**1. INT. NPR STUDIO - PRESENT**

(MUSIC: NPR like chime. SFX: Small studio ambience and warm radio announcer quality to the dialogue here.)

**CARY ONANON:**

WFIU, Bloomington Indiana. Where you don’t need to be an expert, if you learn something new everyday.

(MUSIC: Newsbreak transition.)

**CARY ONANON (CONT’D):**

News at the top of the hour. I’m Cary Onanon.

**DAN V PRESCOTT:**

And I’m Dan V. Presc…

**CARY ONANON:**

And I’m Cary Onanon. In a growing effort to take our mind off of world events, we here in the newsroom have decided to replace the trending news bites, typical of our daily routine, with something that has been lost in recent years due to the demise of that great American institution; the newspaper.

**DAN V. PRESCOTT:**

Yes, that’s right Cary…

**CARY ONANON:**

I know. And with last July’s breaking news of the discovery of thousands of hours of sound recordings.

**CARY ONANON (CONT’D):**

On the side of the box was written, “1935-1942: The Hoosier Vagabond, and that girl who rides with him”. From one of the all-time great reporters of the art form, and Indiana’s favorite son; you’re in for a treat today. I’m Cary Onanon. With the story is the omniscient Dan V. Prescott...(he pronounces it Press-Kot)

**DAN V. PRESCOTT:**

It’s Press-cuit…Thank you, Cary On-and-on.

**CARY ONANON:**

I’m Cary Onanon!

**DAN V. PRESCOTT:**

And-on.

**CARY ONANON:**

I am.

**DAN V. PRESCOTT:**

Well folks, you *are* in for a treat today, because you will be the first to hear the story from the source himself…

**MUSIC SEGUE:**

**1a. INT. MOTEL ROOM - 1936**

(SFX: The crackle of an old wire recording is heard and small hotel room ambience. NOTE that all of the SFX played-back on-air from the recording should be mono and have a vintage sound quality. Reference video: https://youtu.be/90ihiTwJPCc?t=967)

**ERNIE (DISTORT):**

Where this wandering business will get us or where it will end, I have no idea. Five years ago my boss in Washington got tired of my pestering him about the travel idea, so he said, “Oh, all right, go on and get out. Try it a little while as an experiment. We’ll see how it turns out”. From that day on he never mentioned it again.

(SFX: The recording cuts out.)

**CROSS TO:**

**1b. INT. NPR STUDIO - PRESENT**

(SFX: The ambience of a recording studio.)

**DAN V. PRESCOTT:**

That is the voice of famed WWII correspondent and newspaper columnist Ernie Pyle.

Only one recording of Ernie Pyle’s voice was known to exist until late last year when that grand treasure trove of wire spools was found.

For those out-of-the-know, before the war Pyle and his wife travelled the United States, and parts abroad, gathering stories to be used in a newspaper column for the Scripps-Howard news service. The task amounted to 1,000 words a day, six days a week.

And now, thanks to these recordings, we know what that sounds like. I can go on about it, but heck, I ought to just stop talking right here and let ol’ Ernie get to it himself:

**MUSIC SEGUE:**

(MUSIC: WASHINGTON POST MARCH – THE ERNIE PYLE EXPERIMENT MAIN TITLE THEME.)

(MUSIC: Main theme begins to fades out.)

**1c. INT. NPR STUDIO - PRESENT**

(SFX: The ambience of a recording studio fades in.)

**DAN V. PRESCOTT:**

Welcome to the Ernie Pyle Experiment. Episode 1. The Bourgios Standard.

(MUSIC: Main theme finishes fading out.)

**DAN V. PRESCOTT (CONT’D):**

Imagine, if you will, early June of 1936. A hotel room in northwest Iowa, Ernie and his wife, Jerry, seem to be wrestling with the task of recording themselves…

**CROSS TO:**

**2. INT. MOTEL ROOM - 1936**

(SFX: The recorder clicks on. The sound of a shower is heard in the background. Ernie fiddles with the RCA Wire Recorder, placing it on the bed as he fiddles with its dials. NOTE: The scene should start with the mono vintage wire recording SFX then slowly cross fade into a full stereo mix.)

