

**Pilot**  
**Little House on The Prairie**

**Laura**

If I had a remembrance book, I would mark down how it was when we left our little house in the big wood to go west into Indian territory,

We had to go Pa said because so many people had come to live in the Big Woods, there wasn't enough game anymore for him to hunt, and he was afraid we might go hungry.

Ma said we might never see grandma, grandpa, Aunt Dosie, Aunt Rubie and Uncle George again. Though it made me sad, I still thought it a fine thing to go to where there had never been a road before.

We'd go to where the land was more bountiful, he said. And we sold our house, our land, and cow. We packed whatever would fit in the wagon. I was glad Pa took his fiddle because it makes a joy-some sound.

Mary was afraid to go but I knew nothing bad could happen as long as we had Pa and Jack. Jack is my best and truest friend. And Pa said there has never been a better watchdog.

I knew there would be rivers to cross and hills to climb and I was glad, for this is a fair land, and I rejoiced that I would see it.

**Laura**

I want our own horses, Pa.

**Charles**

I know, Half-Pint, but they're just too worn out to go on. It's the kindest treatment for the ponies.

**Laura**

But what happened to our horses?

**Charles**

Oh, some farmer will come along, buy them. They'll thrive again. Stop your frettin'. We're going to have three ponies by midsummer.

**Laura**

You wanna buy another one?

**Charles**

Nope

**Laura**

They're going to have a baby!

**Charles**

That's right. Gonna have a foal. Hey, Caroline, you about ready?

**Caroline**

We are ready. Laundry's all dry.

**Charles**

Good.

**Caroline**

They're sturdy little animals.

**Charles**

They are. We made a good trade.

**Mary**

Can we give 'em names, Pa?

**Charles**

Sure. I think we should. Seeing as they're part of the family now.

**Mary**

I want to call this one Patty.

**Charles**

Patty it is.

**Laura**

We better name this one Pat. He's a boy.

**Caroline**

Laura

**Charles**

That child would be in a heap of trouble if she didn't know the difference between boys and girls.

**Caroline**

Really, Charles.

**Charles**

Pat and Patty it is. Everybody up in the wagon. Up we go. Me love. Everybody all set back there.

**Girls**

Yeah!

**Charles**

All right. Kansas, here we come.

**Laura**

Ready or not!

*Wagon Rides Away*

**Caroline**

Do you think we can get across?

**Charles**

I don't see why not. River swell in the Spring rains. As you can tell wagons have crossed here. Before by the wheel ruts running through.

**Caroline**

Water looks so wild.

**Charles**

Don't worry. Wagon's sound. Ponies are stout. We'll be alright.

*Whistles for horses to go forward.*

*They leave Jack on the shore by accident.*

**Charles**

COME ON!

COME ON!

*Jack barking because they are leaving them behind.*

**Laura**

Can't Jack ride in the wagon, Pa?

**Charles**

Can't stop now. Don't worry about it. He'll make it. Hyah! Come on! Get inside!

**Caroline**

Get inside.

**Charles**

Hyah! Come on! Get inside!

**Caroline**

Go with Carrie.

**Charles**

Come on! Hyah! Hyah! Hyah! Hyah! Hyah!

*Jack jumps into the river to try to catch up.*

**Charles**

Take over!

*Charles tries to get the wagon unstuck.*

**Charles and Caroline**

Come on! Come on!

**Caroline**

Are you alright?

**Charles**

Yeah.

**Caroline**

You could have drown.

**Laura**

Pa, I don't see Jack.

**Caroline**

Are you alright?

**Mary**

We're alright Ma. Carrue just got scared.

**Laura**

Where is Jack Pa?

**Charles**

It just got washed downstream. I'll get him.  
Go hitch the ponies and make camp. I'll be back.

*Charles walks down the river.*

**Laura**

Did you find Jack Pa?

**Charles**

No

**Caroline**

Do you think he drown Charles?

**Charles**

Looks like it.

**Laura**

We can look again tomorrow.

**Charles**

I followed the river for miles. He's gone. Don't know how we're gonna manage without a good watch dog. I'll see to the ponies.

*Next Day*

**Caroline**

Laura, come inside, dear. It's too hot to walk in the sun.

**Laura**

I'm not hot.

**Caroline**

Then put your bonnet on. The sun and the wind will make your skin all leathery.

**Charles**

Leave her be Caroline. She's hurtin'.

*That Night*

**Charles**

Children asleep?

**Caroline**

All but Laura. How much longer, Charles?

**Charles**

Until we settle? I don't know.

**Caroline**

We crossed into Kansas 4 days ago. What are you looking for?

**Charles**

I'll know it when I see it.

**Caroline**

The children are tired. And the joy seems to have gone out of all of us.

