Letters and books in Conrad's Typhoon – or on writing and (mis-)reading

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Summary/Abstract: ‘Typhoon’ belongs to that group of Conrad's works which has experienced alternating fortunes at the hands of critics. At the very beginning it was classified as an uncomplicated story, whose “preoccupations are nearly all on the surface [...]. Thus 'Typhoon' requires no elaborate interpreting.”1 Jocelyn Baines believed that it was “one of Conrad's simplest, important tales, and has none of the ambiguous moral and philosophical overtones with which ‘Heart of Darkness' or Lord Jim reverberate.” Frederick Karl wavered in his critical assessment of the novel, regarding it at one time as being “as dull as its hero MacWhirr,” and at another as “almost top-quality work.” Recent criticism has re-evaluated the novella as “a remarkable part of the Conrad canon,” and “an artistic feat of the highest order.”
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Regardless how many books I've written (nearly 200) and sold (over 70 million), I fear if I'm not learning, I'm stagnating. My late mother was a convincing example of one who never believed she had arrived. Mom was not only a piano teacher well into her eighties, but she was also a piano student. So it's the memory of my mother that spurs me also to keep reading everything there is to read—especially about writing. The books below (in alpha order by author) represent a fraction of those available. You could read one per day for the rest of your life and not exhaust the resources. But, in my op