Oct. 23, 1998

Mr. Ivan Doig
17277 15th Ave. N.W.
Seattle, WA 98177

Dear Ivan,
Great to chat with you on the phone the other day. This is the letter I said
I'd send along. Thanks again for your help.
The Great Falls Tribune is planning a December feature story about
books writers would recommend for Christmas gifts.
I know your time is precious so I've tried to make this as easy as possible.
What we need is a list of up to 10 books for adults or children that are on
your list for Christmas gifts or that you would suggest for someone else's gift list.
The books need not be new, just those you think people would like finding under
the Christmas tree.
The writers participating in this project are Stephen Ambrose, Rick Bass,
Dan Cushman, Ivan Doig, David James Duncan, Richard Ford, Pete Fromm,
William Kittredge, Deirdre McNamer, Thomas McGuane, Gayle Shirley, Annick
Smith and James Welch.
I need your reply in hand by Friday, Nov. 13.
You can e-mail your reply to my attention at hticket@hotmail.com. If you prefer to send a letter, post it to me and the Great Falls Tribune Features
Department, P.O. Box 5468, Great Falls, MT 59403. Or just call me at 800-438-
6600, ext. 464.
Thanks very much for your help.

Best Regards,

Mark Downey
Dear Mark—

A handful of books for your Xmas list:

The All of It, by Jeannette Haier. Short but exhilarant of language, this charmer with a serious side to it includes a fishing escapade that will entrance anyone who ever stood out in the rain not catching any—and this rain is Irish.

The Jump-Off Creek, by Molly Gloss. If all westerns had taken the route of this gritty tale of a woman homesteader, some Louisa LAmour would have sold a bazillion copies of fiction with a genuine tang of the frontier and without gratuitous bang-bang.

Chronicle in Stone, by Ismail Kadare. This novelist is one of the recovered treasures out of the Cold War, a world-class writer who for most of his career was sealed away behind the totalitarian boundaries of Albania.

The Profile Makers, by Linda Bierds. Whimsical; This poet, recently a recipient of a MacArthur "genius" grant, won the PenWest award for this volume of her work; it's an intellectually stimulating set of poems in which images provoke memory, told in dazzling narrative.

all best,

[Signature]
In the blue bayou of my mind, I see the things of my past crumbling like afternoon sun. The Flathead Valley is still cool and green, but... well, you know, that's a story for another time.

But I digress. I'm here to tell you about something new. Have you heard of the small town of Lively Times?

Please, just listen.

I’ve had some interesting experiences this summer. For instance, I went on a tour of the outskirts of town, and I noticed something. The place is teeming with spirit... and it shouldn’t be. I mean, it’s a small town, for Pete’s sake!

Let’s see... Well, it was Saturday, and the town was buzzing with activity. The feverish atmosphere of Lively Times City, on the edge of Bozeman College, was palpable. It seemed to stretch on forever. And then I noticed something peculiar. A group of people gathered around a small stand selling hotdogs.

I approached, and the smell of grilling hotdogs wafted up to my nose. The scent was irresistible. I had to have one. As I waited in line, I overheard a conversation that changed everything.

"You want what? A hotdog? Here, let me get you one. It's on me."

I looked around, confused. Then I saw it. The man was not just offering me a hotdog; he was offering me something more. A moment of understanding flashed through my mind. I realized that the people of Lively Times had something special to offer. And I was not going to pass it up.

I bit into the hotdog, and the flavors burst in my mouth like fireworks. It was unlike anything I had ever tasted. And as I chewed, I knew that I had discovered something truly remarkable. This small town had something special, something that I had to share with the world.

So, let me tell you about Lively Times. It’s a place where the past and the present collide, where the ordinary becomes extraordinary. It’s a place where one can find joy in the simplest of things, like a hotdog.

In Lively Times, we celebrate our differences, our shared experiences, and our love for life. It’s a place where everyone is welcome, and everyone has a story to tell.

On the road, or at home...
9/17/99

Dear Ivan—

I'm returning the slide you sent us. Thanks for letting us use it, and thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Matt T. Campbell
two-page fax to Alison Kling, Scribner publicity

Hi, Alison--

Here's the list of reporters and columnists and editors I've brushed against, one time or another, who might do some kind of follow-up piece if we get a copy of Prairie Nocturne to them. No doubt you already have some of these, such as the books editors at the Seattle Post-Intelligencer and Spokane Spokesman-Review on your prime list for review copies, but any of the others let's send 'em copies anyway to make sure the book hasn't been waylaid somewhere in inter-office-transit. Ginny Merriam of The Missoulian in particular is volunteering to try to do a piece on the book even though it's no longer her beat, for instance, and I'm going to provide her some material about the background of writing the book.

