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16th April, 1971

19 APR 1971

Mr. Robin Boyd,
340 Albert Street,
MELBOURNE VIC 3002

Dear Robin,

This will be a gloomy letter for you on your return. I hope there was enough sunshine in Honolulu to overcome any dampening effects of the following words.

In a sense, this letter will be over-harsh. This is simply because so much of THE GREAT GREAT AUSTRALIAN DREAM is very good that I think it would be utter madness to publish it in its present form. I think that the major question you will want answered is whether or not (in my humble opinion) you have the ability to write fiction. To that I would have to shout an emphatic yes. Some passages in that book are absolutely first-class, and would place you well up in the league of Australian comic writers.

I particularly liked the passage about Gordon Hope. And I liked that whole business set up in the mountains, juxtaposing the activities of the explorer with those of the developers. First class stuff, and well worth publication!

The criticism I would offer of the book is that it isn't a book at all. The connection between the various episodes is thin indeed, and I couldn't help feeling there were large passages of waffle keeping the gems apart. Which is to say that there wasn't enough good material in there to sustain a whole book.

The second difficulty is that the connection between the various episodes is too remote. I expect that over the years you have assembled these various fantasies in your own head and have now committed the lot of them to paper, whether or not they made any sense alongside each other. That is where I think the book goes basically wrong.


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What I suggest you do is develop almost any one of the various fictional outbursts into a novel, or at least a novella. I regard Gordon Hope as the most likely, but you may have other ideas.

I don't know when I'll be next in Melbourne, but I would certainly like to see you again and talk about all this. In the meantime, the MS goes back to you under separate cover.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in red ink, appearing to read 'Peter Grose', written in a cursive style.

Peter Grose