

father & fear - yes, fear - make it about as impossible as usual to live at home" (*Journal*, November 27, 1941).

Margaret Mayorga chose "The Lady of Larkspur Lotion" for *The Best One-Act Plays of 1941* (1942). The title refers to Cuprex, "The Personal Insecticide" used to treat "crabs," which TW needed but could not afford shortly before writing the play in October. It led him to pun upon, and to misspell, his own embarrassing infestation: "Literally a lousey writer, that's me. - A lousey guy" (*Journal*, October 19, 1941).

The published version of William Saroyan's play *Jim Dandy* (1947) was subtitled "Fat Man in a Famine" and set in "a transparent egg shell" containing the "majestic ruins" of the past.

Spring Again, a marital comedy by Bertram Bloch and Isabel Leighton, clients of Liebling-Wood, opened on November 10, 1941, and ran for 241 performances on Broadway.

Earlier in October TW drafted a letter to Lawrence Langner in which he enclosed still "another new ending" for *Battle of Angels*: "I have substituted dogs for fire and fox-skin for snakeskin and worked out a clean-cut finale without conflagration or regurgitation" (n.d., HRC).]

211. To William Saroyan

[53 Arundel Place
Clayton, Missouri]
[ca. mid-November 1941]
[TLS, 1 p. Todd Collection]

Dear Saroyan:

Like your character Jim Crow, I make a series of profound obeisances before your chair-on-a-table, having just finished reading your play Jim Dandy which rings in my head and my heart like the multitude of soft and musical bells that bring down the curtain. It is a beautiful little mystery of a play: I read it twice: first time I was too confused to enjoy it: the second time it began to glow and vibrate, coming out like a star in "first dark". - Well, I loved it. I got hold of the Ms. from the Little Theatre of St. Louis. - I am visiting here. The director didn't understand it, I am afraid, and seemed to think it needed understanding. - I hope I shall catch a performance some where. But it should be done in N.Y. because it should have an excellent professional cast to bring it out best. - I am crazy to see it.

I am returning to New Orleans in a few days. If chance should ever bring you down there, please let me know. - 722 Toulouse St.

Cordially, 10.
Tenn. Williams.

[The title character in *Jim Dandy* is served by a faithful black retainer named Jim Crow. A speech in the third act may have stated the rationale for TW's own defense of poetry in the theatre: "Poetry is *all* of the experience of *all* of the people," Jim Dandy proclaims. "Poetry is *all*. There is nothing which is not poetry."

Tryouts of *Jim Dandy* were staged by some forty-five member groups of the National Theatre Conference, including the Pasadena Playhouse. Reviewers of the Pasadena production, which opened on November 25, 1941, were puzzled by Saroyan's "soul gropings" but generally respectful and in several cases enthusiastic. There is no evidence of a St. Louis production at this time.]

212. To Audrey Wood

[53 Arundel Place
Clayton, Missouri]
Monday - Nov. [24] 1941
[TLS, 2 pp. HRC]

Dear Audrey:

I think I am sending you a really good little play. Perhaps rather shocking, but good. - Though very short, it has three distinct acts. I wish you would have it typed with the other two - I spilt coffee on some of the pages. You mustn't pay for this typing. Get it done as cheaply as possible and send the bill to me at 53 Arundel Place, Clayton. I will not be here, the family [will] open the letter and send you a cheque for the typing.

I think I am leaving here tonight for New Orleans and then by bicycle along the coast of Florida till I reach that Never-never land where I can live cheaply - some little beach town I hope. - If I were a little more pessimistic or egotistic I might suppose that all this national defense was merely contrived to make my life more expensive.

I have not yet discovered what is wrong with the end of "The preacher's daughter" - I thought the wordless effect was more incisive. But I will put it away for another reading. Incidentally, Byron died in 1824 and I have