Also, I wonder if you could promptly check on whether a Montana publication called Lively Times still exists: phone (406)644-2910, fax (406)644-2911. If it's still functioning (my reference is a few years old), it's a good tool for us for the Montana booktour--it's a freebie newspaper that lists events across Montana every month, has had widespread circulation. Its monthly deadline is the 20th, so we'd have to get our bookstore schedule to them pretty quick for their Sept. issue.

Best,

[Signature]
Prairie Nocturne mailing list:

Theresa Hogue
Corvallis Gazette-Times
600 SW Jefferson
Corvallis OR 97333

Brian Doyle
Editor, Portland Magazine
University of Portland
500 N. Willamette Blvd.
Portland OR 97203

Julie Muhlstein
c/o The Herald
PO Box 930
Everett WA 98206-0930

Ron Franscell
PO Box 458
Idaho Springs CO 80452

Ginny Merriam
The Missoulian
PO Box 8029
Missoula MT 59807-8029

John Marshall
Books Editor
Seattle Post-Intelligencer
101 Elliott Ave. W.
Seattle WA 98119-4220

Wendy Smith
220B Bergen St.
Brooklyn NY 11217

Dan Webster
Spokesman-Review
999 W. Riverside
Spokane WA 99210

Tom Griffin
Editor, Columns Magazine
1415 NE 45th St.
Seattle WA 98105

Northwestern Perspective
Department of University Relations
Northwestern University
555 Clark St.
Evanston IL 60208-1230

Leni Holliman
Yellowstone Public Radio
1500 North 30th St.
Billings MT 59101-0298
George Cole
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975 High Street, P.O. Box 10188
Eugene, Oregon 97440-2188
1-800-377-7428 (Oregon Only)
E-mail: 72040.2732@compuserve.com

Printed on recycled paper
Evans,

Thank you for allowing us to do a more in-depth interview with you for our Face the State program. I have a copy enclosed, unfortunately, the photos we captured on tape were on a 'bad' tape and we were unable to use them.

Interviewing you was an enjoyable experience... thanks again!

Julie Kleck
Dear Diane--

Just wanted to say thanks for the nifty interview and article you did on me. I knew if I hung around that Tower store long enough, fame and fortune would find me.

Would you mind passing along the enclosed to Frank Varga? My north-end friends were much impressed by the pic, although one of them did say: "Where did you get that jacket?"

best, from Carol too

9 Nov. '93

Dear Frank--

A very artful job, on that picture of me that ran with Diane Wright's article. First, thanks for the time, energy and craft that went into it. Second, if there a chance I can get a copy of the print?

best wishes,

9 Nov. '93
Nov 2, 1993

Dear Mr. Doig,

Here's a dub of our interview. Thanks for being on our program.

Yours truly,

Richard Wolinskey
November 2, 1993

Mr. Ivan Doig
17021 10th Avenue NW
Seattle, WA 98177

Dear Ivan,

Finally, as promised, here are some copies of the article we published last month in The Register-Guard. I’m glad you enjoyed my layout and photographs.

I will get your request for color and black & white prints of your portrait into our pipeline for processing. I’ll send them along as soon as they are completed.

If at some point you’re interested in having some nice photographs made, I’d be more than happy to do them for you. We visit the Seattle area regularly and if you wanted to do more than the 10 minute treatment to make some nice portraits, I’d be happy to work with you to set something up. Let me know.

Once again, it was great to be finally able to meet you. Your writing has brought me a lot of pleasure over the years and certainly, many memories and images of my beloved Montana.

All the best,

[Signature]
Dear Doug -

A Wild Horse photo — as promised — from about 8,500' New Lake Sichie. The photo, of course, does not do justice to the flowers.

Really enjoyed the reading and the chance to see you both.

Cheer &

Best,

[Signature]
August 13, 1990

Ivan Doig
17021 10th. Ave. N.W.
Seattle, Washington 98177

Dear Mr. Doig,

I'm writing to ask what books westerners should read to understand their homeland.

A few years ago, I read Marilynne Robinson's "Housekeeping," an excellent novel loosely based on a girlhood in my home town of Sandpoint, Idaho.