**ERNIE:**

Well, alright then Mr. R... C... A... Wire Recorder. Lets you and me get better acquainted. You and your fancy knobs and chrome grill.

(SFX: Ernie adjusts the dials as the shower turns off.)

**ERNIE (CONT’D):**

Anyway, this whole thing lacks perspective. No, sir - we still aren’t completely on-board with this, by the way – not by a long-shot...

(SFX: Full stereo mix should be in effect by this time. Jerry enters from the bathroom, drying her hair with a towel. NOTE we may have to add in some time here to have Jerry cross from the bathroom into the main room.)

**JERRY:**

It isn’t like it was a request.

**ERNIE:**

Well, did they give Heywood Broun one of these wire voice-boxes to lug with him wherever he goes?

**JERRY (LAUGHING):**

Really?

**ERNIE:**

I doubt it. Anyway, I have a chip on my shoulder, so you know. But...listen, we have taken it out some. You don’t have to believe me.

**JERRY:**

Oh, just because you say something doesn’t mean it magically comes true.

**ERNIE:**

But when you make a promise about something…

**JERRY:**

…you shouldn’t lie.

**ERNIE:**

You calling me a liar?

**JERRY:**

Not yet.

**ERNIE:**

Not yet? What am I about to lie about then?

**JERRY:**

Oh, that you’ve been using the recorder on people.

**ERNIE:**

I have used it.

**JERRY:**

They gave us that thing well over a year ago and you haven’t changed the wire on it yet.

**ERNIE:**

I have. Look, they last a long time. What is that?

(SFX: Ernie picks up the wire cartridge.)

**ERNIE (CONT’D):**

24? 28-guage wire? One of these spools lasts for an hour.

**JERRY:**

You’re not even halfway through yet!

**ERNIE:**

Yeah…yeah…look…maybe three quarters of the way through.

**JERRY:**

Oh, well haven’t you been busy?

**ERNIE:**

Well, there’s a lot more in there. Look. We are heading home, so…Back at the office they’re going to want to hear some stuff. I promised I’d use the cursed thing, so we are going open it up a bit more in the coming days. And…

**JERRY:**

Fine. But really what’s on there is you complaining anyway…

**ERNIE:**

All the more reason to fill up these spools –

(SFX: Ernie places the spool down on the dresser.)

**ERNIE (CONT’D):**

— so I won’t get yelled at. So, what I’m trying to get around to saying is to explain what we just recorded yesterday. That’s what is just before this, what I’m saying now, so…

**JERRY:**

Well, you should’ve said *this* before *that*.

**ERNIE:**

This before what?

**JERRY:**

Before what’s on there yesterday.

**ERNIE:**

Well, how do you do that?

**JERRY:**

Ah, do it first, I guess.

**ERNIE:**

Well, I’m here now…

**JERRY:**

Well, something to think about, that’s all. Just think about it.

**ERNIE:**

Anyway, yesterday, somewhere, we picked up a traveller. He was headed to someplace, and had to get there quick. He had a little guitar…

**CROSS TO:**

(EXTERIOR: country road with crickets chirping as a Model A Ford rattles past our ears…)

**CROSS TO:**

**3. INT. MODEL A FORD - DAY**

(SFX: The wind is heard blowing through the trees, a gentle stream is heard, along with the sound of the Model A Ford motor idling in the distance.)

**WILLY:**

We ready?

(SFX: Ernie fiddles with the wire recorder.)

**ERNIE:**

The machine’s running.

**JERRY:**

Wait!

(SFX: Jerry gets up from the picnic blanket and runs from the grass across the gravel road to the car.)

**JERRY (CONT’D):**

Let me turn off the engine.

(SFX: The Model A motor cuts off. Jerry rejoins them plopping on the ground.)

**JERRY (CONT’D):**

Ready!

**WILLY:**

Ok. This is a true story, I heard it with my own eyes...

(W/T: Jerry and Ernie react to the turn of phrase.)

(MUSIC: Willy plays the ukulele and sings.)

**WILLY:**

NOW THE CCC YOU MIGHT AGREE

PUTS MEN BACK TO WORK BY FEDERAL DECREE

MAKING ROADS, AND PARKS, AND TRAILS, AND DAMS

NOW, ROOSEVELT’S MORE POPULAR THAN ABRAHAM...