**Charles**

It'll pass Caroline. We have no future where we were. It was a hand-to-mouth existence at best. I want more than that for you and the children. 160 acres free and clear from the government. Just a planet and harvest my own crops. To be owning to no man. I want that.

*Rustling*

**Laura**

Pa, I heard something.

**Charles**

It's all right. It was just the winds through the grass.

**Laura**

It wasn't the wind.

*Dog crying.*

**Laura**

It's Jack! You didn't drown. You didn't drown.

**Caroline**

We've come so far. How did he find us?

**Charles**

Instinct. Love. We thank you, Lord, for bringing our dear and good friend back to us.

*Fiddle Playing*

**Laura**

I'm sorry, Pa.

**Charles**

Sorry 'bout what Half-Pint?

**Laura**

Sorry for thinking you didn't care about Jack when he drowned.

**Charles**

I did care. I blame myself for not putting him in the wagon when we crossed. I should have taken into account how tired he was. I was just full of guilt for letting him drown.

**Laura**

But you only said you were sorry we didn't have a good watch dog anymore.

**Charles**

I guess I just couldn't find the words to say what was in my heart, Half-Pint.

*Laura hugs Charles.*

**Charles**

Hey...did you hear that?

**Laura**

Hear what Pa?

**Charles**

The stars singing hallelujah.

*Next Day with Jack Barking and Laughter*

**Caroline**

Breakfast is ready!

**Mary**

We saw a lot of little birds.

**Charles**

You'll see a lot more of them. Called Dick Sissies.

**Mary**

Dickie birds?

**Laura**

It's dumb to talk baby talk. They're Dick Sissies.

**Mary**

I can call 'em Dickie Birds if I want to.

**Charles**

The Bible says thou shalt not argue before breakfast.

**Caroline**

That's not in the Bible Charles.

**Charles**

Well it ought to be.

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**Caroline**

There is no need to forget your manners. Just because we're hundreds of miles from civilized folk.

**Charles**

I don't think the folks in Independence would take too kindly to hearing you call them uncivilized.

**Caroline**

Independence?

**Charles**

MM-HMM.

**Caroline**

Are we near there?

**Charles**

Best I can figure maybe 40, 50 miles away.

**Caroline**

I can hardly wait to get there.

**Charles**

We're not going there.

**Caroline**

Well, why not? Oh, it'd be so good to see a town and people again.

**Charles**

Caroline, we didn't come all this way to see a town.

**Laura**

What's the matter with Pa?

**Caroline**

He's just tired. Like the rest of us.

**Charles**

CAROLINE! UP HERE! LOOK AT IT! JUST LOOK AT IT. Green and rich. Be water in those foothills and trees. We're home Caroline. We're home.

*Charles steps off his house measurements.*

Well, Ingalls family, how does it look? All I gotta do now I build it.

*Ingalls build a house.*

**Charles**

Come on. They're all in. Sit down.

**Caroline (exhausted)**

I'll be all right in a minute.

**Charles**

We could both use a rest. Sit down now.

*Caroline sits on the floor.*

**Caroline**

Oh!

**Charles**

It's no work for a woman. I never should have let you do it.

**Caroline**

I'm all right, I said, and you can't raise the walls by yourself.

**Charles**

I should have settled with that man to give me a hand. It's my fault for bringing you out here.

**Caroline**

It's not your fault.

**Charles**

Yes, it is. We're out here because it's where I want to be. I took you away from your home, your family.

**Caroline**

Now, that's nonsense. My hoe is where you are. And you and the children are my family.

**Charles**

Carol Ingalls, I love you.

*Crying and embracing each other.*

**Charles**

Caroline, Found us a neighbor.

**Caroline**

Another settler?

**Charles**

Yeah.

**Caroline**

A little girl?

**Charles**

No, No. Edwards. That's his name. He's a bachelor. Lives on the other side of the creek and Caroline, tomorrow he's gonna come over and help us put up the cabin.

**Caroline**

How kind of him!

**Charles**

He's a wonderful man. You're gonna like him.

**Caroline**

Oh, I know I will.

*Edwards has a spitting contest with Laura.*

**Edwards**

Ha Ha! 10 foot if it's an inch.

**Laura**

Can I do it, too?

**Edwards**

I don't know. It ain't easy unless you got a plug of chewing tobacco. Eh, you can try it if you want. Go on, now. Get yourself a good mouthful of spit. Go on. Work it around. Around, around. You got it? All right now. Here we go. It's all in the neck. Ready?

**Caroline** (noticing Laura about to spit)

Laura!



*Laura swallows her own spit.*

**Caroline**

Just what do you think you're doing?

**Laura**

Mr. Edwards is teaching me how to spit.

**Caroline**

Spit? Do you consider that a worthy accomplishment, Mr. Edwards?