When I talked to my neighbors about the book, I discovered few had read or even heard of it.

Then, the other day, I began reading Wallace Stegner's "Wolf Willow," in which he observes how poorly school prepares us to be citizens of America, much less citizens of the west. In textbooks, he notes, all eyes turn to Europe or at least toward the East Coast.

Like "Housekeeping," which is not taught in Sandpoint literature classes, the interesting history of the métis in the Cypress Hills was not taught to Stegner and his schoolmates in Whitemud.

That's a shame.

While I can't print a list of must-read books for everyone in every town between Kalispell and Cle Elum (the Review's circulation area), I'd like to give people a list of great books about the west in general.

From the fur trade on the Columbia to the Blackfeet wars and the Butte copper wars to the sod-busting on the Palouse and so on, there is much to be known about the lands where we are now building malls and subdivisions.

Would you be so kind as to jot down perhaps a dozen titles of histories, novels and poetry collections that folks in Idaho and Washington ought to
read? I would welcome any comments you might have about the books, but if you've only time to make out a list, that's really the crux of my request.

I wanted to be brief, but if you'd like to discuss this further, please call me, collect.

Sincerely,

Dean Miller

cc: Richard Maxwell Brown
    Ken Kesey
    Prof. William Kittredge
    Prof. Patricia Limerick
    Prof. Carlos Schwantes
    Patrick McManus
    William Stegner

21 Aug. '90

Dear Dean—

In considerable haste, here's the booklist, which I'd appreciate your alphabetizing by author for me when you run it, OK?

I take it as a given that Housekeeping by Marilynne Robinson and Yellowfish by John Keeble are key works of the Inland Empire which everybody ought to read. Thenx (some of these are general classics of the westward movement rather than the Northwest exclusively):

Old Jules, by Mari Sandoz
Fools Crow, by James Welch
Love Medicine, by Louise Erdrich
The Jump-Off Creek, by Molly Gloss
The Triggering Town, by Richard Hugo
Smith and Other Events, by Paul St. Pierre
Winterkill, by Craig Lesley
The Journals of Lewis and Clark
The Way West, by A.B. Guthrie Jr.
The Legacy of Conquest, by Patricia Nelson Limerick
The Stillness, the Dancing (poetry collection), by Linda Bierds
The American West as Living Space, by Wallace Stegner.

If I've savvied right, you'll be at my Auntie's booksigning shindig on Sept. 19 at the behest of your father-in-law? I look forward to meeting you. And send me a copy of your book's article when it runs, would you?

best,
Dear Ivan Doig,  

March 22, 1993

Coming home this Fall from Italy, from research done with an NEH grant on the work of 19th century writer Margaret Fuller in Rome, I sat by a Montanan, who in the course of our nine hour flight from Copenhagen to Seattle, enthusiastically talked with me about *Ride with Me, Mariah Montana* and the earlier books in your McCaskill trilogy, *Dancing at the Rascal Fair*, and *English Creek*.

Since that October flight, I have read your wonderful stories twice. Although I know there's only a slim chance that no one has talked with you about writing a screenplay from your trilogy, that you don't already have an option out there for a film, I'm so convinced that your work belongs in film that I'll gamble on that chance and write, hoping you will be willing to meet with me and talk. Of course, when I think of your work, a screenplay and production, I think of Robert Redford and Sundance.

Twenty-one years ago, I began and have taught since, a year long survey of film art, history and criticism at Lane Community College in Eugene, Oregon. My current writing courses work with voice and audience, the blend of personal and public discourse (hence Margaret Fuller). While I was on professional leave Fall term, I wrote a screen treatment for a one hour documentary on Fuller. Seattle producer John DeGraf is working with me on "pitching" this toward PBS and the American Experience series.