Lincoln, that’s Abe Lincoln, keep up now.

FEELS GOOD FOR FOLKS TO BE BUSY AS BUMBLEBEES

WELL, THE FORESTRY DIVISION CAME TO TOWN

WITH TWO FLATBEDS FULL OF PINE TREES, THEY STARTED LOOKING AROUND

WE CAN PLANT THEM HERE, WE CAN PLANT THEM THERE

AND WITHOUT LOOKING FOR A SPOT THAT WAS BARE

THEY OPTED FOR COURTHOUSE-SQUARE AND CLEARED THE GROUND

**WILLY (CONT’D):**

THE OLD TREES THAT WERE THERE THEY TURNED TO STUMPS

MOVED ALL OF THEM OUT AND OVER TO THE DUMP

SO THEY PLANTED THEM THERE AND THEY PLANTED THEM HERE

IN THE SAME OLD HOLES THE OLD TREES SHARED

IT’S JUST AS WRONG AS PUTTING LIPSTICK ON YOUR RUMP

(W/T: They all share a laugh.)

**WILLY (CONT’D):**

WELL I LIKE NEW BRIDGES, ROADS, CURBS AND DITCHES

I’M FINE WITH OUR TAX DOLLARS IRONING OUT THE GLITCHES

But who the heck is in charge of hiring the guy that gives the heave-ho to a bunch of fine, fully-grown shade-trees, that were already doing the job they were tasked with a full seventy years ago when they were planted? The idea is, you can legislate a WPA, right?

**JERRY:**

Right.

**ERNIE:**

But, you can’t legislate a common sense administration?

**ERNIE:**

A... CSA?

**JERRY:**

The last CSA didn’t do too well.

**WILLY:**

That’s true. For this administration we’d need three new letters. What’s another word for ‘common’?

**JERRY:**

Bourgeois.

**ERNIE:**

Bourgios. That’s good.

**WILLY:**

And another word for ‘sense’?

**JERRY:**

Hmmmm. Well, ‘Sense’ is sense. It is the standard bearer of it’s own meaning and clarifies itself.

(She factors it out, talking to herself, like a math equation. A calculus that only she knows.)

**JERRY (CONT’D):**

Let’s see…In this case the word ‘standard’ itself could be used. Kind of a sideways glance, playing on the definition of ‘bourgeois’ *itself*. There is a direct line between ‘bourgeois’ and ‘standard’…see, they share a definition… But broken down to the sum it’s parts could be…: ‘bourgeois standard’; the standard being the standard of sensibility,

**JERRY (CONT’D):**

and then you’d have the same meaning; ‘Common sense’. So... Bourgeois Standard.

(LONG BEAT, just the tress and the stream. Then;)

**WILLY:**

Wow. Bourgeios standard.

**ERNIE:**

I like it.

**JERRY:**

The B.S. Administration.

(W/T: They all laugh. Willy plays a new song.)

**WILLY:**

NOW COMMON SENSE IS COMMON SENSE

THOUGH SOME IGNORE THIS AS PRETENSE

AND OL’ THOMAS PAINE THIS LAND MEANDERED

HOISTING THE COLORS OF THE BOURGEIOS STANDARD

See what I did there? Standard? Flag?

**JERRY:**

A Standard could also be a song...

**WILLY:**

...AND THE SONG IS SUNG AT THEIR EXPENSE

WE’LL VOTE THEM OUT IN OUR DEFENSE

UNTIL WE GET THE ONES WITH COMMON SENSE

THAT LEAD THE FOLK WITH COMMON SENSE

THE WORLD RIGHT NOW DON’T MAKE NO SENSE

(BEAT.)

**JERRY:**

Well, aren’t you the dissenter.

