

9 April 1972

Dear Mary,

Best congratulations on the arrival of Dawn Elizabeth! And please give my very best wishes also to Bobbie and Larry. I am very glad too that you solved the mystery of the ring, which reassures me that it is possible to solve non-assassination, non-political puzzles.

Jones Harris had relayed your message. He was very thrilled that you were able to help him with the Japanese item. Between you and me, Jones erupts from time to time with frenetic excitement and activity (read "activity" as meaning laborious effort to be performed by others on his behalf), chasing blindly up blind alleys in pursuit of preposterous hunches and clues leading nowhere. Out of a certain old fondness for Jones, I usually indulge him. But the sad fact is that he has never come up with anything solid, and has often created much consternation and confusion. I have no idea why Jones has gone on this Japanese kick (overlooking, in his excitement, a witness no less important than Yaeko Okui!) and have not tried to find out, since he suffers from a bad case of top-secrecy and a touch of incoherence. As someone once said about Nixon, I am tempted to say about Jones that even when he does the right thing, he does it for the wrong reason.

An old and dear friend of mine, Walter, had offered to drive me out to Fire Island to hunt for a summer house, and we made the expedition yesterday despite a crazy-mixed-up spring temperature of 28° and snow flurries with 20-mile winds. The rental agent showed us four houses, two of which were cruddy and repulsive at any price (and they were high), the third, most attractive and inviting but also high and two long blocks from the beach.

The fourth house was a dream, the first house from the beach, maybe six feet from sand. On one side of the entrance there is a huge screened porch. You walk through the door into a huge living room about 20 x 15 feet, very pleasantly furnished with sofas, coffee tables, a huge fireplace. At one side there is a functional kitchen with washing machine, huge new fridge and the usual cupboards, sink, stove, etc., half along one wall and facing the rest along the opposite wall. Doors on the far wall of the living room open into three cheerful medium-size bedrooms, each of which has a second door leading on to a huge outside patio. There are two full bathrooms, and an overhead sun-deck that you ~~can~~ reach by ship-ladder. But the price of the house, June 15 to Sept 15, was way beyond my reach, especially since I could use it only for six weeks and it would be standing unused for at least another six weeks. I would have had to turn it down but then came Walter to the rescue. He loved the house so much that he decided to take it for the first month and the last two weeks, so that I can be in it from July 15 to end of August for two-thirds of what was asked and Walter will pay the rest. So, I took the house! and am real thrilled about it. Walter wants me to go out with him any weekend during his share that he does not have other guests, and I told him that he has full freedom to come during my share whether or not I have other guests. With three bedrooms, there should be no problem, and if you can make it to New York you will be more than welcome.

I have a short piece coming out soon in the Texas Observer on Lattimer and the autopsy photos/X-rays and will send you a copy when I receive it. Much love,