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The Brothers Warner

By Cass Warner

It is not the challenge of dollars...
...it is the challenge of ideals and ideas.
If the producers of pictures
see only the dollar...
...then I believe those production efforts
will fail.
This is Harry Warner.
With three of his brothers, he founded
and ran Warner Bros. for over 50 years.
They did this with no education,
a huge amount of chutzpah...
...and the belief as long as they were told
they couldn't do something...
... they knew
they were on the right track.
To me, Harry Warner was just Grandpa...
... the guy who loved nothing more than
riding me around on the tractor at his ranch.
Grandpa passed away when I was 10...
...following a long struggle
within the family business.
The last time I saw him, he was bedridden
in an antiseptic-smelling room.
His eyes moved to take me in.
He smiled as his hand took mine.
He tried to speak but no words came.
His grip tightened.
Something special
was being entrusted to me.
I squeezed back.
A promise was made.
It wasn't until years later...
... that I would realize the magnitude
and meaning of that moment.
As a kid, I often went to the studio lot.
As long as the red light wasn't flashing...
...I could go into any sound stage
and watch the magic happening.
Cut it. Let's move in
on a close shot here.
It was better than going to the circus.
It was a place of wonder, a kingdom
and a factory of dreams and creativity...
...being fashioned by my grandfather

and his brothers.
Today, the family business
has been reincarnated into another body.
A corporation that's part
of an even bigger corporation...
... that's part
of an even bigger corporation.
In other words, a conglomerate.
So does anyone even know
who the original Warner brothers were?
Can people possibly imagine that this huge
company was once run by an actual family?
People with a story, a past, a passion
and a purpose?
I decided to find out.
When I say "Warner Bros.,"
What comes to mind?
-Bugs Bunny.
-I like Bugs Bunny.
Cartoons.
Do you think there were actual brothers,
or that Warner Bros. is just a brand name?
I don't know. I don't know.
I don't know. I'm sorry.
I have no clue. Why do I care?
- I think it's just a brand name.
- It's just a brand name.
If there were brothers,
what do you think their names were?
I wanna say Anthony.
I'll go with Mike and Charlie
because I got no idea.
Homer.
Oscar and Stanley.
Diego?
I don't know, Time Warner?
And AOL Time Warner, I would think.
When I say the name Warner Bros.,
what's the first thing that comes to mind?
Jack Warner.
If one does remember
the brothers, they remember Jack.
He was the last man standing.
He rewrote history and

pretty much left the other brothers out.
The truth is,
they were a phenomenal team...
...that built an empire on a dream
and revolutionized Hollywood...
... while making the most classic,
relevant movies of their time.
- I reserved a table. Victor Laszlo.
- Yes, Mr. Laszlo, right this way.
Warner Bros. had a definite stamp
to their films.
That'll learn you to sit up
and hold onto this.
The lean, hard, look of Warner Bros.
It's gritty and it's tough.
They were interested in issues of prejudice,
of ethnicity.
Your money's no good here.
Come on, let's go.
You too.
Hold on a minute.
Warner Bros. by far
was known in Hollywood...
...as a studio with a social conscience.
Warner Bros. had a motto...
...to educate, entertain and enlighten.
If there was a champion
for a patriotic way of life...
...it was Warner Bros.
Warner Bros. was America.
You could not have a Harry
and Jack Warner saying:
"The hell with my profits."
There are some things more important
than profit.
I think any studio chief who said that today
would be looking for another job tomorrow.
Four brothers born
into a family of 12 children.
Out of the movie-making four,
Harry, the eldest, was born in 1881.
Albert followed three years later...
... then came Sam,
who was seven years younger...

...and last but not least,
kid brother, Jack...
... who was 11 years Harry's junior,
born in 1892.
Our family entered this country from Russia,
now Poland.
I've been searching for over 30 years
to find out what our real surname is.
Great-Grandpa Benjamin wanted
to leave the past behind.
There was too much pain connected to it,
I've been told.
There's one thing for certain:
It definitely wasn't Warner.
The reason my father came here...
...was because he could not educate
his children, number one...
...and number two, to work for a living...
...because the right to work
did not exist over there.
First of all,
they were mostly uneducated Jews...
...and when they came to this country...
...the educated Jews,
which was the Russian--
The German Jews.
--wanted nothing to do with them.
So they had to find something.
They got into the clothing business,
the rag business...
...they got into anything they could get into
which you could without an education.
We couldn't go to school,
so we started working...
...because we had to earn a living.
So I sold papers and shined shoes
on the corner of Light and Baltimore Street.
We had to stay out pretty late at night...
...because if we didn't bring home \$2...
...we didn't eat much.
And I think that was
the greatest lesson of my life.
I learned how to work
and I appreciate work.

And then one day, they seized on an idea,
all about the same time.
They saw the future
of what was a nickelodeon.
It was 1903.
Sam and Harry put their nickels
on a plate...
...and sat through three shows back to back
until the manager threw them out.
Watching others
go in and out of the theater...
...they looked at each other,
shook hands and said:
"We're in the motion-picture business."
At the same time in another city...
...Brother Albert
had become a nickelodeon junkie.
When he arrived home, he announced that
he too wanted to be in the movie business.
Kismet, fate, call it what you like,
a decision was made.
Sam got wind of a second-hand kinoscope
projector invented by Thomas Edison...
...that came with the film The Great
Train Robbery, the rave of the day.
The whole family, excited about
the potential of this new business...
...piled their savings on the dining table.
Still short, Father Benjamin pawned
the family heirloom, a gold watch...
...as well as old Bob the horse,
who pulled his meat-delivery wagon.
Now they were in
the motion-picture business.
To open up their first storefront theater,
the brothers hung a sheet on the wall...
...and cut a deal to borrow chairs
from the funeral parlor next door.
Sam ran the projector,
Albert fed the film through it...
...Harry collected the nickels,
sister Rose played the organ...
...and Jack sang...
...or more accurately, chased everyone out

when the film was done.

I was used as a chaser...

...in the early days of the motion pictures,
movies, nickelodeons.

They wanted to get rid
of an audience...

...they'd have someone like me
come out and sing.

- Are you ready?

- Yes.

My great-grandfather, Benjamin Warner...

...believed profoundly in the value of unity.

His constant advice to me was this:

"Harry, "he would say,

"You are the oldest of my sons...

...and it is your responsibility
to keep your brothers together.

As long as you stand together,
you will be strong."

He had been brought up from age 6...

...to take care of

...and so he had a lot of responsibility
all of his life...

...and so that's the way he lived his life,
as a very responsible person.

Harry was born Hirsch

and had the middle name of Morris...

...named after his mother's brother.

Usually he was just Harry,

or sometimes H.M.

Harry Warner

took the business very seriously.

Was he a big, jovial,

giving-you-a-bear-hug sort of a guy? No.

Was he humorless? No.

He was a quieter person.

Well, you know, everybody loved Harry,
you know?

Well, they did. I mean, he was just--

He was a gentle soul, you know?

It wasn't that he wasn't tough and strong
and, like, you know, running the show...