This hybrid life is who I am: I see the world, recreate it in words and images. I believe that American film relies too much on computer tricks, when what we need, to engage and reflect, are the well-peopled stories that you write so carefully. You've said it yourself, "In every book I try to work two stubborn substances, research and craft, into becoming the hardest alloy of all—a good story." I think of my work last Winter at a screenplay workshop in Key West; Bud Schulberg talked about how he wrote *On the Waterfront*, about the need for good stories with believable people. He could have been talking about yours: about men and women who live a mix of humor and pain, intellect and sensuality. After I'd read *Mariah*, I wrote my Montanan seatmate the following:

I love the voices in Doig's book—its realistic mix of emotions, Jick's deep love and admiration and frustration with Mariah; the humor, the local RoadKill group songs or that awful TV interviewer and his "pigfucker" segment; the vividness of the descriptions, how a buffalo looks, what gene pools could have created this shaggy-strength, almost extinct creature butting our Winnebagos, linking with us in a fight against corporate takeover if we could just enlist the next generation.
I love the symbolism, Mariah's European caves and her photographs, Riley's "What's inside the turtle?", the scratchy Riley-Mariah relationship, Jick's constant chorus commentary on them, himself, and middle-age as he lives in these parallel zones...childhood, teenage years, all of it there in one 64-year-old brain and heart and hands because we have kinesthetic memories too....

Doig "writes a movie" in the way that Sergei Eisenstein, saw Dickens as a film maker. He writes stories that screen out and forth petroglyphs from all of our pasts. And I love his people. I hate whining, a wallow in misery. I revere that man crying in the Helena Archive, laughing at Good Help on TV, and helping stitch a Centennial Flag even while Marcella's death made him feel "as if I'd been gutted, the way a rainbow trout is when you slit his underside all the way to the gills and run your thumbnail like a cruel little plow the length of the cut to shove the insides out." (11) Doig has it all, I think...style, substance, an evocative, unforgettable road movie that is our past and present, and a narrative that could translate to a voice-over. Of course, at almost fifty myself, I pick the following as a sample:

Why is a centennial supposed to be such potent arithmetic, will somebody just tell me that? I mean, you think about it, it always is a hundred years since one damn thing or another happened; the invention of the dental drill or the founding of junk mail or some such. But the half centuries, the fifty-year wedges that take most of our own lifetimes, those are the truly lethal pieces of calendar. Instead of chasing off after olden topics, what about those closer truths? [103]

To find where we are, we have to go back as far as we can go, as far as we can bear to go, and the terrific thing in this series of Doig dispatches, full of tears and laughter and hope and life going on, is that we find an affirmation of our own optimism, our belief in family and partnerships.
So, you can see, Ivan Doig, that your work touches me, makes me think: the best of all combinations. Maybe growing up in Central Oregon with mountains at the edge of our farm, growing up as the granddaughter of a one room schoolhouse teacher, now the third generation of family to teach in public schools, I feel as if these McCaskills could be family. Recently, I used a line from English Creek to head an essay I wrote for my college because I think our community colleges aren't so far from those one room school houses a few generations ago: "Life is wide, there's room to take a new run at it." Wanting to work beyond my classrooms, to reach a larger audience through film and television is certainly my "new run."

I am teaching full time this Spring Term. I have one daughter in college and another I want to bring to Seattle for a visit to the University of Washington sometime this April or May. If you are willing and able to meet, I will arrange my obligations to suit your schedule. Even if a screenplay collaboration between us isn't possible, I would be most honored to talk with you, and, if you are agreeable, to interview you for our college radio station, KLCC, an NPR affiliate.

Sincerely,

Susan Glassow 7 April '93

Dear Susan Glassow—

In haste, I'm sorry to say, as I'm about to leave on a trip; but I simply can't contemplate collaboration on a script—there are too many books I'd like to explore. If you indeed have somebody interested in producing an it would write, options and the rest of movie-contract apparatus are available through the Pleskette-Green Agency, (213) 66-04-28, which handles the movie rights to my stuff. And, let's see, your question about a KLCC interview; maybe this fall, depending on the schedule my publisher comes up with, when I have a new book out and will be signing in Eugene. Meantime, good luck with your own work.
Paul, Nelson (703) 998-2877
MacNeil-Lehrer
Wed. 9th
Fri. 10th

Where?
When?
How long?

Fed Ex me, guys
MacNeil-Lehrer Paul Nielsen, producer (703) 998-2877

not be national goofy uncle, Reagan & Bush, loved costume of office, not actual word of running: Republic.
(In an odd way, it’s time for grownups from a younger generation to take over.) (TB’s attention spans of

ants: notion that nose-thumbing gestures by a handful of artists are threats to society. What a people sleeping
hostile, people drug addicted, people jobless... Part of job of art is to effect, comfortable, or it’s hope. Clinton
administration merely can stay bareheaded so that. (But will we go by lesson of music it once rock us once an abrasive
new artisan — they’d do OK.

