

REX STOUT HIGH MEADOW BREWSTER NEW YORK 10509

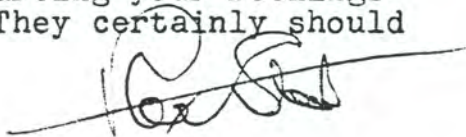
March 20 1973

To the Viking Copy Editor:

Dr. Johnson said it: "Such excess of stupidity is not in nature." Do you think Archie Goodwin should write and talk like a grade-school English teacher? Having written nearly three million of his words I know quite well how he handles them. Not a single one of the changes you suggest makes any sense.

And not only the use of the English language. As examples, take the two near the bottom of your second page which I have marked A and B. In A, Meer's being still alive is irrelevant. The "You did" obviously means "You knew him when you were trying to decide what he would do." It must be the past tense. In B: the murder was on May 20. This conversation was on June 26th. 37 days is five weeks and two days.

If I am hurting your feelings that's fine. They certainly should be hurt.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rex Stout', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and somewhat cursive.