

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, SANTA BARBARA  
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY      SANTA BARBARA CALIFORNIA      93106

April 18, 1983

Dear Ms .Thurman,

I have just finished reading your splendid biography of Isak Dinesen, and write to tell you how much I enjoyed it, and how much more I learned about Dinesen. I have been familiar with the African work for years, and more recently have been reading most of her other books, and also the recently published letters. But now I have a much clearer idea of who Dinesen was. I have been doing field work in Kenya and have spent about three years there over the past 13 years, so have had a chance to visit the house at Karen, as well as many of the other places that are mentioned. I have a special interest in the colonial period, both from my own involvement for five years as a colonial administrator in Tanganyika, and also because I teach a course on the social effects of colonialism.

In 1981 I went from California to Dares Salaam, travelling with my friend and colleague Bernard Riley, who had also fallen under the Dinesen spell (It was he who gave me your book). We decided to travel via Copenhagen, both to take advantage of the good service offered by SAS, and particularly to make a pilgrimage to Rungstedlund. We were dismayed to find that at first no-one at the SAS hotel seemed to have heard of the place, nor of Dinesen Blixen, but we persevered and on a drizzly Sunday morning travel led by bus, train and foot and were much rewarded by a stroll around the garden and bird sanctuary, and along the path by the sea. That visit helped to fill in some of the gaps we'd had in our idea of Dinesen, and now your book has for both of us been a revelation. And how well you write. Thank you for a memorable experience.

Sincerely  
David Brokensha

Judith Thurman  
c/o St. Martin's Press Inc., 175 Fifth Avenue  
New York NY 10010