**Mr. Edwards**

Well, I don't know how worthy it is, Ma'am. Sure comes in handy in a stiff breeze. Best get back to work. Mighty fine lunch Ma'am.

*Later that evening.*

**Caroline**

He is uncivilized.

**Charles**

Well, he's a little rough around the edges. It's because he hasn't had the advantage of the refining influence of a good woman.

**Caroline**

I can imagine the kind of women he's known. I don't like having him around the children, Charles, especially Laura. For some reason, she's taken to him.

**Charles**

So have I. He's a good man. He's been kind to us. I expect you to be civil and friendly to him.

**Caroline**

I am civil, but I will not be friendly. I doubt he's even seen the inside of a church.

**Charles**

I hardly think that's any way to judge a man. I know an awful lot of pious churchgoers who wouldn't think twice of doing some poor old widow woman out of her pittance. I'll see to the ponies. I'm going to bed. You coming? Good night.

**Caroline**

I'll be friendly, but my heart won't be in it.

**Charles**

Good night.

*Next Day*

**Caroline**

I don't think it's too small. And it really looks sturdy. When do you think we can move in Charles.

**Charles**

As soon as I can get the roof on.

**Caroline**

Well, how long will that take?

**Charles**

Tomorrow soon enough?

**Caroline**

Tomorrow? You can't make a roof in one day.

**Charles**

I can take the wagon canvas and stretch it over the top. That suit you?

**Caroline**

Yes! Well, I guess I better start supper. Mr. Edwards, will you stay to supper? We're only having stew rabbit and dumplings, of course.

**Mr. Edwards**

You've got yourself a customer, Ma'am. Been eatin' so much jerky lately, just thinking on it's enough to make me upchuck.

**Charles**

Let's get back to work.

*Fiddle playing and dancing around a fire.*

**Mr. Edwards**

You sure can fiddle, Ingalls.

**Charles**

You sure can dance, Edwards.

**Mary**

Play some more, Pa.

**Caroline**

No more. It's time for bed.

**Laura**

Can't we stay up just a little bit longer? Please?

**Caroline**

No, it's past your bedroom now. There's lots to do tomorrow. We all need our rest.

**Mr. Edwards**

Well, that sure is the truth. Yep. I best be moving on. Here you go.

*Mr. Edwards hands Carrie to Caroline.*

**Caroline**

All right, girls. Off to bed.

**Mr. Edwards**

I sure do want to thank you, Ma'am. I don't ever recall tasting better rabbit. Them dumplings of yours went way down with that delicious gravy. Well, it took off like birds in that light.

**Caroline**

Thank you.

**Mr. Edwards**

Well, I'll see you soon. Night, all.

**Pa**

Take care  
I'll play you home.

**Charles**

Take care. I'll play you home.

**Mr. Edwards**

Now you are talking.

*Back to Mr. Ingalls playing fiddle.*

**Mr. Edwards**

Get out the way for old Dan Tucker.

*Mr. Edwards leave the family. As he leaves, he sings song.*

**Mr. Edwards (sings)**

Get out the way for old Dan Tucker,  
He's too late to get his supper,  
Supper's over and the dishes washed,  
Nothin' left but a piece of squash.

**Laura**

If I had a remembrance book, I would mark down in it that this was a fine night. Even if I did have to go to bed too soon.

*NEXT DAY*

**Charles**

Seems kind of foolish sweepin' a dirt floor doesn't it?

**Caroline**

It's the only floor we have.

**Charles**

I'll build you a hardwood floor when I get the time. I'm doing the best I can.

**Caroline**

I'm not complaining. I'm worried about the girls' schooling. I can manage for now, but Mary has her heart set on being a schoolteacher. She'll need formal training...

**Charles**

We'll worry about that when the time comes. I'm sorry.

**Caroline**

There is another thing. I don't see how the girls can grow up properly without going to church.

**Charles**

I don't see how they can get closer to God than they are right here. Now, stop worrying. Everything is going to be fine. You realize something? Hmmm? We're alone.

*Caroline chuckles.*

*They kiss.*

*Girls giggle.*

**Laura**

We brought the bed things.

**Caroline**

Alone?

*That night.*

**Laura (in bed)**

Is Patty still feeling poorly, Pa?

**Charles (walks in the house with lantern)**

Well, she's a bit edgy. That's to be expect now that she's so close to her time.

**Mary (in bed)**

What if she dies when she has her foal?

**Laura**

She won't.

**Caroline (sews)**

We mustn't even think such a thought. We couldn't get along without the ponies.

**Laura**

She'll do fine, won't she, Pa?

**Charles**

You bet she will, Half-Pint. It looks to me like you're gonna do a heap of washing tomorrow.

**Caroline**

You'll have to bring some water from the creek.

**Charles**

It's be a lot easier if you go down and wash the clothes at the creek like Indian women do.

