Josephine Reinhold's Taped Letter

Track 01 - To Lawrence Reinhold
American Embassy, Bonn, Germany

Speaker: Josephine Reinhold, Lawrence's mother
Recipient: Lawrence Reinhold
Recording date: circa 1978 (estimated)
Duration: 16 minutes, 32 seconds

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[00:00:00]

Josephine Reinhold: It is 20 minutes after midnight, and no doubt you're standing watch. I can just see you in your-- in the embassy, uh, next to your big panel of controls. Um, your dad left for work, uh, about 10 o'clock this evening. So as usual, I'm a widow. It is Friday. No, this is already Saturday morning, 20 after 12. I, um, don't know whether this is good or bad, but he works all week, and he works the weekends.

[00:00:42]

His theory being that what good is it to be around home because we-- I have to continually study. So he feels as long as I have to study, he may as well work. And besides, as long as I do not have a job, every little bit kind of helps. Um- In regard to that contract, I think you're s- you're talking about the land contract.

[00:01:11]

Now, in all actuality, Larry, the contract, the actual contract that you own that land, you will not get that. Uh, the mean-- the reason I'm saying this is that, um, we hold the contracts from the farm also. Gary Schaefer doesn't have them. When the mortgage is paid off, he will then be given that contract. But by the same token, I'm highly irritated myself because we have paid off the land, and we don't have our contract yet.

[00:01:50]

And one day, I'm just going to become angry enough, and I'm going to stop by Vern's lawyer myself, and I'm gonna give him particular hell. So, uh, Vern's holding your contract. It is safe, and you will not get the contract until the mortgage is paid. So do not become upset about it. Uh, didn't Aunt Eunice send you some papers on, uh- How much you are paying.

[00:02:17]

Uh, golly, I forget the name of these papers, but it, it gives you a rundown of the amount you're paying off, the principal that you are paying off on the land, and the amount of interest you are paying. You know, this tape is quite short, uh, 30 minutes, and I could ramble on, so let's get off the contract. Uh, hopefully you're not ever going to be sassy with Uncle Vernon, um, because really you will not get a hold of the contract.

[00:02:47]

Um, I am certainly happy that you had a ride with this lawyer as much as I'm against hitchhiking. Uh, so you actually learn the dangers of taking guns over the state line, how you're really putting yourself in jeopardy, plus the, the people that are, uh, you're asking to hold these guns. Um, what is your friend's name?

[00:03:14]

Uh, let's call him Charlie. Uh, tell your friends that, your friend that, um, in regard to this recording, uh, music, the girls love country western, and boy, when he mentioned that, the girls' eyes just lit up. So anytime he wants to make that type of a recording, the girls will, will, uh, see to it that they gave him a thank you.

[00:03:40]

Um, I, the girls may tell you about it if they have enough room on the tape. You know what? I like the rights of those German women, especially on that one particular day. Boy, what would your dad say if I tried something like that? You know, I think I'd be kicked from here to hell and back again. Um, about Uncle Bill, I phoned Florida the other day, and he is not well.

[00:04:12]

Um, he went through a heart catheterization in hopes that there would be an opportunity for him to have heart surgery, but his heart has been damaged that badly that no way can this be done. In fact, um, Uncle Vern and Aunt Eunice flew to Florida. They've been gone now since, I think, Tuesday. Uh, they were going to spend time and hopefully to help Uncle Bill straighten out some of his affairs.

[00:04:42]

Um, he is highly sedated, and he is very weak. He can drive his car. Well, I think all of that was pretty much in, um, Aunt Libby's letter. So other than that, his heart is damaged very severely, um, on the bottom of the heart muscles. And since I'm in the process of studying the heart and the circulatory system or blood, um, I really am quite interested in Uncle Bill's.

[00:05:18]

And I called him because, as Barbara would say, he will never know whether the next pain he receives or gets might be the last. And I thought, "Well, gee, I might send out that many long distance phone calls, but I'm going to give my brother one phone call every now and then." And, um, of course, I always got to think about Grandma.

[00:05:43]

Um, Uncle Vernon broke his arm, uh, left arm, wrist, and it was a most unusual accident. Of course, any of that Uncle Vernon has are more or less unusual. Uh, he was down in the local pub in Buffalo, and, uh, he got up and was gonna go over and play cards with some friends, and the bar stool, when he got up, had a tendency to tip.

[00:06:10]

And he reached back to catch it with his foot, and his foot became entangled. And however he went down broke his arm. He's highly irritated with that cast, uh, and yet he's fortunate, uh, where Carol had the cast way up over her elbow, Uncle Vernon's is only to the elbow. Um, so you like sardines, huh? Well, well, well.

[00:06:37]

Minds do change, don't they, Larry? And you'll find that you'll go through this process as you grow up, uh, and become older. Your attitude will change. This is why I believe I always hope that you will never be irritated with Dad and I because we were tough with you kids, and we may be far more lenient with Valerie or the baby.

[00:07:01]

I find often that older children reprimand their parents because they say, "Well, how come we couldn't get away with that? And that little sissy pants over there, she can get away with anything." But as you, your lifestyle changes, you become more lenient, and well, it's a continually changing process. And you like your Band Camp's pork and beans, made your dad laugh.

[00:07:27]

Um, darn that phone call. Um, I'm sorry to hear about that with Alvern and Rick, but I, I don't know. Um, Alvern write, very, uh, rarely writes anymore. Um, uh, maybe the baby and the new home and all the work is, uh, just giving him too much to do. I really don't know. I thought she had... Well, I don't know. Would you call it a coolish attitude or what?

