

Tape #369

Ray Blanco Yazzie

Navajo

Interviewer - Michael Husband

September 5, 1969

Side 1

Q. Somebody broke into your hogan huh?

A. Yeah.

Q. What did they steal?

A. I don't know, not my hogan, it belongs to Benny you know.....

Q. Oh, did they take something?

A. I don't know, I just write letters.

Q. You are all alone now, your wife is gone huh?

A. Yeah. She will be back about Monday. Her boy is being buried on Wednesday. You know when somebody dies, and then they bury him, today is what?

Q. Friday.

A. Wednesday, Thursday, they will stay until Saturday and then come back on Sunday. That is the way that we keep ours. A lot of people die.....

Q. What happened to him, kidneys did you say?

A. Oh something, kidneys and he has got some of that.... what do you call it....

Q. Cancer?

A. No, he catch cold.....

Q. Oh, he had pneumonia?

A. Yeah.

Q. How old was he?

A. Oh, he is just a young kid about 30, 35, he has got eight kids.

Q. He died in Gallup huh?

- A. Yeah, in the hospital, I think that he has been working all this time over there at Grants, but you know where Grants is don't you? I think they are going to pay his wife, he has been working for a long time, and you know what I mean.
- Q. He is not your boy though, he is your wife's boy?
- A. Yeah, but in a way, well it isn't my wife's boy, but the same way like, help one another.
- Q. Yeah, I know....
- A. Help one another. Missionary try to take over everything.
- Q. Do they really? Like what....?
- A. Just like we are speaking about something different, just like this way, here and there, I don't know why they do. That is between you and me, that is our business, right?
- Q. Yeah, that is nobody else business. Do the missionaries ask about me or what I do here or....?
- A. No.....
- Q. Do you just tell them that I am your friend, or what do you tell them?
- A. Oh that you just visit me because.....you know that boy that was over there?
- Q. Yeah.
- A. That is, stamp guy, what is his name.....you know him don't you?
- Q. Yeah, the one that works for the state, food stamps.....
- A. Yeah, he knows you too. Where is that him????? and he said that he is going to be a teacher he said.....what happened last time, I was waiting for you Bob? That day you were supposed to come?
- Q. Oh, I couldn't get here, I got sick.
- A. I got a letter from you, said that you had been busy or something like that right?
- Q. Yes. So the missionaries still come and visit you a lot huh?
- A. Yeah.

- Q. Do they come every week?
- A. You know they charge even if you want to buy clothes, pants, shirt, shoes.....
- Q. Oh, you have got to buy it from them?
- A. You have to pay, boy, I don't know why?
- Q. I thought they gave that to you.....
- A. Suppose to be but you know..... lot of Squaw Dance going on while you were gone.
- Q. Did you go to them?
- A. No, I was taking care of the hogan over there..... no good right? I wish that you would come sometime and.....
- Q. Oh I will, I will....
- A. Maybe Yeibeichai right? It is more better.....
- Q. Good dance huh?
- A. Yeah, your wife don't like it or.....?
- Q. Yeah, bring her too.....
- A. Yeah, that will be all right.... lot of fun..... I was just taking a shower over there too.
- Q. Maybe I will talk to a missionary sometime..... How many are there here at Torreon Mission?
- A. Two. ⁺s it alright for me to get that letter and give it to you and then you mail it for me?
- Q. Yeah.
- A. It is over there, we will stop over there..... they won't say anything, they are nice people.....
- Q. Okay.
- A. I will show you where to take off and we stop over there and we will get that mail and so that way it will be more fast.
- Q. Okay. ^Go in here?

- A. No, where that red truck is.... gas truck or something like that. You went to my house?
- Q. Yeah. The road are pretty bad, you can't..... I had to go the long way, around..... in here?
- A. Take that road there, you see where that sign is, over there. That red spot right there.....school is start, what about over in Albuquerque..... who is going to be a good team this year?
- Q. You write your letter in the mission huh?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. Do they give you stamps?
- A. No.
- Q. And you get your clothes up there at the mission?
- A. Yeah, but.....
- Q. You have to pay? Where do they get them?
- A. I don't know.
- Q. Do they buy them or do people give them to them maybe?
- A. They get them, but we have to pay over here.... It isn't right is it?
- Q. It doesn't seem that way. Is that the missionaries wife, there that you were talking to?
- A. Yeah, he is from Iowa.....
- Q. Maybe I will talk to them sometimes. Do you think that they will talk to me?
- A. Sure, you are welcome.....
- Q. What is their name?
- A. Her name is Floyd Holoman. Mrs. Floyd Holloman. Mr. Holloman is in Albuquerque, they went this morning.
- Q. Holloman is the one that runs the mission?
- A. Yeah, he is the boss.
- Q. Are there any other missionaries there too?
- A. Yeah, there were some but they are visiting someplace, in one of the hogan, this one has got a Navajo wife you know.....

