

Not for publication
Confidential Memo
From Rex Stout
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DESCRIPTION OF NERO WOLFE

Height 5 ft. 11 in. Weight 272 lbs. Age 56. Mass of dark brown hair, very little greying, is not parted but sweeps off to the right because he brushes with his right hand. Dark brown eyes are average in size, but look smaller because they are mostly half closed. They always are aimed straight at the person he is talking to. Forehead is high. Head and face are big but do not seem so in proportion to the whole. Ears rather small. Nose long and narrow, slightly aquiline. Mouth mobile and extremely variable; lips when pursed are full and thick, but in tense moments they are thin and their line is long. Cheeks full but not pudgy; the high point of the cheekbone can be seen from straight front. Complexion varies from some floridity after meals to an ivory pallor late at night when he has spent six hard hours working on someone. He breathes smoothly and without sound except when he is eating; then he takes in and lets out great gusts of air. His massive shoulders never slump; when he stands up at all he stands straight. He shaves every day. He has a small brown mole just above his right jawbone, halfway between the chin and the ear.

DESCRIPTION OF ARCHIE GOODWIN

Height 6 feet. Weight 180 lbs. Age 32. Hair is light rather than dark, but just barely decided not to be red; he gets it cut every two weeks, rather short, and brushes it straight back, but it keeps standing up. He shaves four times a week and grasps at every excuse to make it only three times. His features are all regular, well-modeled and well-proportioned, except the nose. He escapes the curse of being the movie actor type only through the nose. It is not a true pug and is by no means a deformity, but it is a little short and the ridge is broad, and the tip has continued on its own, beyond the cartilage, giving the impression of startling and quite independent initiative. The eyes are grey, and are inquisitive and quick to move. He is muscular both in appearance and in movement, and upright in posture, but his shoulders stoop a little in unconscious reaction to Wolfe's repeated criticism that he is too self-assertive.

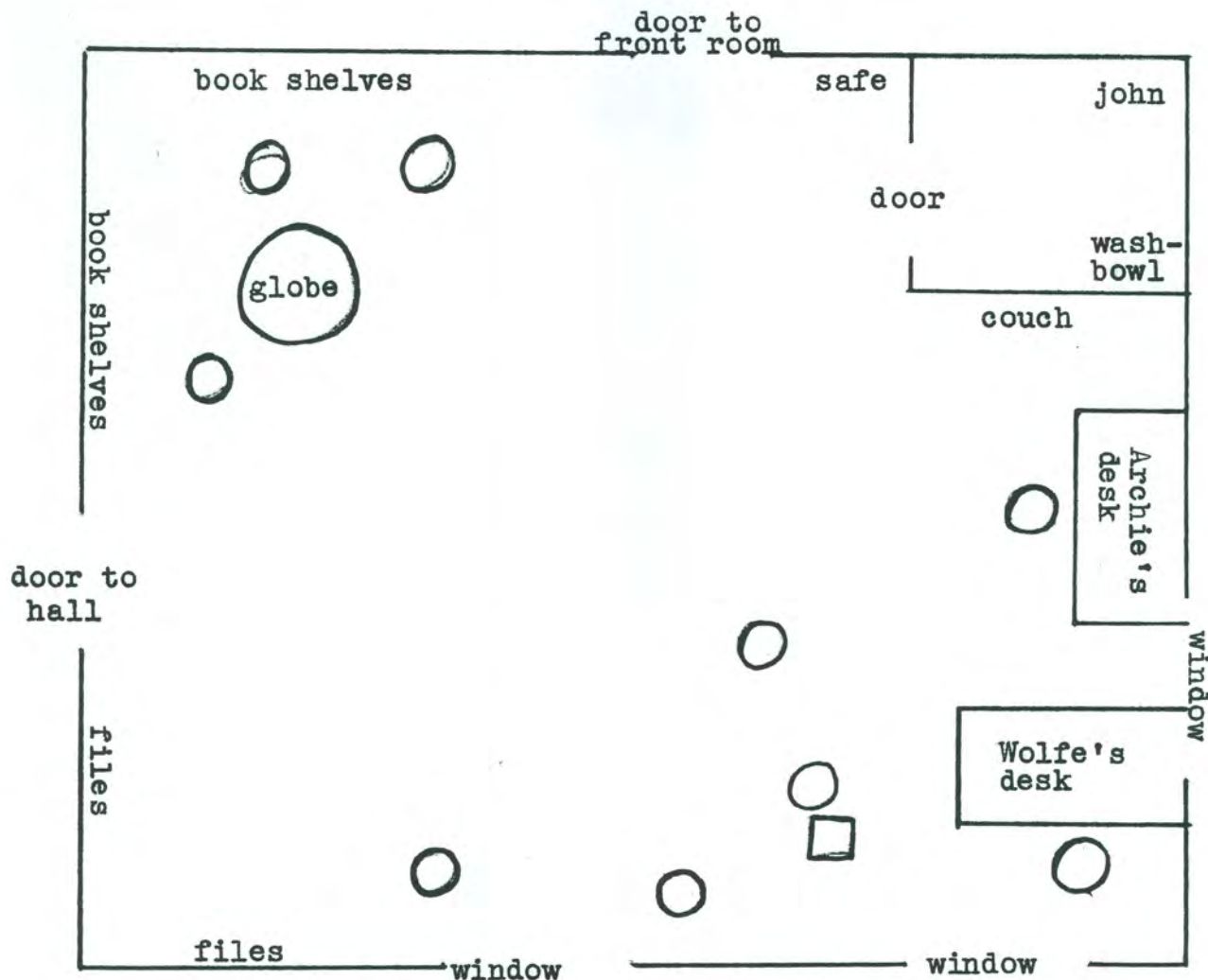
DESCRIPTION OF WOLFE'S OFFICE

The old brownstone on West 35th Street is a double-width house. Entering at the front door, which is seven steps up from the sidewalk, you are facing the length of

a wide carpeted hall. At the right is an enormous coat rack, eight feet wide, then the stairs, and beyond the stairs the door to the dining room. There were originally two rooms on that side of the hall, but Wolfe had the partition removed and turned it into a dining room forty feet long, with a table large enough for six (but extensible) square in the middle. It (and all other rooms) are carpeted; Wolfe hates bare floors. At the far end of the big hall is the kitchen. At the left of the big hall are two doors; the first one is to what Archie calls the front room, and the second is to the office. The front room is used chiefly as an anteroom; Nero and Archie do no living there. It is rather small, and the furniture is a random mixture without any special character.

The office is large and nearly square. In the far corner to the left (as you enter from the hall) a small rectangle has been walled off to make a place for a john and a washbowl — to save steps for Wolfe. The door leading to it faces you, and around the corner, along its other wall, is a wide and well-cushioned couch.

SKETCH OF OFFICE



In furnishings the room has no apparent unity but it has plenty of character. Wolfe permits nothing to be in it that he doesn't enjoy looking at, and that has been the only criterion for admission. The globe is three feet in diameter. Wolfe's chair was made by Meyer of cardato. His desk is of cherry, which of course clashes with the cardato, but Wolfe likes it. The couch is upholstered in bright yellow material which has to go to the cleaners every three months. The carpet was woven in Montenegro in the early nineteenth century and has been extensively patched. The only wall decorations are three pictures: a Manet, a copy of a Corregio, and a genuine Leonardo sketch. The chairs are all shapes, colors, materials, and sizes. The total effect makes you blink with bewilderment at the first visit, but if you had Archie's job and lived there you would probably learn to like it.