**Caroline**

If I wanted to live like an Indian, I'd live in a tent.

**Charles**

I'd wager it'd be the cleanest tent in the territories.

**Laura**

When will we see some Indians, Pa?

**Mary**

Never, I hope.

**Caroline**

My sentiments exactly. Don't even mention Indians. I hope I never see one.

**Laura**

Then why did we come to Indian territory?

**Caroline**

Ha! I suppose it does sound pretty foolish, coming to Indian territory and hoping you'll never see an Indian. Wish we could write to the folks, Charles. They must be wondering how we've fared.

**Charles**

Then write.

**Caroline**

How would I post it?

**Charles**

I'll post it for you when I go to Independence for supplies.

**Caroline**

When will that be?

**Charles**

Well, let me see. Soon as I finish the stable for the ponies, put a roof on the house, dig a well, build a fireplace so you can cook on indoors. Unless, of course, you settle for a hole in the roof to let the smoke e out, the way the Indians do.

*Howling. Whimpering.*

**Caroline**

Guess we'd better start with the stable. We don't want the wolves getting at the ponies.

**Laura**

I'm going to see how Patty is.

**Caroline**

You'll do no such thing. Get back in bed.

**Charles**

It's time for you two to go to bed. It's getting late. Good night, Mary.

**Mary**

Good night, Pa. And as for you, don't you fret. Patty is gonna be just fine. You understand?

**Laura**

Yes, Pa.

**Charles**

Okay. Sweet Dreams.

*Howling*

*Next Day*

*Hammering*

**Laura**

And then what happened, Mr. Edwards?

**Mr. Edwards**

Well, Snookie. This old bear and me were just sorta gonna circle one another like they was getting each other's measure. Well, we just circled and circled. Finally, I was just pulling out of paces. I looked at the bear square in the eye and I said, "Bear, if we're gonna wrestle, let's get on with it." You know what that bear done?

**Laura**

What?

**Mr. Edwards**

Well then, he just sniffed and ambled off.

**Caroline**

One good whiff of Mr. Edwards would drive any bear off.

**Charles**

Hey, Edwards.

**Mr. Edwards**

Huh?

**Charles**

Could use a hand now.

**Mr. Edwards**

Your Pa sure is one to get things done, ain't he?

**Laura**

He's just worried about the wolves. He has to get the stable up before Patty foals.

**Mr. Edwards**

Due to foal anytime now. So I best get crackin'.

**Laura**

Right!

*Laura looks like she is about to spit.*

**Caroline**

LAURA!

*Horse neighing.*

**Charles**

Easy now, girl.

**Laura**

Is Patty all right, Pa?

**Charles**

She's fine, Half-Pint. Be a foal by morning.

**Caroline**

Laura, why don't you go in the house and get some sleep.

**Laura**

But I want to see the baby get born.

**Charles**

Let her stay, Caroline. It's a fine thing to see a new life come into the world.

*Horse neighing.*

**Laura**

Why doesn't Mr. Edwards come by since we fixed the roof?

**Charles**

He's got his own place to look after.

**Laura**

I think he doesn't come by because he knows Ma doesn't like him.

**Charles**

I don't know that she doesn't.

**Laura**

She don't and I know why.

**Charles**

Is that a fact?

**Laura**

MM-Hmm. Because he spits.

**Charles**

Caroline! I'm off! You be careful not to let that lye get in your eyes.

**Caroline**

It's just the fumes that make them tear. You be careful.

**Charles**

I will. There you go, Half-Pint.

**Laura**

I wish I could go.

**Charles**

Now, you stop fretting. One of these days. I'll sweet talk your mom to let you go hunting with me.

Take care.

**Laura**

Big people have all the fun.

*Charles ride off on a horse.*

**Mary**

It's so late. Maybe something happened to Pa.

**Laura**

Nothing happened.

**Caroline**

Your father knows how to take care of himself. Charles! I've been besides myself. What kept you so long?

**Mary**

I was scared, Pa.

**Laura**

I wasn't. May I was a little worried.

**Charles**

No need to worry. I just went a little further than I thought.

**Laura**

Did you get a bear, Pa?

**Charles**

No. I didn't have any luck at all.

**Caroline**

All right, girls. Off to bed. Tuck you in. Right to sleep. All right (as she puts Carrie in her crib). Good night, Carrie. You all right?

**Charles**

Yeah.

**Caroline**

I'll get your super. It's a nice hot stew.

**Charles**

Sounds good.

**Caroline**

I put your biscuits in the way you like...

*Charles is sleeping from a hard day of hunting and defeat.*

*Caroline smiles and she plays with his hair and turns off the light.*

*Laura and Charles spot wolves circling their home.*

**Laura**

Jack? Will...will they go away Pa?