

5th May, 1956.

My dear Besse,

I got this morning your letter of May 1st with great joy, and what entertaining news you have.

You do not mention whether you hired Perry Mason as one of your assistants. Indeed I gather that, rather like macaroni, it may be that the more you work at it the more comes out. They must have given you an anxious time, these 'Washington gangsters'.

I have been kept in a state of furious impatience by Oliver and Boyd, or more probably by the printers they may employ, for they are a very big business. I had hoped the book would be out long before now, for they have had it a year and I have not even a spare page proof to send you. I very much want you to see it, as I have had to burrow quite deeply into the logical underworld, in which a word of reassurance comes not at all amiss.

The tulips here have succeeded to the daffodils and crocuses; I have a vase of them in my room for the first time this morning, and the flowering shrubs, pear blossom, etc., have been rushing out quickly.

I have had to tell A. E. Brandt, who has left me for a long while without news of what arrangements he was proposing for an American trip, that I must give it up for this year, for I am firmly fixed by accepting a term's assignment at Michigan State for the Fall of 1957. I hope I shall not find a mathematical department full of "decision functions" and "random experiments" and all that New York jargon. I suspect it may be hard work trying to get people to think, if they have been working for the last 15 years trying to get mechanical devices to think for them, which seems to be the ideal of many even in academic posts!

Thank you for telling me about your mother. I can see now how much you must have been in her life. I fear that you must feel her loss deeply.

Yours ever,

I hope you like Australopithecus in his little t-ton jacket. They say he only weighed about 6 stone.