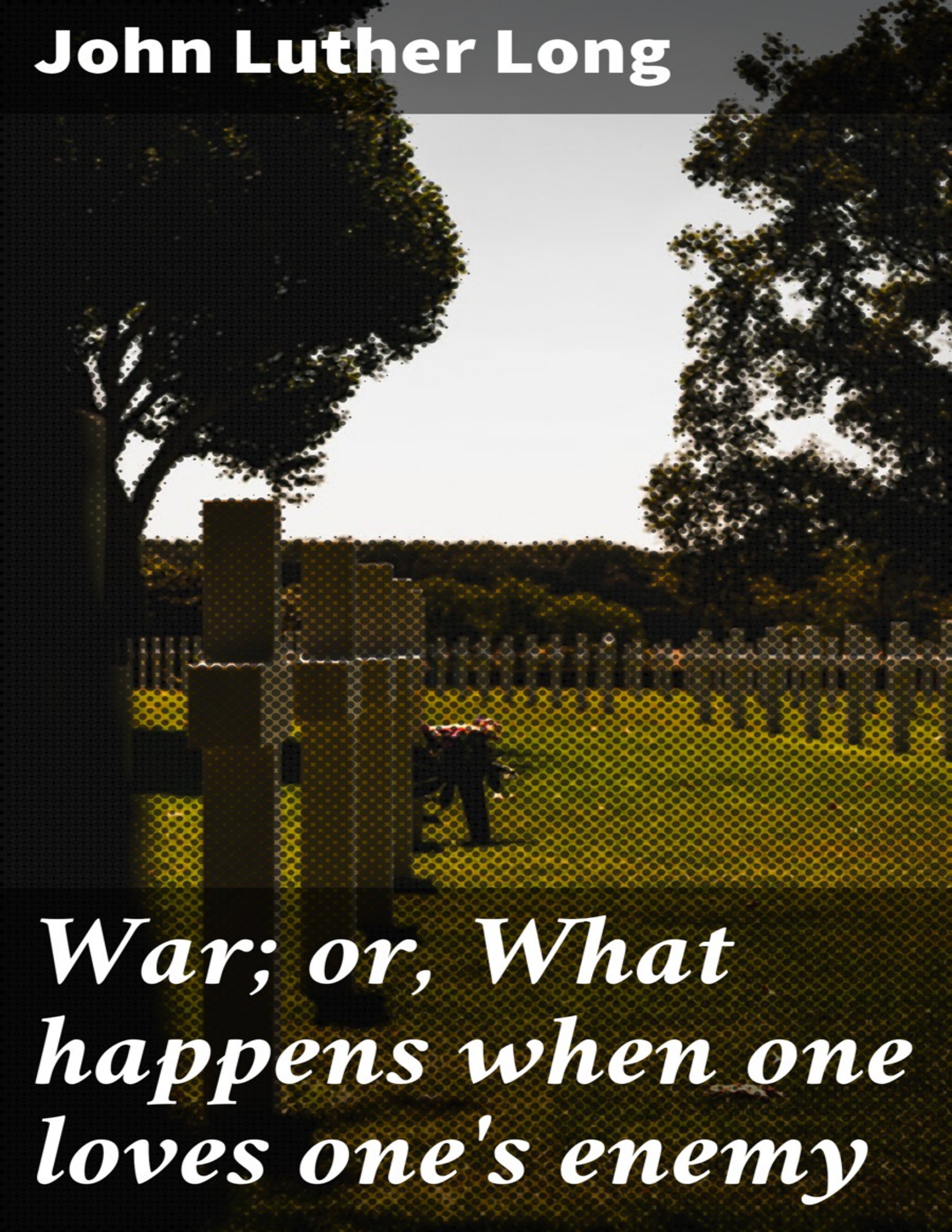


John Luther Long



War; or, What happens when one loves one's enemy

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WAR

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WHEN DAVID AND JONATHAN FISHED

MY oldest boy's name was Jonathan, and the youngest David—though they weren't called that anywhere but in the family Bible—just Jon and Dave. Except when people got the Bible and the boys mixed up and called them David and Jonathan—sometimes David and Goliath!

