**Sorry for Your Loss**

**by Lisa Rubenson** (from Three-minute Fiction. Hear it read aloud here: http://www.npr.org/2013/03/09/173722517/sorry-for-your-loss)

Hi, it's me — Christine. I can't believe you still have this number. That I still remember it. But there's your voice on the machine ... like no time has passed. I'm so sorry for your loss, Nick, for your mom. *Can anyone else hear this?* [PRESS # TO ERASE AND RERECORD YOUR MESSAGE]

# Hi Nick, it's Christine. Christine Williams. Remember? It's been a long time. I called because — I know it's tough right now. I'm sorry to hear about the death of ... that your mom passed — *try and say something real.* [PRESS # TO ERASE AND RE-RECORD YOUR MESSAGE]

# Nick, it's Christine. Hey, long time, no anything. *Too jaunty.* [PRESS # TO ERASE AND RE-RECORD YOUR MESSAGE]

# Hi Nick, it's Christine. Stacy told me about your mom. It was in the paper here, too. How are you? What a thing to say, I'm sorry. For everything. Your mom and I — well, whatever, you know, but I was still fond of her. *Is that what I was?* [PRESS # TO ERASE AND RE-RECORD YOUR MESSAGE]

# Nick, it's Chris. I'm so sorry. I'm in town, and I wanted to come over—bring you dinner or something. Stacy said you're single again. I left that guy—you called it, ha! Maybe now we can—*no, please no, let me press the right button here* [PRESS # TO ERASE AND RE-RECORD YOUR MESSAGE]

# Nick, it's me, Chris. Christine. I'm sorry about your mom. I've been thinking about you. About her. For some reason, about the time she picked up the phone and said, "you two are too young to be this serious." Remember how we laughed when she spit out the words, "two and too"? I tried so hard to get her to like me. It's weird, I have a daughter now. She's the same age as we were. Can you imagine? *Can you imagine?*[PRESS # TO ERASE AND RE-RECORD YOUR MESSAGE]

# Christine, it's Nick, love of your life. *Nice ...* [PRESS # TO ERASE AND RERECORD YOUR MESSAGE]

# Hi Nick, it's Christine. It's been so long. I'm in town. Listen, I'm sorry to hear about your mom. I'll never forget the house on del Cielo. Her garden — those ocotillo with the octopus arms and the squat prickly pears in front of the gate? How we said she planted them to keep girls like me away? [PRESS # TO ERASE AND RE-RECORD YOUR MESSAGE]

# Nick, it's Chris. I'm in town, would love to see you. I'm sorry about your mom. It's so hard to find the right words. I'm rambling — nervous. So much to say. I keep thinking about the old days. It's weird, I have a teenager now. A daughter, the same age as we were. I think about us, and it's hard. I think about skiing and finding that circle of pine trees. About pretending the clouds were our kids and giving them all Greek god names. About sitting at dinner with our faces bright red. Your mom thought we were up to something, but we were just burned from the sun and the wind and the future shining down hard all around us. [PRESS # TO ERASE AND RE-RECORD YOUR MESSAGE]

# It's me. I'm in town. I'm sorry. [PRESS # TO ERASE AND RE-RECORD YOUR MESSAGE]

# It's me. Call me back. Please. This is Christine. [PRESS \* TO SEND YOUR
MESSAGE]