West: needs healing. Some of what rest of country also needs would help healthcare, no cost of extensive care such
as AIDS or Alzheimer’s needs, doesn’t overwhelm small-town hospitals — but beyond that there is public West, not’ll
West, which holds most of 1/3 of US that is federally
owned. Not’ll parts need healing, not’ll parks need healing — I had hope for a Sec. of Interior, 9 year Admin,
that would be trying to peel off another layer of resources
my way (parks, mining, grazing, farming, fishing,
timber) we’re beginning to get awful close to. Come on (L)

- bicentennial
- 5 1/2 lifetime since Jamestown (1607) 325 = 70 + 5 1/2

“change of direction”

Conversation series - 10 of 1 interview “future 7: entry”
MacN pro
- sig for new pants
- compare to other men (FDR instead of JFK)
- dust a country
- helped spirits
- give ideas o mood & devotion 7. evilry?
- event carried away
- G'man... we're back Clinton
- electronic reality = of social values
- just say no; you've got to say a lot of things.
CONFIRMATION OF AUTHOR INTERVIEW

AUTHOR: Ivan Doig

BOOK: RIDE WITH ME, MARIAH MONTANA

RADIO/TELEVISION/PRESS: "Northwest Perspectives" KOBP Radio

DATE: Tuesday, November 27, 1990

TIME: 10:45 a.m. - 11:30 a.m.

PLACE: KOBP Radio
       Golden Hours
       71-40 SW Macadam Avenue
       Portland, OR 97219

CONTACT & PHONE: Julie Draper (503) 293-1902

REMARKS: Cross Marquam Bridge below Lake Oswego - 6½ mile
       to Macadam - go past bridge
       turn r. up Taylor Ferry Rd.
       turn r. up Macadam. at 1st traffic
       light, turn r. into play lot.

Confirmed by Susan Richman Phone (212) 702-6757 Date 11.6.90
CONFIRMATION OF AUTHOR INTERVIEW

AUTHOR: Ivan Doig

BOOK: RIDE WITH ME, MARIAH MONTANA

RADIO/TELEVISION/PRESS: "Midday with Jim French"

DATE: Wednesday, November 7, 1990

TIME: 10:28 a.m. arrival
       10:30 - 11:00 a.m. airing

PLACE: KIRO Radio
       2801 Third Avenue
       Seattle, WA 98121

CONTACT & PHONE: Kristen Probst
                 (206) 728-7777

REMARKS: Extra book and list of local signings enclosed.
CONFIRMATION OF AUTHOR INTERVIEW

AUTHOR: Ivan Doig

BOOK: RIDE WITH ME, MARIAH MONTANA

RADIO/TELEVISION/PRESS: "Voice of America"

DATE: Wednesday, November 7, 1990

TIME: 8:30 - 9:00 a.m.

PLACE: KUOW Radio
325 Communications Building
University of Washington
Seattle

CONTACT & PHONE: Ben Cromer
(202) 619-0084

Mail: Special Events Division
room 2050
330 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20547

REMARKS: taped

Confirmed by Susan Richman  Phone (212) 702-6757  Date 11/1/90
December 3, 1991

Ivan Doig
17021 10th NW
Seattle, WA 98177

Dear Mr. Doig:

All of us at One Norway Street would like to thank you again for giving us the pleasure of your appearance on our program.

We found your insights and commentary constructive and valuable, and we are sure that our viewers would agree.

We hope your experience at "One Norway Street" was pleasant and that you will visit us again.

Very truly yours,

Sincerely,

Schuyler Sackett
Host
"One Norway Street"

Christine C. Levesque
Producer
"One Norway Street"
11 Nov., '90

Dear Jennifer—

Just a note of appreciation for the piece you did about my writing and researching. You put a lot of time and verve into it—a really exceptional job. And it got read—many of the people who showed up in the bookstore (it was a great book signing, 75 Marishas sold) remarked that they'd come because they read the piece in the Coloradoan.