**WILLY:**

Only when I sing. It’s funny, I’m not a complainer. I despise complainers. You know, I listen to those words I just made up there and if I heard them from someone else I’d say to him, “Well, you step in there if you think you can do better”. And, I don’t think I can. But, I guess complaining, if you don’t feel you have any power to change anything, feels like the most effective tool the shed. I don’t know. I voted for Roosevelt, that doesn’t mean I don’t get to complain, does it? For goodness sake,

…those CCC boys took out a stand of trees from the ground, just to plant the trees they had on their truck so they could get out of there and go drink beer. If that don’t

**WILLY (CONT’D):**

make a follower of the *bourgeois-standard* angry, I don’t know what. Anyway, I only dissent when I’m making songs up, and what-not.

**JERRY:**

That’s what standard bourgeois do.

(W/T: They laugh.)

**WILLY:**

So I’m bourgeois now I guess. I guess that’s official.

**JERRY:**

Aren’t we all?

(SFX: Jerry pours herself a drink.)

**JERRY (CONT’D):**

Drink?

**WILLY:**

Drink!

(SFX: Jerry pours Willy a drink.)

**ERNIE:**

Okay.

**CROSS TO:**

**4. INT. MOTEL ROOM - LATER**

(SFX: Small hotel room ambience.)

(W/T: They laugh.)

(SFX: Ernie picks up the recorder from the bed, walks across the carpeted room, and moves it on top of the dresser. Over this.)

**ERNIE:**

Anyway, maybe there is a use for this thing. But, it does get me thinking that if folks ever do listen to these wires they might see I’ve been fibbing in my column.

(SFX: Ernie stops walking.)

**JERRY:**

Only if you admit to it.

(SFX: Ernie turns toward Jerry. Over this.)

**ERNIE:**

Thing is, I don’t even know I’m doing it, until I go back and listen to what actually happened. It really makes you think how much our imagination immediately begins filling in for the facts.

(SFX: Jerry picks up a comb and beings to brush her hair.)

**JERRY:**

Maybe it’ll keep you honest.

**ERNIE:**

It’ll keep me boring. That’s what I’m afraid of.

(SFX: Ernie picks up a wire cartridge.)

**ERNIE (CONT’D):**

Did I play for you that little girl in Kallispell?

**JERRY:**

No.

**ERNIE:**

Well, this is what I mean. I like what we talked about, what she said. But what if I want to write about something not on the wire?

**JERRY:**  
Write what you want.

(SFX: Jerry continues to brush her hair.)

**JERRY (CONT’D):**

Nobody will hear it, anyway.

**ERNIE:**

Yeah. Lee Miller will hear it. Then it will give him an excuse to get in there and start rewriting my stuff.

**JERRY:**

That just get’s my goat.

(SFX: Jerry slams her comb down on the nightstand.)

**JERRY (CONT’D):**

Who does he think he is, anyway? You’d be the damn editor of that rag if you wanted it.

(SFX: Jerry gets up from the bed and joins Ernie by the dresser. Wrapping her arms around him from behind in an embrace. Over this...)

**ERNIE:**

I should, right?

**JERRY:**

Mmm hmmm.

**ERNIE:**

He’s not that bad.

**JERRY:**

He is that bad, and if your stuff needs anything you give it to me first…or I’ll quit.

(SFX: Jerry lets go of Ernie and steps back playfully.)

**ERNIE:**

You will?

(SFX: Jerry assumes boxing stances, her feet dancing. Over this…)

**JERRY:**

Just watch me. And if I have to fight that pimple-nosed pinchfist, I will.

**ERNIE:**

OK.

(SFX: Jerry takes Ernie in her hands and tries to pull him from the recorder. Over this.)

**JERRY:**

Let’s go get a drink, Ern.

**ERNIE:**

Let me play this wire.

(SFX: Ernie picks up the wire cartridge.)

**ERNIE (CONT’D):**

The one with the little red-headed girl.

**JERRY:**

I’m thirsty.

**ERNIE:**

You just said if my writing needs anything to give it to you first.

(SFX: Ernie pulls away from Jerry.)

**JERRY:**

Oh. Alright. That’s what we’re doing? Go ahead. What are we thinking about here?

(SFX: Jerry crosses away from Ernie and flops on the bed.)

**ERNIE:**

Memory. Memory itself. Not sure it’s as accurate as I think it is.

**JERRY:**

What do you remember about it?

(SFX: Ernie takes a few steps toward Jerry.)