Jon was the oldest and Dave the youngest and there was four years between. Jon didn't seem to care much for anybody else after Dave was born, and Dave never inquired if he had any parents as long as Jon took charge of him. Well—I have to acknowledge that Jon made a better daddy to Dave than I did. Dave's mother died when he was born and I took it hard. Didn't notice, like I ought, what was going on. But Jonathan took entire charge of Dave. He'd carry the little chap, before he yet could walk, a couple of miles on his back and fix him fast in the fork of a tree while he fished. And when they got home he'd swear that Dave had caught all the fish. And they'd all have to be cooked—minnies just an inch long, sometimes!—which always made a fuss between Jon and Betsy, the cook.

Yes, Jon was a good fisherman, and a good boss. He always got his way. But it was by gentleness. He used to preach to me, his own daddy, when he got older, about gentleness being stronger than anger, because, I suppose, I used to break glass when I got mad.

Only one ever got away with Jon's gentleness by kicking, and that was little Dave. Why, when he grew old enough to fish himself, he never caught a thing and he ruined Jon's reputation as a fisherman. He couldn't keep quiet a minute! He'd sing songs and tumble summersets and scare the fish away and get tangled in the lines—sometimes come home crying with the hooks in him. Jon used to call him the King. But I called him Parliament. I expect he was both.

Always, on the farm, one went to college to learn and the rest stayed at home to work—if there was more than one son in the family, as there always was. So it was since seventeen hundred and ten—when we first got the farm—so it was with my brother Henry, Evelyn's stepfather and me, and so it had to be with my sons Jonathan and David. Germans like to obey the ways of their ancestors from generation to generation.

It was decided by lot, and begun way back when they used to leave everything to the Lord. Mostly, they'd put a hoe and a Bible on the floor and let us boy-babies crawl for 'em. If we took the hoe we were to be farmers. If we took the Bible we were to be students. The Bible was nice red morocco and gold, and the hoe was kept bright and shiny, and both had come straight down from the ancestor who got the farm in seventeen-ten.

The first born had always the first choice, and so, when it was between my brother Henry and me, I crawled and took the hoe—which, I seem to remember, looked so nice and shiny. I'm fond of shiny things now, yet. Of course, Henry had to take the red Bible, there wasn't anything else. That's how it come that I stayed at home, which was literary, I expect, and Henry went to Virginia, to college, which never liked four walls about him. Anyhow, he learned nothing the first year except

" *Ich liebe,
Du liebst,
Wir lieben—*"

and the second year was married to Evelyn's mother already, a widow with a child! which he met when his class went on its annual tramp from Virginia to Tennessee. He never even came home—he was so in love with Evelyn's mother—but went and lived in Tennessee, because she wanted him to, with niggers and a plantation, and spent more money breeding funny horses than my daddy and me could squeeze out of the old farm to keep him—including chickens, butter, eggs, and milk.

My Jon and his Uncle Henry were both born in the *Unter Gehenda*, that is the undergoing of the moon, which is a bad time to be born, and sad and gloomy and unlucky. But Dave and me was born in the *Über Gehenda*, the over-going of the moon, which is happy and joyous. So, you can see how the signs fool us sometimes.

When it came to deciding which was to go to college of *my* two boys, Jon, of course, being the oldest, crawled first and took the shiny hoe, like me, because it *was* shiny, I

expect, and Dave was not only satisfied with the red Bible, but chewed the edges till he got colic. But the signs were no more right with Jon and Dave than they had been with Henry and me. Dave didn't care anything about college when he grew up, and Jon took all the learning he could gether up—mostly by himself in fence corners—and wanted more.

Even when he minded the cows I used to see him sit under the trees and books come out of his pocket and his nose go into 'em forgetful.

