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ABANDON ALL HOPE, YE WHO ENTER:
NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF A LAW STUDENT
by Ivan Lawdog

Editor's Note: The advent of spring brings with it all sorts of wonderful traditions here at the I.U. School of Law—students depart for break and the rest of us can find a parking space, thousands of daffodils begin to bloom only to be killed by freak snowstorms, 3rd years start screaming in panic because they still haven’t finished their B706 papers or, for that matter, found a job, etc... Among the most rewarding rituals, however, is walking into a certain reference librarian’s office, pointing a gun at his head and reminding him it’s time to whip up another edition of Res Ipsa Jocular. This year, though, the certain reference librarian came up empty-handed, probably because he was wearing a straight-jacket and sitting in the Stress Center after one too many bibliography requests from two faculty members who shall remain nameless (but we call them Professors Ken Dau-Schmidt and Susan Williams). Fortunately for all of us here at Res Ipsa Jocular, the certain reference librarian is sharing his room with a 1st year law student, Ivan Lawdog, who reluctantly supplied us with this insider’s perspective on the I.U. Law School experience.

8/25/97: My first day of law school! I am so eager, so excited, almost bursting with my dreams of high ideals and helping my fellow man! The orientation speeches given by Dean Aman, Dean of Students Len Fromm, and Dean of Admissions Frank Motley only served to further inspire me, although I still can’t tell whether Dean Motley was joking when he pulled me aside and muttered that I owe him $25,000 for letting me in I.U. because I got my B.A. from Purdue ... 

8/26/97: Met with my 3rd year peer advisor, a most curious person. Hope I don’t develop such a horrible nervous tic by the time I graduate. And why did he cross himself and giggle hysterically when I showed him my class schedule? He just kept repeating the names of my teachers, "Dworkin, Bethel, Bradley, Robel at 8 in the morning" over and over again. Well, I refuse to
be intimidated. I also refuse to purchase this baffling list of supplemental readings he suggested. I mean, gosh, I didn’t see Gilbert, Emmanuel, hornbooks, nutshells or Case Briefs on any of the reading lists posted by my professors. Which reminds me -- must hit the books tonight. Doesn’t look like very daunting to me ... some of these teachers are only asking us to read a few pages for tomorrow.

8/27/97: I seem to have grossly underestimated the attention to detail the professors require of us or, worse yet, how I would respond when called upon ... which happened to me in three different classes today. I don’t think I’ve wet my pants in terror since I was in kindergarten. On reflection, I probably shouldn’t have told Professor Dworkin that Vosburg v. Putney was “something about a knee.” Does Socratic Method involve wishing you were never born? I’ll have to talk to my peer advisor about that tonight when we meet with him at Nick’s.

8/28/97: Very important observation: drinking six pitchers of beer does not mix well with Civil Procedure at 8 a.m. the next morning. I’ve only been here three days, and I’ve already discovered something -- the authors of my civ pro text have completely stripped the cases of anything of interest. Professor Robel was definitely unamused when I mumbled that trying to get in personam jurisdiction was a crime against nature in most states. I think I’d better buy some case briefs and nutshells.

9/12/97: We had our first library lecture today. Thank God my peer advisor told me I can forget all about these silly books once I get my LEXIS and WESTLAW passwords, because I don’t think I’ve got time to figure out the difference between a reporter and a statutory code. And what’s the deal with this shepherdizing business? Sounds to me like some unwholesome practice with a sheep ... and speaking of unwholesome, I’ve got to quit going to Nick’s every night. My bank account is getting dangerously low.

10/13/97: Something horrible happened this weekend. The Black and Gold of my alma mater miraculously beat Ohio State in football on Saturday. I never knew Professor Bethel was an O.S.U. alum, that he was a rabid football fan or, worst of all, I was the only Purdue grad in my section of Contracts. I never knew it was possible for me to spontaneously hemorrhage from both ears either. All I remember is that after “discussing” Hadley v. Baxendale with Bethel for 50 minutes, I felt like he’d driven a crank-shaft through my skull. Kill me now, Lord.

10/15/97: Uhhh, Bethel is real serious about this football thing. When I couldn’t answer any more of his questions about foreseeability because my ears had started bleeding again, he made me get down on the floor and bow in the direction of Woody Hayes’ grave. I am going to spend the rest of the day at Nick’s ...

