

3/24/71

Dear both,

Today, pub date, felt like no other, save for a big victory (unless it leads to what I suspect is a planned scalping). Lil has a client with complicated affairs and the husband, a preacher, is always on call, so I can't go to bed, as I should, and I can hear just so much politely. The remail that is unanswered requires more time than I have (I keep hoping they'll be finished any minute) or is more complicated. Can't read, so I share a goodie with you.

Believe I told you Percy Foreman chickened out while they were putting the makeup on. Natch, his reason is that I'm a baddie, an irresponsible, etc.

They were going to pull a real whiteash this week, same time, same station, and I got wind and got my wind up, with some force and what might be called persuasion. So, after two long battles by phone yesterday, today they phoned to say they'd have me under circumstances I accepted. I leave early in the a.m., which is not the best preparation for a difficult night taping, but no choice.

First will be Dwyer, former prosecutor who, with his associate, Beasley (of the famous shift, as you'll read) have gone to their earned reward as judges. He was sent by the prosecution as their surrogate, for they dare not pull in NYC what they do in Tenn. Some judge, huh, airing in public what will come before him is Ray wins his appeal? But, that, too, will help. I knew it all along, but the station didn't acknowledge until today that Huie also had agreed. But get this:

Huie, who will follow Dwyer, will not face me. Nor will he, stout heart that he is, even say why himself. He has gotten the station (and have I ever agreed!) to say that he will not face me because I am an irresponsible writer! Aside from his own lofty and unimpeachable record, the partial delineation of which I think you'll relish, I am so "irresponsible" that he offered me all of his files, Foreman's, Hooker's (his lawyer's), and those of both Hanes. Now, how much more irresponsible can he judge me? I expect to read that letter, make a few quiet remarks, and enjoy Dwyer for supper. He, naturally, has contrary views. Be the first time I faced a judge this way, but I doubt he'll be any more than Nizer, if as uninhibited.

It is comforting to know that if the great do not have feet of clay, they have fleet feet when I'm near.

Foreman's indirect threat, one he wasn't man enough to deliver in person when I was but a few feet away, lead me to some not ungentle prodding, by immediate mail. I expect no answer, but I took Hanes' phrase, that he is the big wind from Texas, and told him it seemed to me more like broken wind. See how polite I can be.

Don't worry about the pictures. I've enough, all but one I wanted, and a good substitute for it. It was not easy paying for them, but I'm delighted the local papers would not let me have. Much better this way, and I've made a couple of friends getting. AP is half again UPI in charges. Or have they special prices for me?

Poor Lil. I guess she'll write before too long, the tax season having but three weeks to go. I don't know which is worse: having her work this way and not going more deeply into debt or worrying more about money and less about her.

Best regards,