...but there was a gentleness about him
that everybody appreciated.

He wasn't a fast talker,
he didn't tell stories.
He was just a straight-shooting,
honest person...
...and, "This is who I am, "you know,
"And you better be who you are."
And if you weren't, he didn't like it
and he'd let you know.
Albert was a very large man.
He had a large head, huge hands.
He was impressive in his bulk,
I would say that.
And he did not like to attract
any attention to himself.
He'd sit at the dinner table
and hardly say a word.
Always called everybody in his family
a bunch of bums.
The philosophy of life
that that would reveal...
...is that hard work prevents you
from being a bum.
Sam was described
as the family's visionary...
...the dreamer
who loved anything mechanical...
...and had the nerve,
or chutzpah, to match.
Well, Sam was a remarkable man.
He was a very rough character
but he was a very colorful man.
He was extremely bright.
In the family, he was a buffer
between Harry and Jack.
If I'm trying to picture Jack Warner
walking around the set...
...he was a brisk walker.
Not really smiling,
but animated all the time.
He had this brush mustache,
which he dyed.
It was always brown...
...and his hair was always slicked back
and always dyed brown.

And I finally understood that.
Nobody was gonna catch him being gray.
Very strong, very direct, very big desk.
You know, just like you'd cast the head
of a studio for a movie, you know?
The youngest brother
Americanized his name...
...Jacob, or Yankel in Yiddish,
to Jack.
He added a middle name, Leonard,
because he thought it sounded classy.
Jack L. Warner had a ring of formality
or authority to it...
...but he preferred the snap
of just being called J.L.
He was the frontman
and he was the youngest, right?
Well, the youngest, "I'm the youngest.
I'm an actor, put the light on me, please...
...because they're getting all the attention
all the time. Hello."
He was definitely a man to notice.
When he walked in a room...
...you knew someone of importance
was walking into that room.
Every crisis was an incentive
for the brothers to take their next step.
It became difficult
to get a supply of films.
They formed
The Duquesne Film Exchange...
...acquiring films for themselves
and for others to rent...
...realizing distribution
was more profitable than exhibition.
When one of the films arrived
as a negative print...
...Jack advertised it as the first picture
made with all colored actors.
When it became nearly impossible
to get new films...
...Harry leased an abandoned foundry
to start to produce their own films...
...and Warner Features was born.

When Edison tried to control
the East Coast market for two-reelers...
... Sam and Jack joined the exodus to
Hollywood, with Harry and Albert to follow.
Even though times were tough...
...they weren't interested in selling
their fledgling company.
World War I broke out.
Sam and Jack got hired
to make training films for the Army.
In their first film, Open Your Eyes...
...Jack played the part of a soldier
who caught the clap.
Tired of working for others,
Sam bought the bestselling book...
...written by the ambassador to Germany
called My Four Years in Germany...
... which told of the atrocities committed
by the Kaisers troops.
Their gamble paid off.
It was the company's
first politically conscious film...
...and their first moneymaker.
Although others offered more money,
Harry convinced the author...
... that Warner Bros. was the biggest
movie studio in Hollywood...
...and would deliver
the biggest box office.
The famous Hollywood back-end deal
was born.
With their profits,
they bought their first studio in Hollywood.
Each brother took on specific roles
within the fledgling company.
Harry served as president,
the financial wizard and strategist.
Albert oversaw distribution
and exhibitor relations.
Sam was the producer, acquiring books,
ideas and new technologies...
... while Jack oversaw
the day-to-day operations.
"Those were the good old days. Positively."

That's his handwriting.

Is it? Wow.

I think so.

-These are wonderful.

-That's right.

Yeah.

This one I love.

This one is so touching.

That's sweet, yeah.

This one is Hal Wallis.

A very young Hal Wallis.

-Yes, indeed.

Oh, look. This is your 6th birthday.

Society Cinema, Mom.

You got in Society Cinema...

-...on your sixth birthday.

-How about that.

Even when Grandpa took
time off, he was still making movies.

He produced a short about
my mom's 6th birthday in 1926.

God, everybody
was having such a good time.

That's my cousin, Jackie,
who was very close to me as a friend.

That's my mother and my sister.

And my dad.

He's so cute. It's funny to see him
excited and having fun.

- Yeah.

- Yeah, it's so cute.

My sister, Doris,
was eight years older than I was.
And my brother was 12 years older
than I was.

The truth is, I was unexpected.

Yeah, I was a surprise.

My mother and dad were married
for over 50 years...

...which in those days
was unusual in Hollywood.

He relied on her,
and he liked being with her...

...and he felt reassured

when she was with him.
Oh, that's Jack and Irma.
Jack's first wife.
That's Jack and Jackie.
That's Jack and his second wife, Ann.
Okay, you know the rest.
People in the family
disapproved of Jack's divorce...
...and him marrying his mistress,
especially when there was a child involved.
One of my regrets was the
friction between Harry and Jack.
But I think it was mainly that my father
resented authority of his older brother.
When Jack first started out,
he was a lightweight.
And it bothered Harry terribly
that this younger brother...
...was just not going anywhere,
and he was crazy about girls and parties...
...and so he was not happy with him.
His idea was that his son, Lewis...
...would take over the studio
and not Jack.
Sam Warner came to New York
and saw me and met me.
And I was 18. He was 40.
In those days, a man 40 years old is old,
especially when you're 18.
It didn't take long for Sam
to propose and marry Lina.
Mother was under the impression...
...that Sam Warner
was a bigshot movie man.
So she was very upset
when she found out the truth...
...that Sam wasn't such a bigshot.
They were struggling in those days,
the Warner brothers.
They had to sell Rin Tin Tin pictures
to meet the payroll.
I was earning more money
as a salary from Ziegfeld Follies...
...than he was getting from the company.

For years, Edison and others
had been looking unsuccessfully...
...to add sound to pictures.
In 1925, Sam was introduced
to a new system...
...developed by Bell Labs
and Western Electric...
... which he thought could work.
It recorded sound
on a 16-inch record disc.
My brother phoned me
that there' s an apparatus I should see...
...and after seeing it...
...I then made up my mind
that through this instrument...
...talking pictures would be possible.
One example of Harry Warner's
willingness to take risks...
...was his decision in 1 925
to buy Vitaphone.
Harry gambled everything
they had, borrowed \$7 million...
...which today would be 150 million...
...oftentimes paying for this money
at 40-percent interest.
There' s a Yiddish expression...
... tokhes afn tish,
"put your ass on the table."
And they did that.
It was the music of the instrument
that I saw that attracted me mostly...
...and beyond that,
I was attracted by the screen...
...being used as our future education...
...because through the screen,
you could educate.
What was impossible to do
with the silent picture...
...was possible to perform
by this instrument.
It was the general belief at that time...
...that motion pictures had progressed
as far as they could go...
...as a medium of dramatic expression