I hope your own work with words is thriving, and that our paths will cross again sometime.

regards,
Nov. 7

Ivan—

I'm not sure this article does your book justice, but here's a copy you requested—

Jennifer Paul
Doig's novels let us eavesdrop on Montana life

By JENNIFER PAUL
The Coloradoan

"Walk into the Log Cabin Cafe in Choteau — a whip of a town in northern Montana — at exactly 6:30 a.m. and you'll run smack into six to 10 old geezers, hunched over white mugs of coffee. These farmers, decked in overalls and tractor caps, hunker around the center table, which is like the middle ring of a three-ring circus. They sip steaming cups and make their pronouncements about the world. These fellowes, a bit long in years, are a mother load of character, of stories, of turns of phrases. Indeed, they're being mined by writer Ivan Doig. He eavesdropped on them. They never noticed. They didn't see Doig bend his ear to their talk. They just kept right on philosophizing and politicking and drinking their refills. Doig just kept right on listening. "I will bring in a morning paper, and Carol (his wife) and I will sit down to have hot cakes and eggs, and I will just radar in on the conversation," Doig says. "I can talk away in my mind three or four things. I can do a shopping list, a grocery list in my mind. I might get the urge to go to the restroom and write something down. I'm picking up generalities, turns of phrases. The words, the details, are part of the intensive research he's done to write his trilogy, which ends with "Ride With Me, Mariah Montana." Doig, who will be at the Stone Lion Bookstore in Old Town Square today to sign his books, has spent the past 10 years writing about the McCaskills in three novels, including "English Creek" and "Dancing at the Rascal Fair." The books cover 100 years of Montana history as viewed through the eyes of the fictional McCaskills, a Scottish immigrant ranching family. In 1894, he published "English Creek," focusing on the 1880s when the first McCaskills arrived in the area. The second book, "Dancing at the Rascal Fair," published in 1987, takes place during the Depression. The trilogy ends with a father and daughter traveling in a Winnebago during the centennial summer to

Timing off in Foothills’ ‘Broadway’

By HEDY BERMAN
For the Coloradan

"Broadway Bound," the third play in Neil Simon’s autobiographical trilogy, is one of the most serious plays the prolific Simon has written. That doesn’t mean it

ST LOUIS — Rock 'n' roll pioneer Chuck Berry is suing the magazine High Times, saying it published stolen nude photos of him with several women.

In the suit filed this week in St. Louis Circuit Court, Berry claims that the magazine published eight photographs of him posing with unidentified nude women as the cover story.

Chuck Berry sues magazine over printing nude photos

Choice editor:
Dale Ulolland, 224-7740

THURSDAY, November 1, 1990
The Junior League of Fort Collins is accepting proposals for potential project development for the 1991-92 year. The league’s focus is on women, children, health and education.

The deadline for completing the league is today. Application deadline is Saturday, Dec. 1.

For more information, call 493-6961.

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writing, in the language and in my imagination, and my memories are still in Montana. I’ve been able to write about Montana, being a day’s drive away. We can pull into Missoula by suppertime.”

And the state spreads out before him, in backwater towns, wayside cafes, even the post office, where he was one day to mail some letters. He saw a woman come in, her hair in a short hank.

“She was wearing a checked shirt with a yoke across the front and blue jeans. It was in Mile City, Montana. This was a ranch woman if I ever saw one. She was in her Bronco, getting the mail, groceries and tractor parts. I thought, ‘When Leona shows up in this book, she’ll look like that.’”

Doig watched the woman. Then he hopped in the Winnebago and scribbled notes, tucking away in his mind what she was wearing, how she moved.

---

Russ Berens
Knits
+
other selected items

On Sale
25% off

Comfortable and Casual

Razzle Dazzle Designs
Women's Apparel and Accessories
122 East Monroe (East of Swensens) + 229-3335
Hours: M-Th. 10-6, Fri. 10-5, Sat. 10-5

What are the odds
a little extra
Dear Jyl--

I don't know whether NPR measures the passage of time the same way as the rest of the world does, but a couple of months having passed I wondered if you'd thought about possibly getting unbigfooted by Noah? (There is precedent, you know. Remember Evelyn Waugh's Scoop, when the reporter in Abyssinia got hold of a story that a nurse had died in a landmine explosion and cabled to London, "Nurse unblown." Finding that the story was only a rumor, he next cabled "Nurse ununblown.") Carol and I aren't utterly sure that Noah didn't run the brief satellite interview he did with me after yours, but we're pretty regular ATC listeners, and nobody else has mentioned hearing any interview, so... Anyway, I've been chagrined that your more extensive interview had to go into the void, and just wondered if there's ever a reprieve in bigfootland.