That's how we came to lose Shalom—she was a cow. While Jon's nose was in a book Shalom's nose was fooling with a blast Swartz's men had set in the quarry, which went off before she stopped. Jon was sorry for Shalom and got the pieces and gave them decent burial and put up a wooden tombstone. She was the only cow living which ever came to misfortune through Jon. And it always worried him. He was crazy about *not* killing things. He used to say that only One could take life: Him that gave it. He wouldn't kill a fly. And that used to aggravate me. For they were mighty plenty on the old farm. Sometimes he'd catch a handful and put 'em out of doors—but the rest stayed with us—on account of Jonthy.

Of course, when he grew up more, he minded his farming business more. But it wasn't as easy as sleeping in church. He had to keep a memorandum-book with the hour for each part of the day's work. Though he had a good eye and a good hand when he got at it! No one in the township could drive a straighter furrow! And he could cradle a ten-acre field of wheat without dropping a dozen heads—and so

the stubbles looked like yellow plush afterward—so nice and even! He never neglected anything—after the death of Shalom—by the help of the memorandum-book.

To think about Dave having a memorandum-book, or bothering with "duty" makes me laugh now!

Maybe his chewing that red Bible had something to do with it. For he always liked red things—color—warmth—snap. It was all joy with Dave. Fishing—swimming—fighting black-head bumble-bees—making uncomfortable "harness" for the dog Wasser—and so on. Why, he drove the poor old dog away from home, pestering him with his wagons and harnesses. Jon was scared stiff. He thought now Dave had a death on his conscience, like *he* had, about Shalom. He had an idea that no one could live without Dave, and that, therefore, Wasser had committed suicide—maybe, by drowning. He looks all over for the dog for three days, and Dave doesn't bother his head about him.

Then, when Jon was half crazy, Dave goes off and finds Wasser in five minutes—hiding in the haymow where he could see Dave without danger. I don't know how Dave knew it, or Wasser got there, but he went straight to the spot.

Then he brings Wasser home on his shoulder, both as pleased as a bride and groom, and licking each other!

And, that's Dave for you! Never bothering till some one was about crazy, and then bothering a lot—and fixing things all in a minute. Honest, he fooled the bumble-bees that way. They stopped coming on the farm—Dave worried 'em so and that's bad luck for a farm—till Dave stole some wild honey one night, in the dark of the moon, and built a

nest for them in the clover. Then they came back and Dave forgot it.

Till one stung him one day—one that rembered him, I expect—and he caught him and took his stinger away and put him back in the nest. That bee must have told the others. For none of them ever bothered any of us after that, and they and Dave were like brothers. And old Wasser, after that love feast, he used to get in Dave's way just to get pushed out.

People called him a shustle—yet they always had to laugh when they said it, because Dave had a kind of way that made them like him—and Germans think they have no business to like shustles! Everything was fun—yes. But everybody likes fun. And it was mighty nice on the old farm to have little Dave always so gay and happy. And he wasn't selfish about it—not a bit of it! He d give up about any kind of fun to be with Jon—running and tumbling after him in the furrow behind the plow. Never working, of course. No one expected that of Dave. He was to go to college.

Maybe you think that Jon crammed his head so full of knowledge just to have it on hand! Not at all. It was just to get Dave ready for college. Well, Dave passed all his entering examinations like a breeze. Nobody on earth but Jon would have been able to get enough into Dave to pass 'em.

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WHAT THE TENTH SHELL AT SUMTER CAUSED

HENRY, my brother, was one of the men who was helping to worry Major Anderson and starve him out of Fort Sumter in 1861. He was a regular Southerner by that time. And when they found that Anderson wouldn't go, poor Henry was one of them that built the batteries on Sullivan's Island. I know just how that sort of work suited him! I bet he was always right out front. But after the tenth shell from Sumter, they sent Henry to his home in a pine box, and when it came there was no one to receive it but the girl Evelyn. Her mother had dropped dead with the despatch! She loved our Henry so much! Evelyn telegraphs the news of the death with her last money and that she has no parents nor money nor home now and what shall she do. I answers right away that I'm coming to get her, because she's ours now. But at Memphis they turned me back unless I'd take the oath of allegiance to a lot of foolish things, and if I waited long they'd, maybe, put me in jail, for safe-keeping, or improve my appearance with chicken feathers. Well, I helped to tar and feather a fellow once—Elick Schnatz. He didn't make much trouble, only asked several times to be excused. He was such a perfect gentleman about it that I tried to get him excused. But the boys said he was worthless and they hadn't had any fun for some time. However, they said, on account of me,

they wouldn't put any tar in his hair. And Schnatz he thanked *me* for that.

