

Chapter 12_Strange Things in My Mailbox ...

In this chapter from "Mother Night," the protagonist reflects on his relationship with Kraft, who initially shared a strong indignation about the injustices the protagonist faces. Kraft, who admires the arts, believes that future civilizations will assess individuals based on their artistic contributions rather than their past actions. He encourages the protagonist to revive his writing, suggesting that true creativity can bloom through inspiration, specifically through a relationship with a woman. Kraft's belief is sincere, and he challenges the protagonist to reconsider his stance on writing, persuading him that engaging with a woman could ignite his creative spirit.

Although annoyed by Kraft's insistence, the protagonist reluctantly contemplates the idea. He dismisses it, feeling burdened by memories of a past relationship that now feels distant. As he seeks solace from their conversation, he descends to check his mailbox, finding it a place of mundane correspondence, including dividend checks and junk mail. Surprisingly, he discovers more sinister items in his mailbox, including a letter from Bernard B. O'Hare of the American Legion.

The letter reveals O'Hare's disdain for the protagonist, expressing disappointment that he remains alive while heroes from World War II have perished. O'Hare demands that the protagonist face justice, urging that he should be hanged or deported back to Germany, the country he is accused of loving. Alongside this letter, the protagonist finds a hate-filled newspaper, *The White Christian Minuteman*, which echoes the rhetoric he once espoused in Germany.

This chapter paints a vivid picture of the protagonist's internal conflict regarding his identity and past choices. It reveals the societal backlash he faces and the absurdity of his situation—living in obscurity while remnants of his past continue to haunt him. The correspondence he receives further underscores the tension between his former and present selves, accentuating the complexities of his existence in a society laden with prejudice and collective memory. Through Kraft's encouragement and O'Hare's animosity, the protagonist grapples with the legacy of his actions and the roles assigned to him by others.