**ERNIE:**

I remember a little girl, about 10 years old, sitting with her baby brother in the shade, watching her grandmother washing clothes in Flathead Lake. There was nothing that girl couldn’t see.

**CROSS TO:**

**5. EXT. LAKESIDE - DAY**

(SFX: Warm summer day, ducks are heard on the lake in the distance.)

(W/T: A baby coos as an old woman playfully tickles him. Jerry amuses herself at the shore. Jerry W/T: Ernie I need another drinkie winkie! Maybe I can put a boat in my bottle. They’re too big! They don’t look so big through my bottle.)

**JUDY:**

Is that your wife?

**ERNIE:**

Yes. That’s my wife.

**JUDY:**

Is she drunk?

**ERNIE:**

Yes.

(Jerry W/T: Ernie look at me! Ernie, look! Look! I’m toeing the line, the water line!”)

**JUDY:**

What does she want?

**ERNIE:**

What does she want?

**JUDY:**

Yes.

**ERNIE:**

Hmmm…Well, you’re an insightful little human, aren’t you?

**JUDY:**

What are you doing out here?

**ERNIE:**

Well…now what is your name?

**JUDY:**

Judy.

(SFX: Baby cooing.)

This is Bob.

**ERNIE:**

Judy, I’m Ernie. Hi Bob.

**JUDY:**

He says hi.

**ERNIE:**

Does he, now? Well, Judy I’m a newspaper writer. They call me a columnist. I write six stories a week for the Scripps-Howard chain.

**JUDY:**

I never met one of you. That’s why you’re here?

**ERNIE:**

I’m always looking for my next story.

(Jerry W/T: WOO!! The water feels great! Come on Ernie, come play with me!)

**JUDY:**

Why are you ignoring her?

**ERNIE:**

Who?

**JUDY:**

Your wife.

**ERNIE:**

You’re right-full of questions, aren’t you?

**JUDY:**

So?

(Jerry W/T: Come on! COME on! Don’t be a wet blanket!)

**ERNIE:**

When you get married, you might understand.

**JUDY:**

I’ve never seen anyone drunk in the daylight.

**ERNIE:**

Well, you ought to try it then.

(Grandmother W/T: Harrumphs at Ernie.)

**JUDY:**

You’re funny.

**ERNIE:**

You know I’m kidding, then?

**JUDY:**

Yes.

**ERNIE:**

Good.

(Jerry W/T: ERNIE! Ernie, look at me! I’m dancing on the dock!)

**JUDY:**

You think she’s going to fall in the lake?

**ERNIE:**

I hope so.

**JUDY (LAUGHING):**

Oh, you do not.

**ERNIE:**

No, I don’t.

**JUDY:**

You like her?

**ERNIE:**

Do I like her?

**JUDY:**

Why are you repeating everything I say?!

**ERNIE:**

It’s just…I need a little air, here. Do I like her?

J**UDY:**

Do you?

**ERNIE:**

Yes. I love her.

**JUDY:**

Why?

**ERNIE:**

Wh…OK, look. I’m the one with the newspaper column. Let me ask the questions.

**JUDY:**

When I grow up I’m not going to let anybody tell me what to do.

**ERNIE:**

Oh?

**JUDY:**

I’ll be doing the telling. I’m not living anybody else’s life but my own.

**ERNIE:**

Well…sure…

**JUDY:**

And I sure as heck won’t let anything get in my way.

(SFX: A splash is heard in the distance.)

**JUDY (LAUGHING):**

You’re wife fell in the lake.

(Jerry W/T: (laughing) Ernie! Help, Ernie! I’m all wet!

(SFX: Ernie runs to Jerry’s rescue. Another splash is her and Judy giggling.)

**CROSS TO:**

**6. INT. MOTEL ROOM - LATER**

(SFX: Small hotel room ambience.)

**JERRY:**

Well, that little brat!

(SFX: Jerry grabs the wire cylinder from Ernie and crosses the room.)

**ERNIE:**

Sure was cute.

**JERRY:**

You wanted me to hear that, did you?

**ERNIE:**

Why not?

**JERRY:**

This doesn’t have anything to do with what your memory is. You just want to laugh at me!

(SFX: Jerry throws the wire cylinder in the trash.)