and satisfying entertainment.
My brothers and I believed otherwise.
We were determined to break
the barrier of silence...
...and bring full life to the screen
by giving it a voice.
To this goal, we dedicated
the full resources of Warner Bros.
There were setbacks and discouragements
and a great deal of criticism...
...from doubters who were annoyed with us
for not letting well enough alone.
If you look at history of Hollywood...
...they've always been skeptical
of any innovation...
...and so that was the reason...
...that most of the moguls
wanted nothing to do with sound.
It's very difficult...
...especially for large,
successful companies, to change quickly...
...and so any sort of introduction
of new technology...
...puts into question every business
and profit model that they have in place...
...and rehiring people and restructuring
is a very scary, risky thing.
Sam didn't see it as a risk,
but more as an opportunity.
He was determined to make
the synchronization of sound on film...
...a commercial success.
He named it Vitaphone,
the living voice.
Sam and Lina now had a child...
...and she had gone back to Paramount
as an actress...
...and wanted Sam to bring his invention
to a bigger, more successful studio.
I begged him.
I begged him to sever his relationship
with the company and go to Paramount.
At the last minute, you know...
...they got his mother and the father

on the phone and they cried...
...and the sisters and there were
other brothers too, you know.
And I really never quite forgave him
for turning down the Paramount deal.
The brothers made a historic
decision to do a feature film, Don Juan...
...with the star John Barrymore.
The film had a track of swords clashing...
...doors opening,
and the shattering of glass...
...as well as using the best orchestra
money could buy...
... the New York Philharmonic...
... which only the wealthy
could afford to go to hear at the time.
The closest any actor came
to making a sound...
...was during the 191 kisses
Barrymore laid on his costars.
Don Juan created a lot of excitement
but it had drained the coffers...
...and bankers were turning a deaf ear
to Harry's pleas for more loans.
Mama, darling,
if I' m a success in this show...
...We' re gonna move from here.
Oh, yes,
we're gonna move up to the Bronx.
Lot of grass up there,
and lot of people you know.
There's the Ginsbergs, the Guttenbergs
and the Goldbergs. A lot of Bergs--
The brothers gambled everything
to hire the world's greatest entertainer...
...Al Jolson, to star in The Jazz Singer...
...and show the perfection
of a synchronized voice...
...moving exactly with the picture.
This was the scene
that put sound on the map.
The whole film contained barely
two minutes' worth of synchronized talking.
Stop!

Jack Warner has always had the credit
for The Jazz Singer.
Sam was the one
who produced The Jazz Singer.
Wait a minute, wait a minute,
you ain't heard nothing yet.
Wait a minute, I tell you,
you ain't heard nothing.
You wanna hear "Toot Toot Tootsie"?
All right, hold on.
It was Sam who insisted
that Al Jolson's famous line...
...which was ad-libbed,
be kept in the film.
He knew magic when he saw it.
Sam was popping aspirin like candy...
...due to terrible headaches
and sinus troubles.
At the end of filming, when he
showed an unsteadiness on his feet...
...the doctors demanded
that he go to the hospital for treatment.
The other brothers went to New York...
...to get ready for the premiere
on October 6th, 1927.
His condition worsened.
Harry and Albert
grabbed two specialists...
...and got on the first train they could
to Los Angeles.
They arrived three hours too late,
as Sam had died of a cerebral hemorrhage.
Regarding Sam's death, Jack said:
"The Jolson debut
was an empty victory for us.
There's no doubt
that The Jazz Singer killed him.
Something wonderful
went out of our lives."
Quiet Albert was moved
to give a rare statement to the press:
"The three of us who are left
will carry on...
...and I believe we will always accomplish

more work in one day...
... than any other trio of men
will in three...
...not because we're smarter,
but because we trust each other implicitly."
I was doing a film at Paramount
when he died.
All of a sudden, I'm a widow at 20
with an 11-months old child...
...and I probably was very foolish.
I was young and rebellious.
My mother was young,
and she was a different religion...
...and Harry Warner was very conservative,
you know that, and didn't--
I don't think really much liked actors
and actresses and people like that.
They just never, never let up on me,
particularly Harry Warner.
After Sam's death, Harry and
wife Rea petitioned the court to adopt Lita.
Lina was awarded \$300,000...
...and Lita was raised by Harry and Rea
as one of their own.
I really look back and love them,
and they took great care of me...
...and I had a probably much better life...
...than I would have had.
They weren't wrong.
I give them a lot of credit.
I don't think I would, in my 50s...
...would I have wanted to take on
a little child, another child.
So Harry Warner, I think
one of his beautiful things about him...
...is he wanted to take care
of the whole family.
Many a time, I walk out of
the theater with tears in my eyes...
...because when you find the dream
realized...
...and you know that no dream such as
mammoth as that one was to undertake...
...was done easy.

Today to have all of you enjoy
that which even life was given for.

Opening night of The Jazz Singer
at Grauman's Chinese...

...Irving Thalberg came out of the theater...

...he turned to my father and said,

"This thing won't last, it's a one shot."

- Really?

- Yes.

They were stuck with a lot of
pictures that did not have sound on them...

...and if this idea worked,
they were all in trouble.

The Jazz Singer...

...was the thing that inspired Steamboat
Willie, the first Mickey Mouse cartoon.

The Jazz Singer came out and Walt goes,
"Gotta have sound."

Started a whole new, in secret--

Now, the studio at the time
was like five people.

And in secret from the other four,
he had an animator start up this talkie...

...and it became this worldwide
phenomenon...

...but it was because of the success
of The Jazz Singer...

...that that all happened.

And we were into the era of sound.

The Warner Bros.

What else did they do?

They didn't have to do anything else.

Think what a thing it was
to bring sound to movies.

And it will take them from poverty-row status
to first-tier studio status.

The Jazz Singer remained the
biggest moneymaker in Hollywood history...

...until Gone With the Wind.

The brothers had made it to the top.

The next challenge was

how to get theaters wired for sound.

They bought First National...

...which had the largest theater chain

in the country...
...and a sprawling lot in Burbank.
Then they went on and they made
the great pictures of the 30s and 40s.
Great stars and all that.
Nobody had a crystal ball saying,
"The Depression is coming."
But Harry was smart enough...
...had enough business savvy
to say it's not really the smartest thing...
...to have all of our eggs in one basket.
And so he diversified the company
in the late 1920s...
...so that they got into publishing
and they got into music.
Leading this new division...
...was a Warner brother of the next
generation. Harry's only son, Lewis.
- That's Lewis and my dad.
- And Arthur.
- That's Arthur.
- And who's the pretty girl?
I don't know, but I guarantee
it was with Lewis and not Arthur.
Lewis was always
a bit of a devilish character.
- And my father-- And my father...
- Yes, he was.
- ...was very shy, very shy.
- Gorgeous. Okay.
- Yeah, he was a leader and a half, that guy.
- Lewis was. Oh, yeah.
But not always in the right,
proper direction.
Well, that depends.
If you like girls, it was the perfect direction.
That's what he was known for.
The house was always like a party,
and he played music a lot.
And, yeah, he was a fun person.
He was great to be with.
He was marvelous to me.
He treated me, you know,
extremely lovingly.