10/25/97: Since Dean Fromm stressed the importance of extracurricular activities during his orientation speech and I thought membership in a fraternal organization might look good on my resume, I joined the Men’s Law Cartel yesterday. We met at Kilroy’s and drank steadily from 2 in the afternoon until 8 in the evening. As luck would have it, I ran into Professors David and Susan Williams out for an evening stroll on Kirkwood Street after I left the bar. I dimly recall extolling the virtues of the Men’s Law Cartel to the Williams’, then violently regurgitating as David Williams began taking copious notes on my performance. Gee, I hope I get him for Con Law next semester!

10/29/97: Errr, judging by the most recent edition of the Indiana Law Annotated, Professor Williams was definitely impressed by my performance Friday night. Although he didn’t name names, I’ve become the first person drummed out of the Men’s Law Cartel.

11/14/97: Ms. Crosson gave me an F on my first office memo. Apparently there is a difference between reporters and codes. And why the hell didn’t she tell us we had to use cases decided after 1885? Special note to myself: go downtown and sell some plasma for beer money tomorrow.

11/29/97: Met with my Crim Law study group at Nick’s Hump Room last night. It’s amazing how 25 pitchers of beer will invest you with such a perfect sense of clairvoyance -- we’ve got Professor Bradley totally psyched out! That’s right: by the time the place closed and the bouncers started pistol-whipping us to get us out the door,
we'd determined Bradley will base the entire exam on the Model Penal Code's varying levels of culpability. The only question now is which one of us will nail down that A star!

12/8/97: A near disaster occurred -- I left the diskette with my Crim Law outline on my carrel and a squirrel got into the Library and actually started gnawing on it. I tried to load the disk into a computer and retrieve some of the data, and somehow managed to set fire to the entire computer lab, which definitely perturbed a number of my fellow students, not to mention Juliet Smith, the Electronic Services Librarian. After surveying the damage, though, Ms. Smith, Ken Dunn, Dave Lankford, and Kris Skjervold seemed to lighten up, and even jokingly suggested that I should smear my neck with peanut butter so that the Library squirrel would chew through my carotid artery the next time he saw me. At least, I think they were joking ... No matter -- I am going to kick butt on that exam!

12/12/97: I am smearing my neck with peanut butter in the hopes that the Library squirrel will return and chew through my carotid artery. Not a single question about the Model Penal Code on Bradley's exam. I saw several members of my study group standing at the intersection of Indiana and Third Street attempting to throw themselves in the path of an approaching campus bus. I might've been able to balance out the beating I am going to take on the Crim Law exam with my Contracts exam, but half the test was based on a hypo from Hadley v. Baxendale, so I spent most of the three hours on my knees, bowing towards Woody Hayes' grave with blood streaming from my ears. The way things are going, I'd better wear a pair of Depends to my Torts exam ...

1/12/98: A new semester begins today, but I am something less than enthusiastic, having spent Christmas Break locked in my bedroom with a bottle of Everclear, reading want ads for janitorial positions. It also looks like I'll be selling a kidney over Spring Break to pay for the next batch of Gilbert's, Emmanuel's, hornbooks, nutshells and canned briefs -- I somehow transferred my entire savings account to Nick's last semester. Real discouraging note: went to the Registrar's Office to see what's become of my peer advisor. Sherrilyn Lawrence just laughed and laughed, then told me he'd transferred to an unaccredited school in California that would give a diploma to people with 1.3 GPAs. Never knew there was a Judd For The Defense Law School in Palm Springs ...

1/28/98: Okay, something pretty weird is going on in my Property class. Professor Stake invented this game to teach us the rule of capture, and told us to bring lots of dimes. While I admit I was never too good at statistics and I didn't get a chance to read anything about the rule of capture this weekend because I've recently sold so much plasma that I've been unconscious for the last 72 hours, I still don't understand how Stake walked away with over a thousand of my freaking dimes! I mean, gosh, what kind of law school is this where a professor can fleece his own students??!

2/14/98: Actually got a date for Valentine's Day with Ima Grind from my study group. Met her at Siam House for dinner at 6 and the evening was going wonderfully until we started discussing classes ... at around 6:15. Ima's opinion of me went straight down the tubes when I confessed that I thought springing interests involved a truck's shock absorbers. I tried to explain that I missed most of that particular lecture because Stake had knocked me unconscious with a stale pancake, and the next thing I remembered was Professor Baude rambling on about mudflaps in Con Law, but it was no use. Of course, I probably didn't score any points with Ima when I told her at the end of the meal she'd have to pick up the check because I'm still trying to recover my economic losses to Stake in that infernal dimes game. On a more positive note, Ima did congratulate me on my aspirations to become a public defender, and I'm certain her somewhat sharpish comment that "it will give you the opportunity to rub shoulders with slimeballs who are almost as evolved as you" was just her way of thanking me for a wonderful evening.

