

Letters from Prison

August 16, 2011

Dear Marie,

Hello Sweetheart, how are you? As always, I hope to find you and yours and all of the Piecemakers, healthy and content in the Almighty's Hands!

Wow, I'm truly overwhelmed by all the kind words that you impart to me in your last (Aug. 7th) letter. Thank you my dear and you can be sure that my heart is overjoyed each and every time I read it. To hear you say that I brighten your day gives me much happiness and many blessings! I also want to let you know that for you to quote a Bob Dylan song on my behalf truly makes my heart soar! It is "I" who must say, "If not for you I'd be sad and blue, if not for you. If not for you, my sky would fall, rain would gather, too. Without your love I'd be nowhere at all, I'd be lost if not for you." And you know it's true! Your letters Marie, always come to me when my heart is longing for company, out here on The Front Lines of the California (Tough on Crime) Dirty War! And, I sincerely want you to know how very blessed and grateful I feel each and every time I receive another parcel from you! My cup runneth over.

Yes, that would be terrific if the Piecemakers Band could come up here for a performance in our huge chapel. We (here at CMC) certainly would appreciate the respite and chance to give thanks to the Lord with your son's band. Oh, how joyous that would be! But as you said, there is sooooo much red tape and the logistics are completely out of the question. I'm sorry to say that the cost would be a major factor, too. So what I'll do is close my eyes say a prayer of thanks, and imagine that my dreams came true. I am in our chapel listening to the Piecemakers Band and you guys sound great and amazing! Praise the Lord!

Oh, by the way, "The Saga of the Crows" was a revelation and you always send me "food for thought" in your wonderful anecdotes. I don't know if I've ever told you that my father also had to have his leg amputated in the late '80s due to diabetes? It was so traumatizing for him that he never made it out of ICU alive. So I am very receptive and sorry to hear about your Ray. Be sure that he is also in my prayers!! (1 Corinthians 15:55)

****But thanks be to God, who gives us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Well, my dear Marie, I hope that you and all of the Piecemakers are having a

blessed, wonderful summer down there in sunny Costa Mesa. Our weather, here on the central coast, has been absolutely perfect. Not too hot, not too cold, just right, and as you already know how important it is to be blessed with heavenly weather — huge factor when you're trapped in a cell! Praise God for all of my many blessings and especially my Dear Sweet beloved Marie K! May God bless and keep you and yours always. You are always right here in my heart, thoughts and prayers.

Until we give thanks together again, sincerely,

Louis

P.S. Keep (please) a spot at your breakfast table for me. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons and daughters of God." (Romans 8:14)

Marie's Answer

August 21, 2011

Beloved Louis,

What is there about you, your letters, your heart, your spirit that soothes my anguish, brings rest to my soul. Ah, another one of those mysteries of life. And another mystery. Once again, my day is better already with your sweet letter.

How can this damn cat of mine who was as flaky as, well, as the warden at San Luis, have gotten so she is on my lap helping me write my letters and by the way, not of my choosing???? Did I ever write you the story of my kitty???

Ye gods, and you knew that Bob Dylan song??? How about this one I will sing to you. "You are my sunshine, my only sunshine. You make me happy when skies are blue. You will never know dear, how much I love you. Do not take my sunshine away." That is so old it was popular 50 years ago when music was rather corny at times.

Yesterday was Friday and one "different day". Of course we had the music and it was tops. The store was humming. But that is not the "different" part of my story.

Two ex inmates stopped in for lunch. They seemed a new breed. Both were soft and tender hearted and had that love for God.

One was tattooed from eyelids to toenails and the other looked like a rotund sweet Amish guy. They were tender and sweet and reminded me of the hippie days.

So the one without money we fed and clothed and I pray we see him again.

And I pray all is well with you as life is one continued story played out day by day.

And here is a story of my life played out in my younger days.

Always my love,

Marie 

Hazelnut Time in Wisconsin

The year was sometime in the late twenties.

The summer days on the farm were rapidly coming to an end. The leaves were turning their beautiful colors. The pheasants were roaming the fields looking for food, the honk honk of the Canadian geese resounded in the chill of the day, and it seemed like we were headed into a snow storm when Harv, my brother, who was

seven years older than myself said, "Let us go see if we can find some hazelnuts before the snow flies."

The days were getting shorter and with no electricity we had to make it home before dark. The woods which was virgin on our 80 acre farm was about ½ miles from the house. So we got our burlap bags, which we called gunny bags, and set off.

Not only were the hazelnuts so plentiful that we filled two bags to the very top, but the wild bushes were filled with sweet raspberries which made for some delicious eating. What we call hazelnuts, the stores out here in California call filberts.

Back to my story. The bags were so full and heavy that Harv said, "I will go home with Lade, the horse and get a cart and come back and pick you up. Just sit and wait for me." Now Harv was a kinda no nonsense brother.

So brave Harv jumped on Lade's back, took a-hold of her mane and directed her down the lane toward the house and barn. There were two mud puddles in the lane that never ran dry even during the hot summer days and they were filled to the top with muddy water. When Harv directed Lade to go through the mud toward home, well, Lade had some other ideas.

Now Lade was as docile as a work horse can be but she would be damned if she would walk through that mud puddle. As she got right in the middle she swayed her behind and Harv went flop, right into the mud.

Well, as tragic as the fall was, we sisters laughed until we cried and Harv stormed out of the mud, grabbed poor Lade by the throat and told her, "Giddy yap, you damn horse."

Well the story has a happy ending as it was not too long a wait and Harv appeared with Lade hitched to a cart, and we all rode home with the hazelnuts, content that it was one more vittles we had stored away for the long cold Wisconsin winter.

Somehow there is something we have lost along the way as we take for granted the filberts we see in the store, not knowing that someone spent a lot of time harvesting and husking these sticky nuts. Thank God for His bountiful earth, always abundantly giving, giving for any who may partake freely of His bounty. Life of all kinds is a miracle working its magic daily. Thank you dear Lord of heaven and earth for your harvesters that work to provide all of us with our daily bread.