He was in New York
at the New York office...
...and he was helping with that.
He was also producing plays
on Broadway.
He was a very attractive young man...
...and very bright,
and wonderful personality.
He had two girlfriends...
...and he decided that
he and one of his girlfriends...
...would go down to Cuba for a vacation.
While he was down there,
his wisdom tooth, which was impacted...
...bothered him
and he had to come back.
By the time he got back,
it was infected...
...so they put him in the hospital...
...and two weeks later, he was gone.
Years later, Grandpa is quoted as saying:
"The one thing I wanted in this world
was to have a son...
...but God took him away
when he was 23 years old and I was 50.
He had a tooth pulled.
If it had happened today,
penicillin would have saved him...
...but God took him."
Probably the biggest tragedy
in my dad's life...
...was that my brother died...
...before both their dreams
could be fulfilled.
No music was allowed in
the house as Rea mourned for three years.
Harry tried to bury his grief
by working even harder...
...as the Depression was well underway.
When we think about
the history of Hollywood...
...if you ask somebody
"What's the purpose of Hollywood?"...
...most people would jump,

"To entertain me."
"Let us entertain you."
"Take me away from my worries."
Harry Warner certainly
was committed to education...
...and a lot of that,
I think he got from his father.
His father said to him:
"If you wanna go into films,
then take that tool...
...and make it a tool for social good."
I think that film is the most powerful
means of communication that there is.
I actually think that it does affect
the way you think or feel...
...and it can effect social legislation.
And because of that...
...I think that We filmmakers
have a powerful social responsibility.
And I think you always must entertain...
...but you have to be aware of
the messages that you're sending...
...and I think you have
to act responsibly.
Take a look at that.
The skunk.
You're next.
Take his stinking shirt off.
Warner Bros. looked at some of
the harsher realities of the United States...
...and that's another, I think, sort of
courageous move on Warner Bros.' part...
...in that they looked at
the prison system...
...they looked at
sort of the underside of America.
All right, let him out.
Come on.
Public outcry resulting from this film...
...forced prison reforms
throughout the United States.
It is true that Warner Bros.
was sued by the Ku Klux Klan.
Soldiers of the Black Legion,

you see before you an instrument of death.
- We give you this....
- In the film Black Legion...
...they wore uniforms that looked
very much like the uniforms of the Klan.
And the Klan believed that the film
was being made to disparage them.
They sued Warner Bros. and they lost.
Criminal disregard of germs and
their power to invade the bloodstream...
...is causing a death rate
in childbirth alone...
...of three out of every 10 mothers...
...or in the city of Paris, over 20,000
innocent and helpless women annually.
They were really trying to enlighten people
and trying to educate people.
It wasn't just entertaining.
They did--
And they did a great job of it too.
Because most of the things
that I learned as a kid...
...and I think most of Americans, was what
we learned from the movies in those days.
Really was.
Hey, Tom, Wait a minute.
- What happened?
- Nothing. I just got burned up, that's all.
What do you Wanna run out on me for?
We're together, ain't We?
Sure.
You know, in connection With that Whole
idea of the criminal element or the loner...
...or the antisocial person
being the hero of the film...
...to a certain extent there's been
that kind of continuity of attention...
...being paid to that kind of hero
at Warners.
They brawled their way through life
and it's one thing and another...
...and that's what those characters
in those movies did.
Jimmy Cagney, the ultimate brawler.

Now, boys, boys, don't let
all that smooth talk fool you.
Farrell and the rest of that gang of leeches
up at headquarters...
...are supposed to be working for us.
We sweat blood
to give them their fat salaries...
...their fancy offices and
high-priced cars to ride around in.
- You bet.
- That's right.
There was a time when there were
more films of social relevance...
...and they came out
of the studio system.
And today,
I've come to believe actually...
...that the marketing of a movie
is more important than the movie.
And that is to me a very, very sad thing.
And perhaps that explains...
...Why there are less films of social
relevance, because they're harder to market.
It wasn't only message films
that my grandfather liked to make.
Producer Leon Schlesinger
tickled the brothers' fancy...
...and Merrie Melodies began in 1931...
...exhibiting their scene of humor
and spirit of play.
I remember Bugs Bunny.
I can quote Words from Bugs Bunny.
I can quote the little character in--
That was looking out to kill a rabbit.
- Elmer Fudd?
- Fudd, yeah, that's the guy.
And he goes up to this big rabbit
and he looks at him and he says:
"Say, What is--? What is a rabbit?"
So Fudd says,
"Well, a rabbit has big ears."
And then the rabbit says, "Like this?"
Fudd says, "And a rabbit has a little tail."
And the rabbit says, "Like this?"

And then Fudd says,
"Hey, you're a rabbit."
I am a rabbit!
The Warner Bros. cartoons,
with a figure like Bugs Bunny...
...a kind of a cynical, ironic figure,
makes a connection to the audience there.
Looks at the audience.
What am I doing?
Bugs looks at the audience
a lot more than Mickey ever does.
Now, another thing those cartoons do
that always intrigued me...
...is how often they bring the movies
themselves into the cartoons.
Say, pardon me, but could you help out
a fellow American who's down on his luck?
Hit the road.
I was fascinated by Great-Uncle Jack...
...who had all the cockiness of Bugs Bunny.
We only met a few times...
...as he was rarely present
at family gatherings...
...and, in fact, his name was said
only in hushed tones.
If you could think of Jack Nicholson
as The Joker...
...that would be sort of Jack Warner.
Oh, I think Jack Warner was a big ham...
...and he had the smell
of show business.
Well, you know, he told jokes all the time.
Even-- They Were terrible.
And he then would repeat them...
...When he didn't think
people got the point of them.
He'd trap you one-on-one...
...where you made eye contact
and you couldn't escape.
He knew he was Jack Warner...
...and he'd start his one-liners on you.
And of course, I'm ha-ha-ha-ing...
...and he knows it.
He's not a stupid guy.

And he's rattling off nine or 10
and I'm laughing...
...and anybody else who he trapped
was laughing.
He always liked Jewish humor.
Yiddish humor, you might say,
vaudeville humor.
I like just as much corny, Yiddish,
vaudeville shtick.
- Yeah.
- I always say the "khe."
You know, you're mishpokhe.
And, you know, that means--
Mishpokhe means your family.
The "khe." If you can say "khe" right.
Over the years, Jack became known...
...for things he'd say in public
that could hardly be believed.
I can only imagine Albert Einstein's
reaction when Jack told him:
Hey, bub,
I've got a theory of relativity too.
Don't hire them.
And who can forget
Jack's historic meeting...
...with Madame Chiang Kai-shek?
How could I be so dumb?
I forgot my laundry ticket.
No tickie, no laundry, right?
When the lights went up...
...after Warren Beatty showed Jack
the first cut of Bonnie and Clyde:
So, Jack, what did you think?
I always know when a picture's too long.
Really? How?
Depends on how many times
I get up to take a leak.
One piss, fine. Two piss, trouble.
But goddamn it, kid,
you made a three-piss picture.
I don't think Harry or Albert played parts.
I think they were simply your Jewish uncle
that is very familiar.

