

"Is Aunt Jo in?" I asked. He glowered at me.

"She isn't your Aunt Jo! She's mine!"

I wondered who this upstart was and answered angrily, "She is too my Aunt Jo!" Whereupon we locked horns figuratively and literally. Aunt Jo, hearing the fracas, arrived hastily on the scene, separated the combatants and explained that she was Aunt to both of us--Neddie, the son of her sister had come to live with the Benedict family. A truce was called and after we played amicably together.

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Gayle was four years older than I. When she was sixteen I looked up to her enviously as a young lady. Gayle lived on a farm beyond the edge of town, quite a distance from the center of the village. Between her home and the last house on West Main, the road, minus sidewalk, was bordered by woods for a considerable distance. At night the way was lonely and rather frightening. Gayle always had a current "beau" who escorted her home from evening gatherings in the village, so never had to worry about what might be lurking in the dark shadows of the trees.

When a new boy appeared in town, however, and escorted Gayle home for the first time, he, being city-bred, didn't relish the distance, the dark, the call of a hoot owl, or the rustle of an animal in the bushes. He managed to keep his dismay under cover while Gayle was with him--but once she was safely on the home premises, he found that the return trip alone was more than he could face. Gayle's brother, Park, had to get up, dress, light a lantern, and escort the timid swain back to the village center.