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Literary Agents

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Dear Eliot:

I had a long, and slightly argumentative, talk with Jack to-day about the contract for the bird book and their thoughts are to have the book come out at a pre-publication price of \$25 and afterwards rise to \$30. He wishes to pay \$2.25 a copy, which is 9% on the \$25 price and 8% on the \$30 price. I pointed out to him that the African book had a 10% royalty and Jack replied, yes, and that the profit margin is so narrow that he doesn't know if they will make any money on it. This is all based on a book with 64 color pages and 64 black and white pages.

He offers \$10,000 advance, half to be paid on signing and half in June. My own feeling is that the royalties are fair enough--we have had a number of picture books and 8% seems to be the going rate. But I think we ought to ask for \$15,000 advance to be paid half and half on the basis he suggested--unless you have some urgency for money which I could put up to him.

I think Duttons, while solvent, have no large sums of money hanging around in banks--I think a good many publishers are in the same situation. At any rate think over all this and let me know what you think

yours

Diarmuid