"Because," he says, "I don't know as there's any kind of soap'll take tar out of hair without taking the hair out—and I'm fond of my hair. If you are ever tar-and-feathered, Vonner, I'll try and get your hair excused for you, anyhow," says he.

But Schnatz wasn't in Memphis at that time, and, anyhow, I don't think he could have even got my hair excused from the fellows I saw there. They hadn't had any fun, either, to judge from the way they enjoyed the war, for a long time, and they were bound to get all they could out of this one. They didn't like me calling it "var"; and tried to make me say "wah", and I didn't like their calling it "wah," and wouldn't say it. I didn't make friends by that, and so I got my notice one night to let the committee know who and what I was and what my business was by the next morning. Well, the walking was fair, and the night was dark. I didn't know the way, but I could see the north star.

I didn't wait. But I sent Jim Rasly, a nigger, who was as Union as I, but who had the right words and the right color and was able to say "wah" easy, and he brought Evelyn to the old place. My, but I was surprised to find that she wasn't a baby, but a tall young lady of seventeen, and looking more! You see, I'd forgot about time running one way while I was running the other! We gave her Dave's room because Dave had no use for it. He was at college in Virginia, where the red Bible had sent him.

Well, Evelyn gave us a good many soprizes, at least one a day—while they lasted. But, the first and, maybe, the

biggest was her affection for our Henry—being only her stepdaddy. But, she'd never been acquainted with her real father, because he died before she was born, and she was always crazy, from a baby up, for a daddy "like other little girls." So, when Henry came along and said he'd be her daddy—well, though she was a pretty big girl by that time she was just as crazy for one—maybe more so—and you can believe that Henry didn't disappoint her! I expect they was a good bit like her and Dave. Just the best friends. Anyhow, we soon found out she's crazy about Henry, as a father, and mighty mad at the Unions for killing him. She used to get so worked up when she'd talk about it, that we kept on reminding her that he wasn't her real father, only her stepfather, until she turns the vials of her wrath on us all one day and asks us if she's the only one in this house who loves him! Of course we both answers that we adores him as much as she does. But she snaps out that we don't act like it and goes off to bed—coming to breakfast the next morning with red eyes, kissing us, and asking us to forgive her, and saying that, of course, we loved Henry as much as she did—more! For, no one could know him as long as we had known him without being willing to die for him! And to forgive her if we can.

Jon and I looks sheepish at each other, for, though we did love Henry all we could, which was a good deal, we had never thought about dying for him.

After breakfast Jon says:

"Remember she's from the South, daddy, and loves and hates harder than we do."

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WHAT WAS GOING ON IN VIRGINIA

WELL, it had been unsettled on the border, even before the election of Lincoln, and six months after Dave went away to college in Virginia, the war trouble broke out in earnest. It was about even down our way, till after the battle of Bull Run. Then there were many more secessionists than Unions. There were three fights inside of three weeks at the store, and in every one the Unions got licked. I was in the first one. That's the reason I wasn't in the other two.

Dave used to write funny letters from college, about rebels and Unions and we'd all laugh at 'em. But a little after Bull Run he wrote one which worried me some. He said that his class—all but him—had voted to go into the army of Virginia, but that he'd told 'em he'd have to write home to find out whether he was Union or Democrat. They didn't like that. He hoped we were Democrats so that he could go with the boys and have a good time licking the Black Republicans. It was all he could do, he said, to stay behind when the boys in the slickest uniforms he had ever seen, mostly made by their sweethearts, and with twenty or thirty gold-and-blue officers to each regiment, had gone and taken Harper's Ferry and the navy yard at Gosport—with no deaths. Every one was a separate hero, and all the sweethearts left behind (a good many went along) took the first train to Harper's Ferry to tell them so. Couldn't he go

along when they took Washington?—which would be next. Maybe he could find a sweetheart. And, when they had Philadelphia and New York, he'd stop to see how we were getting along before taking the oath of office as President of the Confederate States of America—formerly the United States of Ditto—just in fun, of course, as you can see.