But Jack was:

And that's how he did it.

It wouldn't be fun for me
to play that part.

That's a tough--

That's a tough part to keep playing.

And so many people think you're a jerk, you
know, because you're out there doing that.

But the great thing was, he didn't care.

He didn't have to care, and

he could go to Monte Carlo, he could do--

"I can do anything I want."

That's the kind of attitude
that he brought to it.

"I don't care What you think,

I'm me and fuck you."

And he did that with a kind of aggression
too, so that you stood back.

It was clear that that Jack
was more interested in publicity...

...more interested in
playing the media game...

...more interested in
the machinations of Hollywood.

But Harry was clearly doing it
for moral reasons.

These poor devils
have all had their homes burned...

...their families beaten and starved to death
by your tax-gatherers.

- Bless you, Robin, we'll never forget you.

- Our humble thanks, master.

- May we be worthy, Robin.

- You are, Mother, you are.

- Have you eaten Well, friend?

- Yes, thank you, Robin.

I'm sorry to have to show you that...

...but once these poor people
Were all happy and contented...

...just simple villagers
who never harmed a soul.

Grandpa often read the newspaper...

...as he took pride in being aware
of local and world news.

His associate told me that
he would often come across a story...
...about somebody being persecuted
or experiencing some personal difficulty.
He'd send someone
to collect more information...
...so if he could,
he would anonymously help them out...
... with a couple months' rent or a job.
I came back from lunch one day
and I had all this money on my desk.
I went in to Sylvia and I said,
"Somebody's left a lot of money on my desk.
Do you know who it belongs to?"
And she says, "It's yours."
I said, "Mine? How did I get it?"
It was about 100 dollars.
Well, that was, like,
a week's salary in those days.
And she said,
"Mr. Warner bet his horse, Honey's Alibi...
...on all of us across the board,
and it won."
That was pretty nice.
In Los Angeles...
...the Medical Achievement Award goes to
Harry M. Warner, president of Warner Bros.
Apparently others noticed his generosity...
...as he was given the title of "the man
who brought charity to Hollywood."
I'm grateful to our great country
for having given me the opportunity...
...that enabled me to do
whatever I have been able to do...
...for my fellow man
for which I seek no honors.
He was on his way to Germany
to open up the exchanges...
...and as a side trip,
we went to Belgium to the Aragon...
...and in through the forests where a lot
of the First World War had been waged.
And he took us down in the trenches
and told us the stories, you know...

...of the people in trenches
being 25 feet apart...
...and shooting at each other all day...
...and then at night, exchanging cigarettes
and talking to each other.
I mean, that kind of
anti-war premise was spoken.
You know, war was stupid
and hell and unnecessary.
In 1933, Adolf Hitler
became chancellor of Germany.
One of his first acts was to order
a boycott of Jewish-owned businesses.
Harry is convinced that
he cannot do business with Germany...
...as long as Hitler is in power.
This is the first studio in Hollywood to stop
doing business with Nazi Germany...
...and other people thought he was crazy.
People, you know--
Louis B. Mayer says:
"We can't live without
the German box office."
I didn't realize how
lucrative a market Germany was...
...and Europe was in the 1930s...
...but I found out that about half the gross
was made outside of the United States.
So it was a very big deal...
...for someone to actually pull out
of Germany in 1934...
...years before any of the other studios
decided to pull out.
So I think that's putting your money
where your mouth is.
Ultimately, to make some socially
responsible decisions...
...you must be willing to give up
some level of profit...
...some level of squeezing
every last nickel out.
It's not just the Hollywood industry
that is selling its product overseas...
...but Americans across the board

are doing business with Nazi Germany.
You know, the International
Business Machine, for example, IBM.
Working With Nazi Germany.
In fact, they develop the device to catalog
the folks who will go to the prison camps.
Warner Bros. wanted to make a film
called Concentration Camp.
This was based on reporting that had been
coming in about the concentration camps.
Dachau opened in March of 1933.
I mean, people forget
that the camps started that early.
Harry Warner ordered folks in the studio
to start collecting stories.
You know,
start going through newspapers.
They're going to focus
on the horrors of the camps.
I mean, they can't be as graphic
as they could be today...
...but about people losing their
civil liberties, being rounded up...
...you know,
put into these camps for forced labor.
So the Production Code says,
"No, you can't do that."
They say,
"If you try to go through with this film...
...We'll contact the State Department."
It's a funny thing to me
that if Warner Bros. knows...
...there's concentration camps
in the mid-'30s, then other people know.
And so it was a real attempt
at making a very hard-hitting film...
...that they didn't get to make.
The Production Code Authority was
putting a lot of pressure on Warner Bros.--
Warner Bros. was pushing the envelope
more than the other studios were.
--not to offend foreign governments,
not to offend pressure and interest groups.
Blocked by the Production Code...

...Grandpa found other ways
to convey messages throughout the '30s.
Porfirio...
...What does it mean, this Word?
Democracy?
Why, it means liberty.
Liberty for a man to say what he thinks,
to worship as he believes.
It means equal opportunity.
There was also a strong
virulent element of anti-Semitism.
There were a number of posters
and pamphlets and--
That were leafleted around that
were saying these were Jewish studios...
...and how dare they speak up
as a minority...
...when in fact that was, again,
one of these American values...
...and American principles
that Warner Bros. knew so well.
Harry Warner himself took the word "Jew"
out of The Life of Emile Zola.
It was not there in the dialogue.
He said it should not be there
in the dialogue.
It's there. It's Written.
At one point, somebody points to the list
of the members of the general staff...
...and it says, "Dreyfus. Religion: Jew."
He says, "How did this person
ever get on the general staff there?"
So it's clear what's going on.
But it's not there in the dialogue.
Now, he's been criticized.
The film has been criticized for this.
It wasn't up front enough. It didn't say it.
To me,
I think it's a different kind of thing.
Because, in fact,
by taking out the explicitness in that way...
...it makes the idea of prejudice
a lot more general.
You will not say, like many,

"What does it matter...
...if an innocent man is undergoing
torture on Devil's Island?"
Is the suffering of one obscure person
worth the disturbance of a great country?
Not only is an innocent man
crying out for justice...
...but more, much more.
A great nation is in desperate danger
of forfeiting her honor.
You had an industry that was run
by Jews, censored by Catholics...
...and an audience of Protestants.
So only in America.
I thank God each night...
...that such an organization as
the American Legion exists in our country.
The American Legion has become
the watchdog of democracy...
...the guardian of equal rights for all...
...a warning to destructive interests
the world over...
...that Americans will stand alone
if necessary...
...in support of true
democratic government...
...and against the hates and prejudices
of a world gone mad.
Confessions of a Nazi Spy.
The most defiant motion picture
ever made.
Confessions of a Nazi Spy is the film
Harry had been looking for...
...where they could actually
use the word Nazi in a film...
...and let people know
what Hitler's up to.
We are proud of our new Germany.
Confessions of a Nazi Spy was
definitely a milestone in American cinema.
It's the first American movie
that is an explicitly anti-Nazi film.
They were writing it in 1938,
shooting in the beginning of 1939...

