

## ORVILLE

Little Orville adored his older sister Sara (my mother). Sara was aggressive and adventuresome, while Orville was quiet and demure, even a little timid. Orville watched Sara execute some of her amazing performances with admiration and envy; then, secretly, he tried to imitate them, sometimes with successful, but more often disastrous, results.

One of Sara's favorite pastimes was tormenting the old bull which her father (my grandfather) kept in the rich pasture at the edge of the woods behind the barn. Ordinarily the old bull was gentle and peaceful, but when Sara flourished a red rag and ran back and forth on the top of the rail fence, shrieking defiance as she ran, the old bull would lift a startled eye, paw the earth a few times and then charge with full force at the taunting object.

Fortunately the old bull had not the speed and strength of youth; the rail fence was sturdy; Sara was quick. When the great horns hit the fence where the red rage had been, Sara was safely on the other side, her dark eyes sparkling, her black curls flying in the breeze.

Orville's heart (Orville always watched from a safe vantage point) seemed to stop as the bull charged. There was a moment when he couldn't breathe at all! As Sara jumped to the ground in laughing excitement, and Orville's heart resumed its normal beat, he would cry: "Weren't you scared, Sherry?"

Of course not," Sara would reply. "I can jump quicker than he can run."

Orville would shiver deliciously. It was lucky for my mother, Sara, in the dangerous pastime, that she had a quick eye and a fleet foot. Many tales were told of some luckless farmer, or occasionally a child, who had been caught by an enraged bull and horribly gored if not killed outright.

Naturally my grandparents had no inkling of this escapade of their unpredictable daughter, and Orville would never tell. This was one of Sara's activities which Orville had never tried to imitate. The very thought of that huge charging creature, thundering across the pasture pointing sharp, cruel horns like spears, filled the little boy's heart with terror.

The children, going back and forth to visit, used a short cut through the woods. They picked flowers, ate wild berries, tried to whistle the birds' songs. The only playmate of Orville's age who lived fairly near was Jenny. Jenny's family lived in the clearing the other side of the forest. When Jenny came to play with Orville, they generally started the day by sitting on the rail fence of the pasture and arguing.

Says Jenny, "My father has two cows!"

"He hasn't."

"He has."

"He hasn't."

"He has, too!"