But I got Evelyn, who was a better scholar than I, to write back that we were all Union to the backbone and that we were nailing Maryland down so that she couldn't get out of the Union, and not to bother about wars nor rumors of war, but study hard, as he was too young, anyhow, to fight with anybody but me and I could lick him any day—also in fun.

Evelyn was kind of shy and distressed, and finally said:

"Daddy, dear, you oughtn't to ask *me* to write that."

"Why?" says I.

"Because I ain't Union to the backbone," says she.

"To be sure!" says I. "Not quite through. I forgot. You are most two yards of rebel up and down. They're the most dangerous—the lady rebels. I expect you'd like to be making funny flags and sticking them up on female colleges like they're doing in Dixie. The women's terrible fighters!"

I laughed, but Evelyn cried. It was hard for her to see a joke. Women ain't funny, mostly.

"Yes," she says, dropping tears on the letter, "just a girl rebel. And yes, they *are* terrible, thank God. And I shan't forget who murdered my father! A woman's vengeance is not like a man's. It never sleeps or dies. And the slayer of my father shall suffer—or his brethren shall—for him!"

Well! I never saw Evelyn like that! I didn't think she had it in her! Just a nice young girl—till I stirred her up. And remember, Henry really wasn't her father, though, remember again, she'd never known any other father. Of course, as I have told you, I don't wonder that she loved our Henry a lot. Everybody did that got near him. Dave—happy little Dave, always reminded me of him. She scribbled fiercely at the letter, dropping more tears, and I sneaked away—for, as I told you, I am no kind of a father.

I could see next day that she was scared about it—and so I scolded her a little. I was never afraid to scold her when she was scared.

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IN LINCOLN'S PEN

AND about this time those mysterious doings began which, I suppose, always happen on the border between two nations at war. I can't tell, now, just what they were at first, but it made you creepy—and look suddenly behind you. Strange people came to the house, now and then, and asked strange questions. Queer teams passed along, with queer loads—often covered over with other things. Something got into the air which kept us nervous. I would come across a neighbor who had been peaceful and friendly the day before, to find him fighty and an enemy, ready to slam me in the face, and more ready to call me all sorts of hard names, and blaming me for the whole war.

In church, which was called "The Ark of Peace," it got so bad that the seats on the south side of the aisle was called "Africa" by the Unions, and the north side was called "Lincoln's Pen," by the secessionists. And the members moved from one side to the other, according to their war-politics.

The aisle was called "Kentucky" because it was supposed to be neutral territory. But no secessionist would move an inch to let a Union pass to "Lincoln's Pen" through "Kentucky". For, at that time, after the fourth fight at the store, the secessionists had far the best of it, and, according to my own count, there were three hundred and

ten in "Africa," while "Lincoln's Pen" had only a hundred and forty-six. But that aisle made all take sides. There were no neutrals. There was nothing to sit on in "Kentucky."

Of course, Parr Horwitz had a hard time of it, preaching straight down that aisle, about angels and archangels all the time, avoiding everything fighty, till Herman Vare rose up in his pew in "Africa" one Sunday and said:

"Pastor, the Bible is full of war-stories. David and Goliath, the Battle of Jericho, the slaughter of the Amalekites, the crossing of the Red Sea, the battle of Armageddon—all of these typifying the present struggle of the South for liberty. We are two to one and we demand that you preach of wars and rumors of wars, two sermons out of three, or else—"

Well, "or else" meant that the pastor wouldn't get his salary the next month if he didn't—and, maybe, be wearing feathers instead of clothes—and he began, by preaching a hummer—calling upon the secessionists to blow their trumpets and throw down the abolition walls of Washington!

