

April 25, 1977

Dear Linda:

I don't know how you are able to keep track of my various versions of Pocket but if you can possibly manage to put out of your mind all <sup>my</sup> past attempts and read the enclosed script I'm *confident*. you will agree that I've got it.

Now I realize I'm asking the impossible since you have been giving the story a great deal of thought and *putting* aside all we've gone through with the text up til now, <sup>perhaps</sup> is asking too much. Anyway, I suspect you can understand my point;— I simply want <sup>^</sup> you to read it afresh.

It has taken much thought, getting to the core of the story. I'll even embarrass myself by repeating how I've had to study the original Corduroy. Unlike my other stories, Corduroy number One hasn't a thick plot as I'm sure you know. It has a theme and all that and in creating this sequel I've had to hold to the form and nature of the original. In other words, a book is a world of its own therefore in this new story I've had to keep within the bounds of *that* world.

Just possibly you would like to hear something of the background of "Corduroy" as I first came upon it. Of course I can't remember exactly how it started happening but I do recall wanting to do a story about a department store in which a character wanders around at night after the doors close. Then I also wanted the story to show the *vast* difference between the luxury of a department store as against the simple quality of life as lived by so many. The idea of simple basic values was another theme that was *rimbling* around in the back of my head. I then wondered who the logical protagonist could be. I went bore you with all the characters I thought of using. I don't remember how or when a toy bear lit on me, or came into my life but he must have come <sup>from</sup> way out of my past, you know, I could just see a bear wearing *green* corduroy overalls with one button missing. About here I must apologize for sounding pompous and analytical and even editorial but I'm leading up to a point which I wish to make about Pocket. Maybe I won't get there but please hang on... The minute I settled on Corduroy <sup>and Lisa</sup> everything came together. Now we switch to the laundromat. I've always wanted to do a picture book about a laundromat (said Corduroy!) I once had a studio right next door to one and I loved the whole scene. It seemed to me then, as it still does, that this is <sup>one of the few</sup> a place, where people come together <sup>naturally</sup> and on their own go about their chores. I once <sup>^</sup> tried a story about a cat in the laundromat but thank gawd that *got scratched!* However, the instant you mentioned over the phone about "Corduroy's Pocket" everything fell into place. I knew the laundromat was a perfect setting for this story. Even the underlying theme came clear..looking for a pocket

amongst all the laundry objects. The less self-conscious I am regards to how and why the laundromat seems a perfect setting the better, nevertheless I believe our pocket story evolves out of <sup>the</sup> good feeling about people getting together.

I hope that you will find in this latest version of Pocket how I've held to the same kind of motivation as in the original Corduroy. In other words Corduroy doesn't discover a pocket by himself, it's Lisa who does. And yet Cord learns how much he needs a pocket even though he doesn't know exactly why until Lisa gives him a name card to put in. I'm sure the reader will get it when the artist says <sup>Corduroy</sup> should have a name tag. I don't say on that page that Cord heard him but we know he *does*. He then continues his distracting adventures, which turn out to be pleasant experiences ( something you hoped I would make clear).

All this yakking would be sounding more natural and less ponderous if you and I were talking things over while guzzling vino at San Marcos ( isn't that the name of our favorite place on 52<sup>nd</sup> street? ) Reading it here in print doesn't make too much sense ,still I want you to know what goes on in my muddled mind. No matter how confused I might sound I feel confident that when it comes to the story at hand, I've managed to make things clear and, I hope, exciting. If it is also meaningful I wouldn't know how that crept in but maybe it's there. The reason I like "Corduroy" is because it goes along easily and naturally and the reader ( myself ) doesn't feel a message coming on.

Finally, what I'm getting at is the fact that I don't want to stir up any plot when Corduroy's world is a plotless world. No big need for whipping one together. It has taken me some time and work to understand this but I think I do now.

The only trouble with this letter is that I've not allowed you to get a word in edgewise. Naturally, I will welcome your thoughts on the subject so please let flow.

Ever so much  
love,  
Don