

#2. "We girls"  
(written March 6, 1932.)

Mailed to:

Sent

Returned

Yale Review, 125 High Street, New Haven, Conn.

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6/22/32  
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Fifth Floor Window, 230 E. Houston St. N.Y.

10/31/32

11/14/32  
NOTHING.

## WE GIRLS

Damnably work - the law. Toil and trouble,  
boil and bubble. Frauds and juries. Tricks and per -  
juries.

It's ~~late~~ late at night. I'm not in good humor.  
I've just put an old crone - a charwoman - out of the  
library. Guess I'm smoking too much. I'm tired of  
this case. The library is quiet save for the distant  
banging of those inevitable and doddering charwomen.  
Charwomen. H'm. The brokers are'nt - were'nt - the  
only ones to clean up on the Street. Pretty good -  
that. Must tell that one to Claude Piggott. Good  
old Claude.

Better get down that instruction on  
punitive damages. "The court further instructs the  
jury that should you believe from a preponderance of  
the evidence/<sup>that</sup> - - " "That" what? Hell. Can't think.  
Better have another cigar. I'll probably die with one  
of these things in my mouth.

Awfully quiet up here now. The charwomen  
must have assaulted some other office. Awfully quiet.  
Only the distant drone of traffic far below on the  
Street. Sounds like the uneasy snoring of some damned  
soul. Say, that's pretty good - for a lawyer. Maybe  
I should be writing books instead of briefs. Those  
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Well, got to get out these instructions tonight. I'll finish with the last witness in the morning. Must get them out. Big case. Big client. Hell, I must be a big lawyer.

Where's that book of instructions to juries? Books. Books. No originality in law. Damn these dirty law books. Dust. Trouble. Appeals. Reversals. Dead tripe, more like it. Ah - here it is. 'Instructions to Juries.' 'Damages. Punitive damages. See volume two.' Damn. Where in hell is volume two? Sure - naturally - not here. Book's out. Someone's left a slip. In Piggott's room - at the other end of the office. Naturally. Damn the jury. Damn instructions. Damn Piggott. Yes, damn you Piggott, even if you are a senior partner.

What a trek to Piggott's room. These corridors are sure dark. Where do they hide the switches? Ouch! What a hell of a noise. Sounds like a bar room riot. Those charwomen and their spittoons. Kicked over a whole flock of them - spittoons, not charwomen. Been looking for a spittoon all night too. Charwomen. Charred women. Pesky lot. No youth, no feelings, no sense.

Who left the light on in the reception room? Oh. "Goot eefning," says a broom handle supporting a charwoman. Damn those spittoons. Spit is a nasty word.

Piggott's office is locked. My book of instructions is locked. What a hell of a note. Crafty, suspicious Piggott. Devil on cross-examination. Tight too. Had a charwoman canned because she heaved out one of his nickel cigar butts.

Hell, I can't break down the door. Yes, Piggott would leave his transom open - to tempt someone. He's probably a trap suspended there.

Looks bad for those instructions. Only half done. Well, Claude, back to the library. Glad my name is'nt Claude. Law's a hell of a job. Still damn dark in this corridor. Miss those spitoons this time. Walk on the other side. Ouch! What a hell of a racket. More spitoons. Cuss-spiders! Who in hell does all the spitting? Charwomen, charcoal, scarecrow. I'm damned tired. Get those instructions done and so to bed. Big client, big lawyer, big headache.

What's all the noise in the library? What's the crowd? Ah me, a bevy of charwomen. Mops, pails and slops. What a drab lot. They're hanging over my work. The Lord save me from the claws of a cat!

They look up at me - bovine, herdish. I ask, "Where are my papers?"

"Clean," says a fallen breasted one.

"Clean what?", I shout, knowing. This library echoes at night.

"Clean. Tony clean. Tony take. Tony burn."

Strike me down. My instructions burned. Hours of work gone plumb to hell. No time. Too many spitoons. Too much Tony.

"What a hell of a note," I say. Don't swear before a lady. Where are the ladies? Can these drabs be human?

These old crows are eyeing me anxiously.  
All gathered there - mops and slops and anxious, drawn  
faces. Can they feel emotion? Can they actually be  
afraid? Hell, I must look mad. Damn it, I feel mad.  
Instructions gone. Light a cigar. Keep your dignity.  
Cigar's all gone, too. Smoke too much anyway.

Got to say something to these women. Why,  
there's a little dried up one with white hair and  
brown eyes. Why damn it man, she reminds me of <sup>my</sup> mother.  
Did'nt know these charwomen looked and acted like other  
women. The little one's frightened too. I must'nt  
act this way.

"Well," I say. Well, well, well. What in  
hell shall I say? Must say something. Dignity.

"I hope you've had your fun," I say. Weak.  
Petulant.

Charwomen are human. Relief. One or two  
smile anxiously. They move a little.

The little one with the color steps forward  
with a little curtsy. "Thank you, Mister," she says.  
"We girls like a little fun."

- END -

John D. Voelker,  
1033 Ontario St.,  
Oak Park, Illinois.  
2nd.draft. 3/6/32.

Submitted by:  
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Who left the light on in the reception room? Oh. "Goot eefning," says a mop handle, supporting a charwoman. Damn those spitoons. Spit is a nasty word.

Piggotts office is locked. My book of instructions is locked. What a hell of a note. Crafty, suspicious Piggott. Devil on cross-examination. Tight too. Had a charwoman canned because she heaved out one of his precious cigar butts.

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damages' alright. Light a cigar. Cigars gone too.  
Dear old Tony. Smoke too much anyway.

Got to say something to these women.  
Soemthing that will ring down the annals of char-dom.  
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"I hope you've had your fun," I say. Weak,  
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Relief. One or two smile anxiously. They  
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The little one with the color steps forward.  
A little curtsy. A soft voice.

"Thank you, sir," she is saying. "We girls  
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