He got a cheer from "Africa"—the first cheers, I suppose, that old church ever heard—and afterward it was worse than ever—until "Africa" outnumbered "Lincoln's Pen" four to one, and the pastor kept on thundering war-sermons, never one about peace and doves, and not down the aisle, in "Kentucky"—where no one was—but straight into "Africa", with his back turned on "Lincoln's Pen".

I tell you it took courage to go to church, them days, and keep from fighting, and soon I excused myself—and so did most all of the other Unions. Four to one was no use.

After that they had it all their own way in "Africa"—and they didn't seem to like it. They were fighty, even in church, wanted to drive us to "Lincoln's Pen" to be bombarded. It wasn't much fun fighting battles without an enemy. They were too sure to win.

At last, when they hadn't us any more to fight, they got to fighting among themselves. Some was too secession and others wasn't secession enough. Some was ready to go into the Confederate army, and others said that was going too far. They got called cowards—spies—Abolitionists—and Know-Nothings—and they called the others Copperheads—Knights-of-the-Golden-Circle—and Nigger-lovers—and those were all fight-words to every man in those days. Well, the upshot of it was that they had a battle, right there in the church, and tore the place to pieces, with many wounded and no dead. Parr Horwitz was so scared that he skedaddled, and was never heard from again, and some one nailed up what was left of the church, and it wasn't opened again for five years. But that fight in the church made worse blood than anything else—like church fights always do. After that everybody was mad at everybody else, and called each other all kinds of hard names. And the secret organizations, for one disloyal purpose or another, flourished mightily—just for spite.

It never looked exactly like an Ark of Peace from that time on—the nice old church.

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ABOUT THE LOVE GAME

THEN Dave wrote, again, that he *must* join the army down there—or come home—or at least get out of Virginia. They were lynching Union men whenever they were not otherwise busy, which, thank heaven, was not often. All that saved him was that they didn't know whether he was Union or rebel—he didn't himself. He wanted to know that—strictly confidential. If he was Union, he'd skedaddle. If he wasn't, he'd join something down there. There was no school no more, anyhow. The president of the college was a colonel in the Fairfax Cavalry, and the chaplain was an independent guerrilla captain. He ended by asking who wrote our letter at the beginning and who else at the end, and who slopped water on it, and why did it smell like the flowers in the three-cornered pasture.

When I read that last I saw Evelyn catch her breath, and I asked her, very kind this time, to write back a large no. That his place was taken and his room was filled—with that perfume that he liked. There wasn't a hole or corner for him, except, maybe, the haymow, with Wasser, and so, he got to stay down there, and learn!—and let 'em guess whether he was Union or rebel.

Evelyn didn't want to write that, either, remembering my scolding, maybe, but cried a little again, though meek and

humble now. Nothing about the murderer of her father; and she kissed me.

"Daddy, I'll go away and make room for Dave," she said. "I ought to, I *am* a rebel. I can't help it."

But I kissed her and said that we liked her as much as Dave, and that she couldn't go. That we loved her—loved her just for herself—which was good enough excuse for any one!—and not because we wanted to keep Dave down among the Johnny Rebs. He went there to learn and he must. And she might be as much of a rebel as she liked. There was plenty of 'em about, and nobody was getting hurt yet—much.

It was really so, that we loved her—and most as much as Dave. Personally, I don't remember ever seeing a prettier girl than Evelyn. I don't think any one around here ever did. Our girls are different: mostly fat and with taffy hair and blue eyes. But Evelyn had eyes like the shady twin-springs in the Poison Woods—where you can see mysterious things you don't understand and big and round—a good deal like a little cow-calf. *Unshuldich*, the Germans call 'em. And her hair was black—actually black—with no shine to it—and never would lay straight, just clung close about her face, careless, like pictures I've seen, but never on a real person. And her face it was kind of pale and glorious and high born, with red spots in the cheeks which spread all over her face, and sometimes her neck and breast, when she was surprised or happy. And it was serious, mostly, like she didn't understand a joke. But when she did smile and open her red lips on her white teeth—well, that was about the sweetest sopriize I've ever seen—

like the clouds had parted and the sun was shining through.