...and it premiered in April 1939.
Until then,
the Production Code Administration...
...had consistently turned down
every project that had to do with Nazis.
They would not let the studios
make anything attacking Hitler.
- was this your first trip to Germany?
- No, I was born in Germany.
- Really, Where?
- In Runaborg. Do you know it?
Yes, we always get our Christmas candles
from there.
They smell so good.
Yes, they smell of honey and heather.
Heather almost as far as the eye could see.
- And you found it changed?
- Changed?
- The sheep are gone now.
- Why?
There's a Hitler storm-troop barrack
in the middle of the heather.
My old pasture
is in a concentration camp.
My friends talk in Whispers,
When they talk at all.
You have family left in Runaborg?
Yes, my brother, and some relatives
and their children.
Oh, I wish that--
You believe in that system?
I believe in the purposes and destiny
of the Third Reich...
...and our Fuhrer, Adolf Hitler.
What happened in February 1 938...
...the FBI uncovered a Nazi spy ring
operating in the United States...
...and they brought them to trial
in early October in New York.
And the Warner Bros. realized
that this was their opportunity...
...to come in
and make their anti-Nazi film.
Because now they were making a film

about a real case. It was an FBI story.
They flew out one of their Writers...
...to watch the trial in New York.
They then signed up Leon Turrou...
...Who had been the FBI agent
Who broke the case.
And Turrou flew out to Los Angeles
as a consultant...
...Where he wrote in a number of articles
how impressed he was...
...by the Warner brothers.
and by the real dedication of the studio...
...and everyone involved with
the production to make an anti-Nazi film.
That information concerned only
enemies of our party and our Fuhrer.
Your Fuhrer?
I thought you said
you were a loyal American?
I am.
They came under tremendous pressure
not to make this movie.
A number of actors turned down parts...
...because they feared
that there would be Nazi reprisals...
...against families that were still living
in Germany or Austria...
...or any of the occupied lands.
The German council came to the studios,
came to Will Hays...
...and threatened that Germany
would boycott all Hollywood films...
...if they allowed the Warner Bros. movie
to be released.
Warners got tremendous pressure
from other studio heads who said:
"Look, you're really endangering
our well-being by making this movie."
And perhaps the worst was,
Jack Warner came home one day...
...and there was a big envelope
that had come in the mail...
...and when he opened it up,
he found a blueprint of his home.

And inside was a letter saying,
"We know where you live."
And so the message was clear,
"Don't make the movie"...
...but they made it anyway.
Germany invades Poland
and the Free State of Danzig.
Efforts and hopes of diplomats
for peaceful settlement...
...are transformed into the roar of gunfire.
Warsaw is bombed, blasted and shelled.
Poland is in ruins.
People were isolationist
for the most part.
The polls that were taken:
"We don't wanna have anything to do
with what was happening in Europe."
I don't wanna be no corporal.
- What's that?
- I don't wanna be no corporal.
- Why not?
- Wait a minute, captain, let him talk.
Well, you see, I--
Is it because of your religious convictions,
York?
Yes, sir, that's it.
- You're a religious man, York.
- Yes, sir.
- You want to worship God in your own way.
- Yes sir.
- You're a farmer.
- Yes, sir.
You wanna plow your fields
as you see fit...
...and raise your family
according to your own rights.
And that's your heritage and mine.
Every American's.
But the cost of that heritage is high.
Sometimes it takes all we have
to preserve it.
Even our lives.
How you going to answer that, York?
Wow.

You done give me a powerful lot
to be a-thinking about.
Well, take your time.
We all know that the fight
against intolerance...
...did not end
with the armistice of 1 91 8.
It may never end.
It has been Well and truly said...
...that eternal vigilance
is the price of liberty.
In 1941, Harry was called
before a Senate subcommittee...
...to testify about using motion pictures
as propaganda...
...and charged with creating hysteria
by inciting Americans to go to war.
In defense of Warner Bros. films,

he responded:

"The only crime we are guilty of
is accurately portraying reality."
A week later,
the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor...
...and the charges were dropped.
The brothers dedicated all
the studio resources to the war effort...
...and made training films for soldiers.
It' s been a wonderful evening
and I' d like to stay some more.
But I gotta get a move on now.
I sail at half past 4.
Heil. That troop ship bound for Africa
pulls out at half past 4.
Good evening, Hollywood Canteen.
The brothers recruited
Hollywood's biggest stars...
...to support the troops and to raise
millions of dollars in war bonds.
The only way you can see the Canteen is
to join the Army, the Navy, the Marines.
Even Casablanca rallied
Americans to join the fight against fascism.
All right, major, you asked for it.

Bogart is the archetypal American
Who has to be persuaded...
...in one way or another that
you need to engage with the war.
That you need to engage in the fight
against fascism and Nazism.
You have any idea what
you'd look forward to if you stayed?
Nine chances out of 10,
We'd Wind up at a concentration camp.
- Isn't that true, Louie?
- Major Strasser Would insist.
You're saying this only....
Casablanca, of course, is the
greatest romantic melodrama ever made...
...and it has this character at the center...
...who is very bitter and very cynical
about everything...
...Who ultimately is redeemed...
...by love and by the noble effort
of the Second World War.
Although Casablanca reflected
Harry's convictions about fighting fascism...
...it was Jack who ultimately
took the Oscar for it.
Hal Wallis, the producer of Casablanca
and many other top Warner Bros. films...
...rose to accept his Best Picture Oscar...
...only to see Jack Warner
make a beeline to the stage...
...before he could even get to the aisle.
In Wallis' words,
"I couldn't believe it was happening.
Casablanca had been my creation.
Jack had absolutely
nothing to do with it."
Let me tell you about
Jack Warner's editing skills.
I knew one of his first editors,
and he said, "He was the kind of a guy...
...it's gotta be his way.
He's always right."
I said, "How did you get around that?"
He says, "I would cut the day's work..."

...and I'd always have one obvious flub.
I mean, obvious, Eddie.
Anybody who didn't know
about the picture business would see it...
...and say, 'Hold it!
What the hell are you, crazy?
Didn't you see that?
Fix that, goddamn it.
And he wouldn't bother with anything else
and I loved that because it was my cut."
In Los Angeles,
vast crowds hail France's thanks...
...for America's Friendship Food Train.
Highlight of the ceremonies,
the presentation to Harry M. Warner...
...of a torch lighted from the eternal flame
at the tomb of France's unknown soldier.
National chairman of
the American Friendship Food Train...
...Mr. Warner expresses the hope...
...that these examples
of international brotherly love...
...may be the forerunners
of peace on earth...
...and goodwill toward all men
among all the peoples of the world.
In 1934, When people,
never mind What their faith is...
...that is immaterial, were persecuted
and executed, that we didn't rise.
Had we have risen at that time,
there would have been no war.
If 500 or 600,000 dogs
Were being executed in Germany...
...I'm positive that the World
Would have risen.
But, oh, no. We hear arguments
about isolationists...
...about everything under the sun...
...except making a home
for those that were persecuted.
When he heard that they were thinking...
...of taking all the Jews out of Germany
and bringing them to Israel...