All has been going splendidly here. Mariah looks dead-certain to be my biggest selling book; reviews have been fine, have sold more than 2500 at the bookstore signings—all of which has produced a contract for the next book, next couple of years. Carol meanwhile is soldiering through fall quarter and looking ahead to winter sabbatical in the Southwest. We got no complaints. Of course I know what's been causing all this—the golden haze you and Paul brought with you out of that San Juans honeymoon.

Best to you both.
Dear Lin--

Here's the photo, the Montana article, and--since you've already seen the NY Times review of Meriah Montana--the other "big" reviews that appeared that same Sunday, in the LA Times and Washington Post.

all best,
Dear Tom--

At the end of our session last Friday I entirely forgot to hand you this picture for possible use with the interview, and as long as I'm sending it anyway, I'll pass along a couple of pieces on the chance that they might be helpful for the interview intro.

Enjoyed talking to you. Had a terrific crowd at The Tattered Cover that night, sold about 170 copies of the new book.

best wishes,
Interviews done for the hardback of DANCING AT THE RASCAL FAIR, autumn '87:

Publishers Weekly (Wendy Smith)
Washington Post (Michael Kernan, Style section)
Rocky Mountain News (Margaret Carlin, book section)
Chicago Tribune (Peter Gormer, feature writer)
McClatchey News Service (Kathleen Merryman, feature writer)
San Francisco Chronicle (Pat Holt, book page)
Associated Press "Bookview" (wire service use of Peter Gormer Chi Trib story)
USA Today (Bob Wilson, get-acquainted lunch)

Radio shows:

Caspar Citron, WMCA
Diane Rehm, WAMU (Washington, DC)
Paula Wissel, KUOW (Seattle)
Don Swaim, Bookbeat, CBS
Good Evening (Noah Adams, Minn. Public Radio--preview show, only on Minnesota stations)

Readings:

Black Oak, Berkeley
Printers Ink, Palo Alto
Tattered Cover, Denver
Cover to Cover, Boulder
Elliott Bay, Seattle
Chapters, Washington DC
The Bookcase, Wayzata MINN
October 11, 1993

Ivan Doig
17021 10th Ave. NW
Seattle WA 98177

Dear Ivan:

It has been many years since our last correspondence — just after “English Creek.” So I was excited to see a review of “Heart Earth” in the AP wires today, and I decided to narrow the gap of time between letters. I was also reminded to write when our local librarian, Marcia Wright, told me she chatted with you in Denver recently.

At our last writing, Ann and I were in Santa Fe, where we learned to love chile and blue corn tortillas. Not such a hard lesson. In 1986, we moved to California’s Wine Country, where we lived while working for the Marin County newspaper, and where we learned to love wine. We were lucky to have lived in two such wonderful places ... and to have picked up such tasty habits, to boot.

So in 1989, with two children whom we longed to raise as we were raised, we came home to Wyoming. We are the co-publishers of a daily newspaper in Gillette, Wyo., a city sustained by the nation’s richest coal reserves, on the stark sweep of the Northern Plains’ Powder River Basin. The Bay Area offered so many choices, and Santa Fe was, well, Santa Fe ... but we belonged here. We have often felt a little like Dorothy, who left her plain, black-and-white Kansas to find a Technicolor world beyond the rainbow — only to realize there’s no place like home.

That Ann and I can share a life in small-town newspapering is just icing on the cake. It is hard work, but every day is different.

Over the years, I have repressed an urge to write a novel of my own, an urge that’s sort of your fault. But I have been successful in repressing it, in part, because of you, too: Just when I think I might be able to write from my heart, I can pick up “This House of Sky” and convince myself that I must exercise my heart for many more years before I could do it as well.

So the ideas ferment, like Hemingway’s Wyoming wine. Someday soon I hope, they will flow. Any suggestions for uncorking them would be appreciated, of course.

In the meantime, I hope that if you return to this area, you’ll stop to see us. I have loved your books since our first visit in Sheridan in 1980, and they keep a special place on my shelf. Though Ann and I are from a different generation of Western children, we still see our homeland in your words.

Also, if you’d like a chance to talk about your newest book before a crowd of semi-literate newspapermen and -women, I could arrange it. The Wyoming Press Association’s annual convention is in mid-January
and we are starved for interesting people like you to enlighten us. Would you consider it? If so, please contact me soonest and I'll give you the particulars.

Good luck on "Heart Earth." The AP review is very positive, and I hope only the best for you. I have enclosed a check for a book and postage; please let me know if it isn't enough.

Best regards,

Ron Franscell