2/20/98: My tenuous relationship with Ms. Grind completely broke down yesterday when Ms. Crosson announced that we would be teamed up as partners for the final appellate arguments. Although I'm sure Ms. Grind was somewhat overwrought when she started screaming the phrase "drunken pariah," I was a little more than chagrined
this morning when Ms. Crosson informed me Ima had transferred to the Judd For The Defense Law School in Palm Springs. Ms. Crosson, however, took pity on me and told me I'd be working with another student named Vinnie Gumma who, oddly enough, I've only seen twice in any of my classes. I got Vinnie's number from the student directory and phoned him this evening so we can get to work. I'm a little worried now that I'll have to do most of the work, because Vinnie told me he's paying off his tuition running something called a "cat lab." Gee, I hope he's not one of these awful vivisectionists all the posters around school have been warning us about ...

2/27/98: I didn't think Professor Bethel could possibly carry a grudge this long, but after Purdue giving O.S.U. a royal waxing on the basketball last night, I learned otherwise. The last thing I remember about yesterday's Contracts class, I was babbling about how collateral estoppel was a traffic offense and Bethel told me "to assume the Woody Hayes position." The next thing I knew, I was bouncing off the walls of a rubber room here in the Stress Center. Do you have any idea how hard it is to keep a diary on the walls of a padded cell with your own blood? Eh? EH?!

3/24/98: What jolly fun! I just got a new roommate today, and it's the Reference Librarian who taught our legal research classes! If only he'd shut up about the differences between reporters and statutory codes ...

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RES IPSA JOCULAR'S ADVICE FOR THE LOVELORN

According to the web-use statistics compiled by the Law Library's crack computer staff, I.U. law students seem to spend an inordinate amount of time perusing the many personal ad services available over the Internet. (If you wish to get a complete web-use print-out telling you how many hours your classmates are wasting trying to find a date, bring $500 cash to the Reference Office.) In order to better assist you in your thoroughly misguided efforts to find that perfect match, our lonely hearts specialists have compiled the following list of common personal ad phrases along with more accurate translations describing what these singles really are looking for in a prospective mate. Happy hunting!

Part One: Ads by Males Seeking Females

Ad: I'm a laid-back, easy-going guy
Translation: I'm a fat slob and god help me if the State Board of Health ever finds out about my kitchen

A: I like quiet evenings at home
T: I am too broke and/or too cheap to take you out

A: Life is an adventure designed for two
T: I am manic-depressive

A: I am a moderate social drinker
T: I like to drink until I vomit

A: I am an ex-athlete
T: There are parts of my body I can't reach with a washcloth anymore

A: Looking for a successful business woman
T: Looking for a reliable meal ticket

A: I enjoy long drives in the country
T: I want to take you out to the boonies so no one will hear you screaming

A: Looking for a very discreet sex partner
T: I am married, have a highly visible position in the community, and would probably make excellent blackmail material

A: I am an artist at heart
T: I am utterly unemployable

A: I enjoy fishing and camping
T: I enjoy tearing the guts out of carp and sleeping on rocks

A: I am new to personal ads and this is the first time I've tried anything like this
T: Women won't touch me with a ten-foot pole

A: Self-esteem required
T: I treat women like dirt

A: Looking for a girl like the one who married dear old dad
T: I need a mommy
Part Two: Ads by Females Seeking Males

A: Seeking someone who will warm up those lonely winter nights
T: Looking for someone to take care of my gas bill

A: Looking for someone special
T: Will settle for someone who won't knock out what's left of my teeth

A: Must be romantic, honest, sincere and emotionally stable
T: Even if you existed, you wouldn't need to be reading the personals

A: I enjoy candlelit dinners
T: I prefer eating in the dark so you can't see that I'm stealing what's on your plate

A: I enjoy long moonlit walks
T: My real boyfriend is hiding behind the next tree with a tire iron -- how much money you got in your wallet, Jack?

A: I like to party
T: Do you know where I can get some good drugs?