**ERNIE:**

No, I don’t.

(SFX: Ernie crosses to Jerry trying to comfort her.)

**JERRY:**

Oh, you do too.

**ERNIE:**

No, I want you to laugh at you.

**JERRY:**

Go ahead, write that story. I’ll just tell everyone you pushed me in.

(SFX: Ernie pulls the wire cylinder from the trash can. Over this.)

**ERNIE:**

They can hear for themselves that isn’t true.

(SFX: Jerry begins to pace the room.)

**JERRY:**

True? What does that mean? I’ll tell them you pushed me with a long stick, or something!

**ERNIE:**

Oh, boy.

**JERRY:**

See? Maybe everything you hear isn’t what you hear.

**ERNIE:**

That’s what I mean!

(SFX: Ernie crosses to Jerry.)

**JERRY:**

Better make sure your notes are backing up the lies this machine is telling.

**ERNIE:**

Guess we’ll have to let it lie. I am opposed to note-taking in all its forms.

**JERRY:**

Really? Let’s see about that…Where did we just come from?

**ERNIE:**

Huh? You think I don’t know.

**JERRY:**

I know you don’t.

**ERNIE:**

We were in South Dakota last night.

**JERRY:**

You don’t remember Minnesota, already.

**ERNIE:**

I mean Minnesota,..Oh, big deal.

**JERRY:**

And where are we now?

**ERNIE:**

Some town with a lake in it. North east Iowa. Let me see...

(SFX: Ernie pulls out notebook.)

**JERRY:**

What’s that? What’s that in your hand?

**ERNIE:**

My notebook.

**JERRY:**

So you do take notes...

**ERNIE:**

You know I do. I have to get folks names right.

(SFX: Ernie flips through the pages. Over this...)

**ERNIE (CONT’D):**

Names and places. This is Spirit Lake, Iowa.

**JERRY:**

Yep. Shame on you, First, you push me in with a big stick, and now you’re trying to lie to these people.

**ERNIE:**

What people?

**JERRY:**

Whoever is listening to this. Where are we headed next, anyway?

**ERNIE:**

I told you we’re going home.

**JERRY:**

And where is that?

**ERNIE:**

Dana, Indiana.

**JERRY:**

Liar! I knew it! We agreed we were going home.

**ERNIE:**

Dana is home...to some people.

**JERRY:**

Don’t play this game with me, Ern.

**ERNIE:**

It is.

**JERRY:**

I knew it when you didn’t want to go through Chicago you were going to steer us toward your folks.

**ERNIE:**

It will only be for a few days, then we can go home.

**JERRY:**

And you haven’t forgotten where that is?

**ERNIE:**

Well, let me check my notes...

(SFX: Ernie jokingly begins flipping through his notebook.)

**JERRY:**

How do I know if you haven’t bought us a house somewhere and didn’t tell me about it?

(SFX: Ernie puts away his notebook and pulls Jerry toward him.)

**ERNIE:**

Well, that’s a good idea.

(SFX: They kiss.)

**JERRY:**

Oh, Alright, A few days in Dana with your folks and then straight home to Washington. For real!

**ERNIE (LAUGHING):**

Well, if I don’t forget.

(SFX: Ernie suddenly breaks away and move to his typewriter. Sits down then begins typing.)

**MUSIC SEGUE:**

**7. INT. MOTEL ROOM - LATER**

(SFX: Small hotel room ambience.)

**DAN V. PRESCOTT (V.O.):**

Later that night.

(SFX: Ernie finishes typing and pulls the page from the typewriter.)

**ERNIE:**

You want to hear this?

(SFX: Jerry sits up on the bed. Over this.)

**JERRY:**

Go ahead.

(SFX: Paper crinkles as he moves it to read.)

**ERNIE:**

Travel, they say, is educational. And so we have found it in our first five years of constant wandering. Why, if I had been sitting at a desk instead of busting around, I never would have learned that Pocahontas was buried in England, or that most laundries insist on putting starch in white pants, and I’m sure I never would have gotten it into my head where Patagonia is. Neither would I have known where the Red River is, but I now know of so many Red Rivers that I don’t know which one the song was written about. And if I had been behind a desk, I never would have

**ERNIE (CONT’D):**

ridden with a long unseen-cousin dragging redwood logs down out of the California mountains with a caterpillar. There is one thing, however, that travel has not taught me: what makes the noise come out of a radio.