Her sadness, of course, was mostly about her mother and her father—as she always called Henry. She had an idea that the Unions at Sumter had deliberately murdered him, and when she thought of that, all the loveliness seemed to go out of her, and she became hard and could do unkind things. I always knew when she was thinking of this, by the way her eyes glittered, and then there was no red in her cheeks. When she began to think of her father's murder, as she called it, I always got out of the way. I don't like trouble. I'm always for peace. Anyhow, if she was left alone, she always repented and was extra nice to us.

But, mostly, she was kind and gentle, and—like her mother, she said. Tall and easy of motion. She had a picture of her mother and they was just about the same at her age, so I didn't blame Henry so much, no more, for his:

" *Ich liebe,
Du liebst,
Wir lieben—*"

and so on. I was old enough to have sense, but I use' to think that such a woman as Evelyn's mother looked like could have made me do something foolish—maybe.

Well, she soon had us that we'd have fallen down and worshiped her, I expect—when she was gentle—even the cattle in the barnyard. But Jon was the worst of all. Right from the start he was witchcrafted, hands and feet, like a nigger slave. I never saw anything so quick. Both of them were rather solemn and didn't talk much. But, Jon's blue eyes weren't so slow saying things to her dark ones, and his

voice, when he read German to her, out of books, wasn't far behind hers. And when he sung to her, with the guitar, German songs, like *Blau ist ein Blümelein*, I just didn't know my son no more! It was a kind of language without words.

Jon, he was entirely different from the rest of the *freundschaft*, anyhow. I never could understand him myself—which was his daddy. Now, you could read Dave like a book, through and through. It was wonderful, the difference between those two brothers.

And, handsome—Jon! With long careless yellow hair that he use' to shake out of his eyes, and a couple, or so, of little whiskers hiding out on his face.

The first I knew what was actually up, was one day Evelyn brought the dinner to the field. We were reaping with sickles in the New-Bought-Field, me and Jon and the hireland, because the rye was too much lodged to take the machine in. Yet the rye was good, and we needed it for roasting to make coffee. Real coffee had gone up to a dollar a pound.

I didn't know Evelyn was about at all till Jon dropped his sickle and run 'way 'cross the field and got her off the fence where she was sticking fast, with the jug and the basket to manage, and scared of a couple of harmless cows a-watching what she was going to do about it.

Jonathan carried the jug and the basket to the old shellbark tree and looked like he was crazy to carry her, too. She had no umbrell' and he held his big straw hat over her head to keep the sun off. She looked like a glowing red

flower. But I expect old Jonthy had no idea how fine *he* looked in his shining bare head, with the sun on it.

"Now, that's strange!" thinks I, to myself, "that Jon should notice once that a woman had a fence to climb. He used to laugh at them when cows got after them. And it has to be mighty funny when Jon laughs."

"Jonthy," says I, "how did you know? Was you expecting her?"

"I must have been, daddy," laughs Jonathan back at me.

"Was *you* expecting him—to rescue you from the fearful cows?" I also asked of Evelyn.

"I must have been, daddy," says she, exactly like Jon, and smiles that smile I have been telling you about—white teeth, red lips and love by the bushel!

"And neither didn't know the other was coming?"

They both said no.

"One of those—"

"Coincidences," says they both at once.

Evelyn was leaning up against the old shellbark tree and swinging Betsy's Sunday sunbonnet, which she'd borrowed of the cook, by the strings, right into Jon's face, and both was laughing. Now, what do you think of that for two such solemn! But it looked nice—very nice. Behind Evelyn was the big black tree, and behind that, yet, the yellow wheat pitching about, under the wind, like the waves of the ocean—at least I expect so, though I have never seen the ocean—and I don't suppose it's yellow—and for a background, the blue old sky with little sugar-loaf clouds like they might fall on us. It looked like that picture in the old red Bible, of Ruth reaping—if Evelyn had just had a sickle yet, and