A: I like to go camping
T: I've never been out with a guy who could afford a motel room

A: Non-smoker, non-drinker
T: I smile once every leap year

A: Looking for a man with a good sense of humor
T: You must be able to laugh at all of my moronic stories about my idiotic friends

A: I have a wild sense of humor
T: I can't remember a punchline for more than thirty seconds

A: I have a smile that will knock you off your feet
T: Please marry me and pay for a lifetime of orthodontia

A: You must know how to treat a woman right
T: Can I see your credit cards?

A: I need lots of cuddling and hugging
T: 100 mg of Prozac ain't making a dent in my case of clinical depression

A: I have an advanced degree
T: I am incapable of laughter

WORKING WITH TROWELS

According to a Reuters news dispatch, Professor Joe Hoffmann, who is on leave this year in Japan, was arrested last week for engineering the economic collapse of several Pacific Rim countries over the past six months. In a phone interview with this reporter, Hoffmann vigorously denied all charges. "It's all a horrible misunderstanding," Professor Hoffmann desperately claimed. I was in a sushi bar back in September when after my fifth glass of saki, I suddenly realized I could make a killing on certain Asian markets by adjusting my investment strategies according to the rating theories Jeff Stake and I devised when we were trying to correct U.S. News & World Report's mistakes in ranking American law schools. I can't possibly be held accountable for what went wrong, especially when you consider that I got hold of some tainted fugu fish that night! Besides," Hoffmann maintained, "Bill Hicks, Ann Gellis, and Sarah Hughes swore up and down that my ratings theory would absolutely revolutionize the world of international securities investment!" This reporter immediately contacted Professor Hicks, who is on leave in Ireland this semester. Professor Hicks muttered a few unintelligible words about being too busy "hiring the IRA to plant a car-bomb" in his own auto and hung up, while Professors Gellis and Hughes hurriedly applied for visiting professorships at the Judd For The Defense Law School in Palm Springs, where they will be joining at least fifty former 3rd year students.
SUGGESTION BOX

(In every other issue of Res Ipsa Jocular, Associate Director of the Law Library Linda Fariss puts on her fireproof suit, courageously attempting to provide civil answers to your petty whining and monomaniacal cant. It’s a thankless job, but somebody’s got to do it ...)

Question: I can’t believe this! I was studying down in the Pit when I suddenly felt this itching sensation on my arm. I looked down and was aghast to find fleas hopping from the carpet onto my limbs! What in the world is going on?!! THE READING ROOM IS INFESTED WITH FLEAS!!!

Answer: Oh no— not again! The guys from Orkin swore we wouldn’t have anymore problems with fleas! We’ll take care of the situation as soon as possible. Stop by my office and we’ll see if we can’t get you a bottle of Kwell Shampoo.

Question: KWELL??! WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT??! I SAID FLEAS, NOT LICE!!!

Answer: Well, we can never be too careful when we’re dealing with law students. Oh, yes, by the way—if you think the fleas came from the rats people have been seeing sky-diving from the Library atrium, you might want to see your doctor and get tested for bubonic plague.

Question: Hate to tell you this, but there’s a squirrel loose in the Library again, and this one seems to be intent on burying food for the winter in my con law text book. Having to read the Lochner case is bad enough, but the little rodent’s completely chewed up Peckham’s majority opinion!

Answer: What, the squirrel’s back too? Have no fears — if he’s dining on Lochner, he’ll probably die of indigestion any day. Just to be on the safe side, we’re calling in some people from the Animal Shelter.

Question: I am at my wits end! This is the third time in a week that SLA’s "Kiss-a-Pig" porker has broken out of his pen in the fourth floor janitor’s closet, leaped on my carrel and demanded that I kiss him! When I came to this law school, I had no idea I’d be dealing with livestock!

Answer: That’s odd ... I thought the Law School Bulletin gave very specific warnings about our faculty ...

Question: I am losing my mind. My carrel is on the third floor, just outside the conference rooms, and I know for a fact Professor Fred Cate keeps his trained monkeys in Room 306C. While I understand Professor Cate needs the little primates to help him with his writings, I simply must protest about the noise the monkeys make while I’m trying to study!

Answer: Then maybe you should go to a library. You see, we’re converting this place into A FREAKING ZOO!!! I CAN’T TAKE IT ANYMORE!!!

(Be sure to drop your comments and criticisms about the I.U. Law School Zoological Gardens in the Suggestion Box at the front desk, or email them to www.law.indiana.edu/tell_somebody_who_cares)