[00:07:55]

But, uh, that, you know, she thinks the world of you, so I can't see that there. Um. We like talking to you, but gosh, you'll have to call in the nighttime, Larry, uh, because, um, Dad and I are rarely around here. Uh, you tell your friend, let's call him Charlie, uh, we enjoy his talking and on the tape. Uh, does he give you a bit of harassment?

[00:08:29]

Um, kinda get that feeling. Uh, you should have heard your dad laugh of... when you were explaining about your problem with your whiskers and, uh, how they grow. Uh, don't feel bad. Your dad and I are not hairy people. Uh, consequently, you children, this is a genetic thing with you people, with you kids. Um, and then again, you know, some just don't grow it on their face.

[00:09:02]

They grow it elsewhere. Um, and how about that, you two guys? Uh, would you believe I don't have time to raise canaries? So Valerie has taken over raising canaries, and it really tickled Dad and I. She'd come bouncing up the steps. She had put these, this male and female together, and of course, I know what she was seeing.

[00:09:28]

Uh, this male canary just prancing back and forth on his cage, bursting his little heart out with song, and she comes running upstairs. She's telling us, "You should see him." Um, and she was just thrilled. Then she comes again. I think now the two of her, um, parent birds are, um, have eggs in the nest, and she's watching them.

[00:09:53]

You know, I can just about hear when she has her first little baby canary. I can also hear about the time she loses a baby canary. But what pleases me is that I finally have somebody that's understanding why I like fooling around with these birds. Um, how about sending us a picture of Joan? Is Charlie giving you a bit of harassment on Joan too?

[00:10:19]

Uh, sounds like kind of a nice girl. You have to describe her a little bit more. Is she, uh... Sounds like she's just a, a little bit of a thing. Um, say, have you gained any weight, Larry? The last time I recall, you weighed 145, and in this tape you mentioned 150. You know, gaining weight is a no-no. Uh, you're small and, uh, like Uncle Vernon, you'll put it on and it goes on easy, but boy, she don't come off. Um, how you'd like to go with that gun.

[00:10:59]

Are you lo- losing your expert, uh, marksmanship that you used to hold back in Medford? Um, you know, Larry, you've been ... I ... Like Dad and I said, we could hardly believe you were in Germany six months. So the next year and a half will go fast. Right at this time, it doesn't look that way. Yeah. But we're waiting for the day to see you come home and, and may- maybe take Dad's .22 and trek across the field with Queenie behind you.

[00:11:33]

Of course, you shoot that gun, you know Queenie would come sailing back home lickety-split. Um, school. Man, I don't know, Larry. That was a big bunch I chewed off. One of my closer friends, and there's many of them I have made at the school, but this one particular lady lives in Muscatine, and, uh, she cries.

[00:12:00]

The schoolwork is so ... They push it at us. I don't think that a day goes by that we don't have a test, and they shove it at, to us at the weekend, that we, we just have to absolutely ignore the family. Um, you ought to see how I piecemeal a few words in with the girls and, uh, sandwich the laundry in and spend a few minutes with your dad.

[00:12:29]

It's just continuous study. I, um, I might go to bed at midnight, and I might set the alarm for 4:00 in the morning, and I'll run this tape recorder. But, uh, it's, it's the way it is, and it sounds like this first quarter is just going to be, uh, sheer horror with studying and tests and ... Well, like Valerie says, "Mom," she says, "you have studied more in the past month than I have in two years of school."

[00:13:02]

And I ... Maybe it's because it takes longer for me to grasp. I don't know. It is considerable memorizing. And Dad's working. Well, he works, like I said before, um, at John Deere's, and now he is working in Washington, Iowa. You know where Muscatine is. Um, Washington's on the other side of Muscatine. So I guess Dad is gone.

[00:13:32]

He's about 60 miles away, and then he stays in a motel over there at, at night. They pay him mileage. They pay his hotel room and even his meals. So he's trying to get a little money ahead because we want to leave for North Dakota. Uh, there has been a little bit of a change here. My car isn't running right, and, uh, these Iowans have screwed her up so badly that- I called Uncle Lyle and we're going to leave Sunday, and I'm going to leave my car by Uncle Lyle and rent a car, and from there go on to North Dakota.

[00:14:10]

Then I will come back, or we will come back, and I'll... Hopefully he'll have my car overhauled. Uh, I am using considerable oil. So, um, but there's something about the carburetion system. I just don't know, for putting in a carburetion kit that I had so much trouble, uh, getting that car to run properly. And it's, well, it just, it just chokes itself to death.

[00:14:39]

So we will be going to North Dakota on the morning of the 3rd, and we will have to be coming back, and I will have to take those books along with me, uh, because we've got a big test on the Monday that we get back. We're going to come back and spend time overnight by Lois and David in Des Mo- uh, Boone, Iowa, um, and spend David Hoppy's and my birthdays, because our birthday's on the same date.

[00:15:13]

And Lois is planning that we will be there for Easter Sunday dinner, and then we're gonna come bebopping home. Um, the twins are not going. They don't wanna take off time from work. They'd rather take some time off right after school and go to Wisconsin and visit with Marlene. Uh, would you believe March 20, 21st, we had six inches of snow.

[00:15:38]

It's all gone now, but boy, it really snowed. Cars were upside down in the ditch and, uh, stuck and, oh, whatnot. Um. Oh yeah, your dad likes the Country Bumpkin song. Uh, I came home the other night after a... Well, I left for s- I leave for school at 6:30 in the morning, and, uh, by the time I get clear across several cities to get there, um, takes 30 miles of city driving, and then I am able to find a parking place close so I don't have to carry all these books.

[00:16:18]

So, um I get there, leave home about 6:30