We have travelled by practically all forms of locomotion, including piggyback. We have been at least three times into every state in the Union. We have not spent a Christmas in a home in four years. I spent one Fourth Of July in hip boots, sheepskin coat, mittens, and stocking cap. And we’ve celebrated New Year’s three times in shirt sleeves. Travel is so confusing. And speak of confusion, my most confused moment was at the airport in Mexico City. The ladies’ and men’s retiring rooms there were labeled “Senoras” and “Senores”. That’s an awful lot alike, so I walked smack into the ladies room. No harm done, however, and I walked right out again. Then I took my bearings, consulted my Spanish dictionary, lit a cigarette for nonchalance, and this time walked confidently and correctly into the men’s department. And I’ll be damned if there weren’t two old ladies in there! Americans too.

The farthest I’ve driven in one day is 570 miles—from a ranch in the center of Arizona clear into Los Angeles. I’ll never do that again.

A fellow gets awfully sleepy driving, especially right after lunch on a hot day. Several times I have had to stop

**ERNIE (CONT’D):**

and walk up and down the road to wake up. Once we stopped on the desert for me to take a little nap. I have never heard such intense quiet. That Girl who rides with me was reading a newspaper. This sounds incredible, but the slight rustling of her paper made so much noise in the desert stillness that I couldn’t go to sleep, sleepy as I was. I never said anything to her about it.

I am probably the most solvent person in America (and I don’t mean too solvent) who literally has no home, no place to hang his hat, no base to go back to and start away from.

The question most frequently asked of us is “Aren’t you getting awfully sick of travelling by now”? The answer is an honest no, though it isn’t impossible some of these days we might come to hate the impermanency of travel. I’ve tried to figure out myself why we haven’t tired of it. And my conclusion is that our travel is a means of escape. We don’t have to stay and face anything out. If we don’t like a place, we can move on. If something happens that isn’t pleasant, we can leave and settle it later by letter, or just let it go forever. Stability cloaks you with a thousand little personal responsibilities, and we have been able to flee from them.

But just as important with us, I suspect, is the fact we can’t stay long even in the places we love. There is no opportunity for lingering disillusionment. I remember that once, years ago, we loved Arizona so much that when we

**ERNIE (CONT’D):**

crossed the Colorado river for the last time we could hardly talk for the lumps in our throats.

(SFX: we should move from the stereo mix slowly cross-fading back into the mono sounds of the vintage wire recording.)

**ERNIE (D) (CONT’D):**

We left Hawaii with broken hearts. We can hardly speak of the people of Sun Valley, Idaho, without bubbling over. We hardly dare go to Albuquerque, we hate so to leave. And we still love all those places because we always had to leave before the sweet taste could turn to vinegar. And also before they could find out about us, and kick us out.

(SFX: The recording cuts out.)

**MUSIC SEGUE:**

**7a. INT. NPR STUDIO - PRESENT**

(MUSIC: Continues to play under this.)

(SFX: Small studio ambience and warm radio announcer quality to the dialogue here.)

**DAN V. PRESCOTT:**

Next time on The Ernie Pyle Experiment:

**CROSS TO:**

**7b. MONTAGE**

A preview cuts and sound bites from episode 2.

**CROSS TO:**

**7c. INT. NPR STUDIO - PRESENT**

(MUSIC: Continues to play under this.)

(SFX: Small studio ambience.)

**DAN V. PRESCOTT:**

See you next week, folks. Until then, I’m Dan V. Prescott reminding you that the good road will never end, if you can only stay on it.

**FADE TO:**

(MUSIC: “THE WASHINGTON POST MARCH”.)

**CREDIT ROLL**

(MUSIC: Continues to play under this.)

**CARY ONANON:**

WFIU, Bloomington, Indiana. I’m Cary Onanon (on-and- on)…I mean, I’m Cary Onanon (on-and-on)…DAMMIT! I’m Cary Onanon (O-nan-on)!

**FADE MUSIC**