...he said, "This is not a good idea.
This is a place that is now inhabited
by both Arabs and Jews...
...and this is not a place, really, that they
should spend the rest of their lives."
He said, "Try Alaska."
Of course, I don't know whether
he spoke to the Jews about that...
...but that was one of his suggestions.
Jack also found himself
wrestling with postwar problems.
The Cold War brought with it...
...a congressional committee that
spent years investigating Hollywood...
...for possible communistic
and subversive activities.
And I am happy to have had the opportunity
to testify.
If you want, you can do it over.
Yeah, I blew it.
"Ideology "term--
Ideological terms, rather--
Termites have burrowed into many American
industries, organizations and societies.
Wherever they may be, I say
let us dig them out and get rid of them.
My brothers and I will be happy to subscribe
generously to a pest-removal fund.
We are willing to establish such a fund
to ship to Russia...
...the people who don't like
our American system of government...
...and prefer the communistic system
to ours.
I believe that there is definitely
an anti-Semitic component...
...to the House Committee of Un-American
Activities. I really believe that.
If you look at people called to testify...
...people who are accused
of having communist sympathies...
...or they've been to communist meetings
or if they're socialists...
...there seems to be a preponderant

number of Jews.

For many of the HUAC investigators...

...anti-Semitism, communism

and anti-fascism...

...were all part and parcel

of the same thing.

People who had been part of the anti-fascist

movement in the '30s and early '40s...

...were immediately accused

of also being communists.

He never felt that he had any Writer...

...in his studio, on the lot...

...Who was Writing subversive material,

Whereas Jack wasn't so sure.

So there was a split between

the two of them almost immediately...

...during this period of the picture business

being attacked.

During this time,

Harry is quoted as saying:

"If my own brother were a communist,

I'd drag him down to the FBI."

But it's unclear whether that says more

about his feelings for Jack...

... than his feelings for communists.

J. L. and Harry Warner, they don't--

There's problems there.

You know, that's all I ever heard.

You remember him taking lunch

at a different time than Jack?

He went usually earlier than Jack, yeah.

He would go, I think, around noon

Whereas Jack wouldn't come by--

Because he had to go by our office

to go to the private dining room...

...so I would see him every day.

He would maybe go, like, 1 and 2:00

and he would miss Mr. Warner, of course...

...and he very seldom came in the office.

There was so much anger going on...

...between he and Jack

and his illness would--

I said the same thing.

--be exacerbated by some meeting

at the studio, and--

You know, and then he would come home
and you could see the veins in his neck.

- So that was from meetings with Jack?

- Oh, yeah.

I'm sure.

I didn't put it quite as strongly,
but that's what I said too.

The role that Albert played was
keeping peace between the two brothers.

I don't think people really understand...

...how Jack and Harry
just did not get along.

And anything Jack did,
Harry was furious about...

...and I'm not so sure, but
I understand he had quite a temper...

...and Jack always thought
that he was the Warner Bros.

- Walt and my dad had a five-year fight.

- Really?

They didn't speak.

Walt sort of wanted to be king,
you know?

They finally resolved it semi-amicably.

It was-- It was brutal.

My father worked at the studio...

...and he ended up being the referee
between Jack and Harry.

And then I'd go to the lot with him
on Saturday...

...and I'd see this booming factory
of creativity going on...

...and yet I was hearing these stories
about these guys chasing each other...

...wanting to kill each other.

I mean, literally, my dad had to stop
my grandfather from killing Jack with a--

Yeah, with a lead pipe.

- Really?

- And people have witnessed, you know--

Only brothers, I think.

I used to say that about Walt and Dad too.

Only brothers could fight like that.

Anybody else would have said,
"Walt, I'm through with this deal.
- I'm going into some other business."
- Yeah, yeah.
- Extraordinary.
- But the blood was important.
The struggles with Jack
were taking its toll.
Harry's health was deteriorating...
...and the family was encouraging him
to retire...
...against his wish to stay in the game.
When they did receive an offer,
Jack and Abe were ready to sell.
Harry had not wanted to sell the studio...
...and Jack insisted this
was a good price, a good time...
...it was time for them to get out of it
and so on.
He had argued and argued and argued
with Harry and Harry finally said, "Okay."
Jack sold it to Semenenko...
...who was head of the Bank of Boston
at that time.
Semenenko had it for one day...
...and sold it back to Jack without
Harry's involvement, which is a-- Wow.
As far as I know,
we all tendered our stock.
Jack made a horrible deal for the family.
That a brother would do that
to another brother...
...after being in business all those years,
and the business having been run...
...and survives because of
the older brother's business acuity and--
And somewhat Sam Warner too.
And without Sam's invention,
nothing, forget it.
If Jack and Ann had been hard up
and, you know, needed money, you know...
...there might've been-- Not an excuse
for it, but some rationale to it.
But Jack was a very rich man

with more houses and villas...
...and things than you could count
on both hands.
He didn't need it.
I mean, he just didn't need it.
And it was just a dirty trick.
And that was the betrayal
to end all betrayals.
Albert couldn't stop talking
about that to me.
About what a son of a bitch Jack was,
how he could have done it.
He couldn't believe he was
his brother at any time.
And at that point...
...Albert, Major, never spoke,
as far as I know, to Jack again, ever.
Mr. Warner just had a fit.
You Want me to tell you
What he said?
"Over my dead body will
he be president of this company."
But he actually was...
...and Mr. Warner found out then
that he couldn't do anything about it.
And that really hurt him, you know,
he was so broken up.
And I felt so sorry for him
when he went to leave.
He came over and shook my hand
and he said, "I'm gonna leave now."
And I said,
"Well, you'll come back, won't you?"
He said, "I'll never put foot
in this lot again."
I said, "Yes, you Will."
He said, "No, I Won't."
And I don't think he ever did.
Now, greatness returns to the screen.
Yahoo!
I guess you're about the best-looking gal
We've seen around here in a long time.
The star who became a legend,
who spoke for all the restless young...