- Q. What is his name?
- A. Long Beard.....
- Q. What is his name?
- A. His name is Gale..... I don't know his last name.....
- Q. What do you call Holloman? Father Holloman? Mr. Holloman?
- A. No, we call him Brother Holloman.....
- Q. Oh, Brother Holloman.
- A. It is strange right?
- Q. You think he might talk to me huh.? I would like to talk to him about his work and what he does.
- A. Don't mention our work, or he will holler, right?
- Q. You mean don't tell him what we do?
- A. Yeah, that way he might you know, cranky, right?
- Q. I can tell him that we are friends, can't I?
- A. We are just talking or something like that.
- Q. We're just friends, that won't hurt will it?
- A. No.
- Q. So what have you been doing since I saw you last?
- A. Oh, just loafing around, don't find any job..... I was in Cuba look for a job, but can't find it.....
- Q. Really, no jobs huh?
- A. No, can't do any good.
- Q. You still get your food stamps?
- A. Yeah, somebody stole my boots just wear them about two times, and I left it outside and.....somebody got away with it, oh shoot!
- Q. What did they steal, your food stamps?

- A. No, the shoes that you gave me.....
- Q. Oh, the boots that I sent you.
- A. Yeah, I write to you that somebody took it. Oh....
- Q. Did those fit all right?
- A. Fit all right, and they were good and somebody come around and....
- Q. Steal it huh? That is too bad, does that happen a lot?
- A. Yeah, there is one guy around here someplace, you know the one that steal the money from Winston?
- Q. Yeah, from the trading post.
- A. He run around here, and I just talk to a man around here and he said that he saw him one day over here, driving around and he was looking for and maybe he is the one that steal it.
- Q. That Winston down at the Torreon trading post, he robbed him of a lot of money huh?
- A. Yeah, he is the guy, \$3,000 and this guy he drives yellow car, it is all painted.....
- Q. Well if he had \$3,000 he could have bought his own boots right?
- A. Yeah. Boy oh boy, I will get even with him sometimes.
- Q. Steal his boots huh?
- A. Maybe I will steal gas from him..... You know a lot of boys his age, they went to Bloomfield working, looking for a job, like Benny or something like that, even women, they just bumb around and peeping in the night time and he is the one that take it in.
- Q. Who is Benny?
- A. That is my niece's husband. Benny Toledo.
- Q. They live where?
- A. No, they are working over there.
- Q. Is this San Jon?
- A. Yeah, he get it right?
- Q. Yeah.

- A. I talk to a lot of men and oh..... about these missionaries. One Navajo, I talk to him about these missionaries and tell him, oh it is a nonsense he said why don't you do like we are doing, Navajo we have their own religion, let them stay there, instead of mixing up, it is not right he said.....
- Q. It is bad to mix it up isn't it?
- A. Yeah, that is right.
- Q. Next time I come up maybe we will go and talk to somebody else?
- A. Yeah, we try.....
- Q. I will take you along and you can talk in Navajo, I don't care.
- A. Apache, that is the one that we are going to see.
- Q. Okay, we go see him next Friday..... Is that okay...?
- A. Then we are going to see Juanito Sandoval..... and we will see, Lavess, I know where they live.
- Q. Okay, they are pretty friendly huh?
- A. Yeah, they are kind of old see.....
- Q. Okay, then I will come up next Friday.....
- A. Then I can translate it for you....
- Q. Okay, we will just talk in Navajo.....
- A. Okay, that is all right.
- Q. I will come up next Friday, a week from today, is that okay?
- A. Okay, just give me the day so that I will remember in my head.
- Q. When we stop I will look at my calender and tell you. It will be a week from today, next Friday.
- A. You know, did I tell you about when, a lot of guys, even when the dog, if the car runs over them, you know, what I mean, when a dog is dead, you see, you don't leave it there on the road.
- Q. No, you pick it up.
- A. You know what I do, I take it home, then I bury it, that is more better.

- Q. Somebody ran over your dog, huh? Right there by your house?
- A. No, it is close to the store, you know some drunkard, staggering around, I'll fix him sometime when I see him.
- Q. Boy you better not do that, you will get in trouble.
- A. It is easy to find another dog right?
- Q. Oh, I don't know..... do you want another dog?
- A. This one follow me all over, if he stayed home it would be more better right? Fight and something like that..... but he follow me all the way.
- Q. I'll see if I can find a dog in Albuquerque, sometimes they give them away there. Do you want one?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. A puppy? You don't care what kind?
- A. I like he.....
- Q. He dog, okay.....
- A. Maybe if I feed him, he'll stay around right?
- Q. Yeah could be I don't know.
- A. What is your wife doing?
- Q. She is at home.
- A. Doing fine huh?
- Q. Yeah. Your wife will be back on Monday huh?
- A. Yeah, maybe.....
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- A. Do you raise chili down there?
- Q. Do you like chili?
- A. Yeah, I like chili.....
- Q. Do you get more food stamps now?

