Show (tape) and we do not know when it will be run, but you might watch out for it if you do any TV-ing.

So you have ordered the books. NUNI, I like. It means still a great deal to me. The Devil is a work of too much immaturity. I have never even read it through (since I wrote it while blind,) and have the feeling I would die of chagrin if ~~xx~~ I did.

All for the moment. Our best love to you and Chris.

John