...as no one has before or since.
Why, thank you, Jett.
That's a very nice compliment.
And I'm gonna tell my husband
I've met with your approval.
Oh, well, now...
...I Wouldn't do that.
I mean, Well, no, l....
I had made Rebel Without a Cause...
...and then I went into Giant
with James Dean.
Jimmy and I were having lunch...
...and suddenly Jack Warner and
Serge Semenenko were walking toward us.
And Mr. Warner said,
"Jimmy, Jimmy, Jimmy.
I want you to meet someone.
Serge Semenenko."
And Serge Semenenko reached out his hand
to shake hands with Jimmy.
Jimmy reached into his pocket
and pulled out a bunch of change...
...and threw it at their feet
and walked off.
And I sort of went...and followed him like--
I'm 18 years old.
I followed him like a little puppy dog,
saying, "What was that all about?"
Harry got stabbed in the back
by his brother.
Shortly after the studio sale
hit the trade papers...
...Grandpa suffered a debilitating stroke.
It was his 50th Wedding anniversary...
...and they were having a big celebration...
...out at the ranch.
Harry now is completely isolated,
a prisoner in his own body...
...and down in the yard in the tent
are all the family.
I was in the room alone With Harry,
Who couldn't speak...
...and just sat looking out of the window.
And my father pops through the door

all cheery and bright with jokes.
Poor Harry, some tears came down
his cheek and rolled down his cheek.
There was only one way
he could get away from this man...
...Who he hated,
Who had done terrible things...
...so he closed his eyes.
At this time, my father
was in the south of France...
...and I immediately sent him a cable
that Harry had died.
They hadn't planned the funeral...
...that we were gonna wait to hear
about Jack coming back.
He didn't communicate With me...
...but evidently sent a cable
that he couldn't come back.
Jack was in a terrible car
accident about five or six days later.
Had he come home to his brother's funeral,
this might not have happened.
He was seriously injured and didn't return
to the studio for about six months.
We used to think
Jack Jr. Would take over.
Everybody there liked the guy.
Before Jack came back
to the lot, he had an attorney fire his son...
...for supposedly giving the press
the impression that he was dying.
Said I'm terminated, as of then,
and I will be paid for six months.
And I said, "Why?"
Then he took me aside and was like:
"Every time he looks at you he sees Irma."
That's my mother.
They changed the locks,
my name was gone.
All, boom, like that.
As I'm leaving, they're putting up
a sign over the main entrance...
...that says, "Welcome back, Jack."
You know,

you always wonder about film...
...whether it's mirroring what's going on
or leading what's going on.
What was going on
the year prior to the sale...
...was the production of the film
East of Eden...
...a family drama about rival brothers.
Your son, Aron,
he' s everything that' s good.
James Dean played
the unappreciated son.
James Dean's next role was a lonely,
discontented rebel without a cause.
You' re tearing me apart!
Finally on his own, with no
older brother looking over his shoulder...
...Jack took creative risks with films like:
Who's afraid of Virginia
Woolf? Virginia Woolf. Virginia Woolf.
Who's afraid of Virgin--?
He said, "Wexler, Mike Nichols wants
you to shoot Virginia Woolf."
And I said--
I don' t know whether I said "sir "or not...
...but I certainly felt "sir,"
and at that time it was--
And I said I was signed up
to do A Fine Madness with Kershner.
Jack Warner did not waste much time.

He said:

"You're gonna do Mike Nichols' picture."
He said the famous lines about
not working in Hollywood again.
There was a feeling when Nichols arrived
with this group...
...and this kind of material and Haskell,
things would-- Jack understood that.
That things Were now changing.
You still look like you have a good body
too. Is that right? Have you?
- Martha, decency forbids--
- Shut up.

Is that right? Have you kept your body?

- It's still pretty good. I Work out.

- Do you?

- Yeah.

- Yes.

Warner Bros. did

Who's Afraid Of Virginia Woolf?..

...Which was a very bold movie...

...that no other studio

would have touched at the time.

And he was the one who approved it

and got it made...

...and stood behind it, so landmark movies

continued to be made by Warner Bros...

...until Jack Warner

was finally put out to pasture.

Camelot.

Camelot.

Camelot is a big romantic

musical produced by Jack L. Warner...

...who brought My Fair Lady

to the screen.

He personally supervises the project.

It's fascinating to me

that Camelot was Jack's last studio film.

Lines like "Happiness is a virtue,

but no one can be happy and wicked.

They can be triumphant but not happy."

And then there's:

"'Blood is thicker than water'

was invented by undeserving relatives."

The same thing happened

when Seven Arts came in.

They bought Warner Bros. from Jack...

...as I recall, a figure of \$32 million.

Amazing to think of today in--

\$32 million.

Of course, they said,

"Well, you'll have an office.

You'll still be Jack Warner,

head of the studio, "you know.

He had nothing to do,

no papers crossed his desk, you know...

...and in a year, he was gone.

I know everything everyone said
about Jack...
...and I could see, you know,
but I understood it.
He had dreams of What
he Would liked to have been...
...of what he would have done
if he could have and so forth.
But those are the things that I-- I--
Made me fond of Jack...
...because I saw the longing in him
to be something that he wasn't.
The key to the real Jack Warner...
...may be hidden on the back of an unsend
postcard I found buried in an old box.
On it, written in his handwriting,

are these words:

"I have made a new resolution
not to speak.
Never, never say a word.
Not to utter more
than absolutely essential...
... to erect barricades and walls of silence
between myself and the world.
One has to be a cobblestone
or a diamond...
...not to be shattered
by the hardness of most people.
Perhaps it is much harder to struggle
against oneself than against fate."
Mr. Warner was relieved
of his being the frontman...
...and all of a sudden,
he had a lot of powerful lawyers...
...telling him what to do,
which didn't sit very well.
I just know everybody was terribly upset
and that Mr. Warner went home.
He Went home to his big house.
It was an honor to be
under contract at Warner Bros.
It wasn't sort of--
It wasn't a little thing.

It was like going into the major leagues,
you know? It was--

You know, it was the Yankees
and the Dodgers all combined for me.

This was a place you belonged to.

It was a family.

You were part of a family.

And for that privilege
of being a part of that family...

...you did what they told you to do.

- Hello.

- Hi, is this Bette-Ann?

- Yes.

- It's your grandfather?

My grandfather and the Warner Brothers'
father were brothers.

So you know what
the real Warner last name is?

Yes, I do. I think my sister and I
are the only ones who really know.

That is so amazing.

- Can you tell me what it is?

- Yes, it's Wonskolaser.

Wonskolaser.

W-O-N-S-K-O-L-A-S-E-R.

- Won-- And you say it, "Wonskolaser"?

- Right.

Now, is that--? Is that--?

That is like-- Oh, my God.

Can you imagine,

"Wonskolaser Bros. Presents"?

Yeah, exactly.

The Warner Bros. made the pictures
that they wanted to see...

...and that they thought were valuable and
worthwhile. That's a whole different mindset.

Thought you were smarter
than to stick your kisser in.

I couldn't stand by
and watch him shoot you down.

The potential force of motion pictures
for good has just begun to be tapped.

All we have done is only a foundation
for future greatness...

...but we can take pride in the fact
that our foundation is a firm one.
It is solid bedrock for future generations
of pioneers to build upon.
My brothers and I thank you, one and all.
You have made us very happy tonight.
United they stood...
...divided they fell.
Yet their ideals live on...
...in all those who believe in using media
to educate, entertain and enlighten.
In other words,
those who have the chutzpah...
...to put their tokhes on the table
to make their dreams a reality.
And Jack?
We're family.
We're mishpokhe.
As your heartfelt postcard said:
"It is much harder to struggle
against oneself than against fate."
But now fate will not have the last word.
I'd like to believe
I've kept my promise to you, Grandpa.