- A. I only get \$30.
- Q. \$30 a month? Or \$30 every two weeks?
- A. A month, I only pay \$1 that is all.
- Q. Yeah.
- A. The boss told me to, because I have got no work. He said that it is all right. No interpreter for me, no more.....
- Q. How come?
- A. I don't know, they just, no money maybe that is why, these other guys just help each other like that.
- Q. Yeah, you can come work for me....
- A. Yeah, raise chili.....
- Q. Yeah, we want to talk to some of these older people, Apache and Juanito and...
- A. David....
- Q. If I can get there in my car, I can go over to their house?
- A. Sure..... this guy used to live here. He living over there, I know where he lives, we can talk to him. He is an old timer.
- Q. Okay.
- A. But he talks good English.
- Q. Does he?
- A. Yeah, pretty good English.
- Q. Then we will talk to all of them. Next week.
- A. Hey buddie, I lost my other book I don't know what happened to it, the one that you gave it to me.
- Q. That little paper book on Navajos that I gave you? You want another one?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. I will send you another one up okay?
- A. You bring one when you come, okay?

- Q. Okay.
- A. Don't forget Bob.....
- Q. I will mail it. Where did your boots come when I sent them, did they go to the mission?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. Did the missionary bring them to you, or what?
- A. No, they just keep it there, I was there a long time, but I don't know why they didn't give it to me. Maybe they were going to get away with it.
- Q. Did they want to know what was in it? Or who it was from?
- A. Foolish.....right? Why are missionaries fools too much?
- Q. I just don't want them to get mad at me. They won't..... Do you go to church every Sunday there?
- A. Yeah I go and help them. Sometimes they bring my, when I buy stuff, they take me to store and they bring my groceries. But the other guy you know.... that was married to a Navajo, and then he said, this Mormon is no good he said, don't listen to those Mormon, they drink and they get the girls....
- Q. Oh, I don't know.....
- A. One time there was a missionary, he was real good. Drink too, he don't say anything about what is going on or anything.
- Q. Mormon?
- A. No he is protestant.
- Q. Protestant.....?
- A. Yeah, they are good people.
- Q. Where is the Mormon, where are they?
- A. Over there at Tinian. You know over there where it used to be Star Lake, you have never been that way have you?
- Q. No, we will go that way sometime.
- A. They have a church.

- Q. Do they ever come and see you the Mormons?
- A. They did but we have got no time, I don't have a chance to talk to them. They want me to sing in Navajo, but I can't. Cause I don't know.....
- Q. Well.....rained up here huh, pretty muddy on the roads?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. I came into your house on that back road, came up behind your house. Where is Henry?
- A. Working.
- Q. Where is he working now?
- A. I think he is working for Shelby.
- Q. Oh.
- A. You don't have any more books?
- Q. Yeah, I will get some for you. Books about Navajos?
- A. Boots.....
- Q. Oh boots you mean?
- A. Yeah.
- Q. Oh, I thought you said books. Yeah, I will see if I can find some and bring them up.
- A. I always like to hear this, it cost too much.....this radio play..... I don't think that you can find anything.
- Q. What kind of battery, what did it look like?
- A. No, it was big ones.
- Q. Oh, big ones.....?
- A. You see, my radio player is dead.....
- Q. The next time I come up you show it to me, If I can get one, I will send it to you. Because I don't know what it looks like, is it round?
- A. Round, somebody told me in Albuquerque, that it is cheaper in the store, you know how much it is if we get one over here.....? They don't have them in the store. One time I bought it from there for \$12.50.

- Q. Oh lord..... one battery.....
- A. Yeah, in Albuquerque I think it is less.
- Q. You like to listen to the radio though?
- A. What do you call these small ones? Radio?
- Q. Transistors?
- A. Yeah. I think Dorothy and Benny used to have their radio. Maybe somebody took it or maybe they took it I don't know. Somebody steal too much. We need some police protection.....
- Q. Don't you have any police here? Got Navajo police don't you, but they are not here though?
- A. They don't come around.
- Q. They don't?
- A. They are afraid.....
- Q. Oh, are they? They just never come around huh? That is bad.....
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- Q. What about that old lady that lives up on the hill from you, she doesn't hear?
- A. Yeah, she is deaf, real deaf.....
- Q. You can't talk to her huh? There are two ladies that live up there aren't there? How about the other one, can she hear?
- A. Unless you holler at her.
- Q. Yell at her huh?
- A. I know some ladies live around there, that can speak all right, if we know where to go. One old lady living way down there, but she can't hear. She is about 90. Too much right?
- Q. Does she speak English?
- A. No, just Navajo.
- Q. Maybe you can yell at her huh?
- A. Yeah. Maybe I will make her scared huh?

- Q. I don't think so, I might scare her, but you won't. I want to take you with me. Translate for me.
- A. Where is Jeff now, he disappear.
- Q. He is teaching school, he isn't working with the food stamps anymore.
- A. He is your good friend isn't he?
- Q. You work for him didn't you, translate?
- A. I did, but no more.
- Q. He teaches, now school teacher.
- A. How about that Spanish fellow?
- Q. I don't know him.
- A. It looks like he knows you but.....
- Q. Who Rudy?..... Oh Joe, Joe Sanchez. He teaches school too, I think.
- A. He is a good fellow.....he disappear.....
- Q. I'll come up then next Friday and we will go and see some of these people we will stop here and see what date it is. Do you have any sheep now, any goats?
- A. No, no.....
- Q. Don't have any huh?

END OF TAPE