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I guess there would be just a little comment about Johnny's resilience. Johnny built himself a 21-footer in Oregon. This was before the US was in the war, and he took it down first the Willamette River, then the Columbia, and then he headed south down the Oregon coast in his 21-footer. He was almost run down by a freighter.

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All his family thought, or some members of his family thought, well, that's it for Johnny. There was, I guess, a Coast Guard alert, and his Dad said, "no, he's not lost at sea. He has Viking blood." And sure enough, he got down to San Francisco. And when he arrived at the at the narrows, there, going into San Francisco Bay.

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The tide was ebbing. And so he was having a hard time rowing this little sailboat back into the harbor. Eventually, the Coast Guard came out and the Coast Guard threw a line on him and then scolded him soundly for taking a small boat like that outside the harbor.

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He didn't mention that he'd actually come all the way down the Oregon coast and the California coast to get there. He wanted to continue going south, but things are hotting up in the war. The US government didn't want military aged men leaving the country, so they refused to let him go further south than San Diego. Then Pearl Harbor happened and he had to go and sign up, and he went to the, of course, into the Coast Guard.

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So after and after his time in the US Coast Guard, which became part of the US Navy during the war. And he was, Johnny was part of the effort to escort convoys around the South Pacific. It was a pretty hectic life. It's the end of the war. It's May 1945 and he just happens to be in Boston. The ship had gone from the Pacific to the Atlantic side, and they were in Boston.

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And there was a huge celebration. You know, all these sailors had been on their ships for three years, right? Four years since the Americans joined the war. They were very happy to have all these beautiful women who were giving them free kisses on the street. And anybody in uniform was just Mr. Popular. And Johnny told his shipmates were here in Boston.

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We're only here for another 48 hours. We've got to go to Walden Pond. And his buddies on the ship said, Johnny, you're out of your mind. There will never have an opportunity like we have right now. And Johnny is like, well, but this is an icon of American literature. Like, we may never be back here. And somehow or other, he convinced 4 or 5 of his shipmates to make the trek out to Concord and go to Walden Pond.

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And just then, a whole busload of women from a Women's College arrived, and the doors open and all these beautiful 20-year old women piled out of the out of the bus. And so all of a sudden,

these heroes of the war, these 5 or 6 shipmates, had all these women who were desperate to talk to them, as desperate to talk to them as they were to talk to the women.

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So, they had the most fantastic day at Walden Pond. So, after the war, he tried out college. He pursued his interest in literature. And one of the authors he loved was Thoreau. And he loved Walt Whitman. And I think he really felt that he didn't just want to read about those people. He actually wanted to live that life.

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And so, when he got introduced to Lasqueti, he thought, this is a place that fits. Johnny had an uncle who had been in Norway during the war, and he'd had to destroy all evidence of having been American so that the Germans didn't pick him up. So, at the end of the war, when he wanted to get back into the US, he couldn't get access to the US.

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And he ended up on Lasqueti. Johnny, and his Dad came up from Oregon and went to visit his uncle. And that was how Johnny got introduced to Lasqueti. And he was looking for a piece of land. He was been looking in Oregon for a piece of land, but Lasqueti was in a different realm for him. Johnny was very sociable in his younger days and very much part of the community.

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He used to play Santa Claus for the False Bay School, and a lot of the people who are now old timers remember him and his big boots, and the Santa Claus outfit. He did plays as part of the community. He loved that very self-reliant life that Lasqueti demanded in 1947. Johnny lived very lightly on the land. There was a big logging boom on Lasqueti in the 40s and 50s.

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His various neighbors were signing up to have their places logged and taking the cheque. And Johnny was under a lot of pressure. So, he agreed with the loggers that he would okay his place to be logged. He really felt like he was browbeaten into that decision. The loggers started, and he really realized that he'd made a terrible mistake by signing on the dotted line.

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Luckily, that summer the dry came early and the logging had to shut down. So, when the fall came, the logger showed up again and wanted an amendment to the contract, giving him more time to get the trees down and the logs out. And Johnny saw his opportunity and he said, no, I'm not going to sign any amendment. You didn't get it done,

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So anything that's still standing is still going to stand. So that's why Johnny's place has got 500, 600-year old firs on it. So, he had a very subsistence farm there. He had a he had a yeah, he had a few cattle and he had some sheep and he had a garden. I would say that John really valued the nature on Lasqueti

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That was his great, great love. And the, the big trees and the empty spaces. So, there was a huge love of the nature that was there. And he talked about that when he was elderly, and he talked about how good it was, how good it was for the human mind to go for a walk in the woods.

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Johnny really wanted to see his big trees stay standing. So, we walked around his property and he introduced me to so many of the places, so many of these special little gems that he'd discovered over his 64 years on the land. And one of the places that he showed me repeatedly was the tide mark on the rocks directly across from his house, where it had been,

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Clearly it had been a wetland. There was a water mark, a straight line level watermark, and so he looked for a long time to find a means of protecting his land. And he'd written to BC Parks, and they hadn't been as enthusiastic as he expected about it, and they wanted him to consult a lawyer. And Johnny had no interest in talking to lawyers, so that didn't go anywhere.

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And we talked a lot about how he wanted to protect his land over a really long time, over 10, 15 years, probably. What that could look like. So, it took him a long time to come to a decision. It really wasn't until my Dad donated Mount Trematon, after a lot of research into what that would mean, and continuing conversations with Johnny and saying, you know, we've really figured that this is the best means of all the possibilities available that the Islands Trust Conservancy offered the best means for keeping control local, as local as possible, and keeping local folks engaged and responsible for it.

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I asked Johnny what he would think if it went back to being a wetland, and he was very philosophical about it, and he said, well, that won't be for me to decide. He said he wasn't opposed to it. If that was the way things went, then that would be a decision that he would respect. So actually, before it went to the Islands Trust Conservancy,

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A few of us who are closely involved decided, well, here's an opportunity to plug the ditch that Johnny had worked for 60 years, mostly unsuccessfully, in keeping open. And maybe it should go back to what it was 80 or 100 years previously. We plugged that ditch, and we were shocked at how fast it returned back into a wetland.

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Really, more than just a wetland, it's now more like a lake. You know, Johnny was a great fan of Thoreau, like I said. He loved *Walden Pond*, and he would read it and reread it and pull out passages. And there was a very well-thumbed copy on his table at the time that he died. So, Johnny really got his own Walden Pond at the end.