



Jon-Jon and Annette

Every day, Jon-Jon played with Annette. Sometimes they played at Annette's, on one side of the brook; sometimes they played at Jon-Jon's, on the other.

Jon-Jon always said, "When I am big, I will marry you, Annette."

And Annette always said, "When I am big, Jon-Jon will be my husband!"

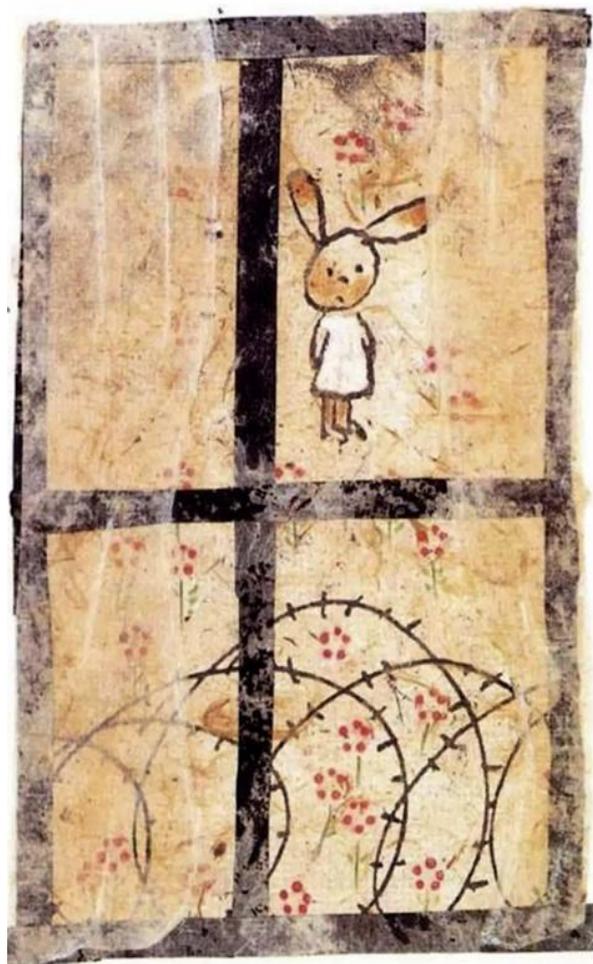


But one night, when Jon-Jon's father was reading the newspaper, he said, "Bad news! War is coming."

The day after, the war had come.

Papa said, "Good-bye, my dearest wife! Good-bye, my little Jon-Jon! I will come back soon."

He held them close to his heart, then he left for the war.



The next morning, Jon-Jon said, "I'm going to the brook to play with Annette."

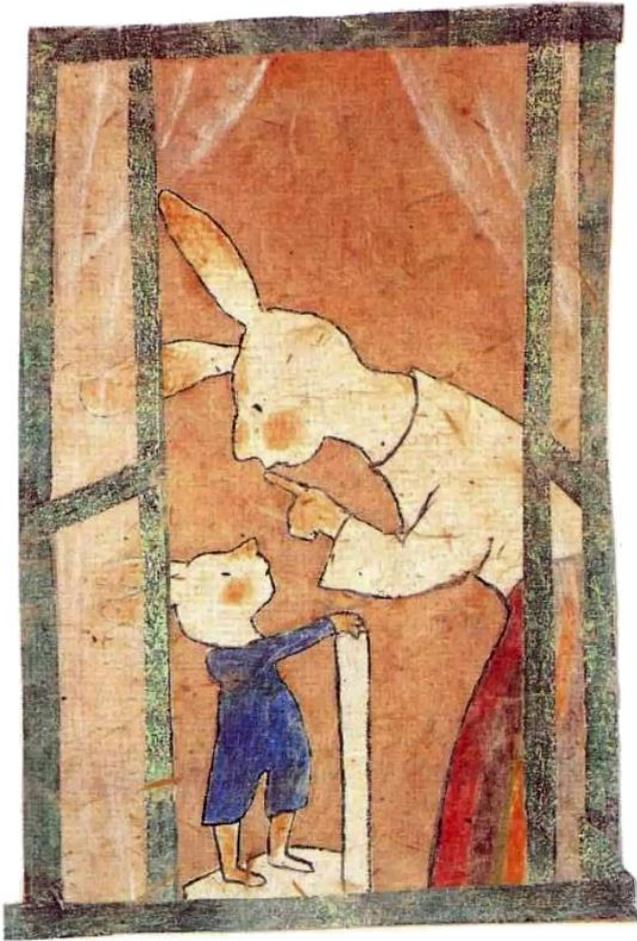
But his mother took him over to the window.

She showed him that where the brook once was, there was now a thornbush.

"That's so no one can get near us," explained Mama.

"Not even Annette?" asked Jon-Jon.

"Hush!" said Mama. "You mustn't speak of Annette. It's forbidden!"



"Why?"

"Because she's on the other side of the war."

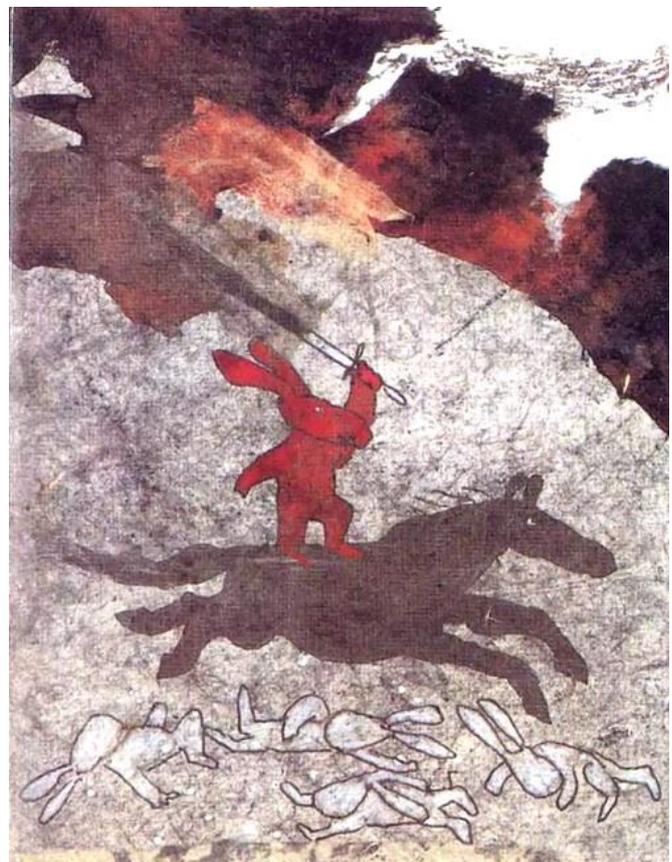
"Where is the war?" asked Jon-Jon. "I'm going to tell it to tear down the thornbush! I'm going to tell it to get out of here!"

But his mother said he couldn't do that.

The war was too big. It didn't listen to anyone. It came and went as it pleased. It made a terrible noise. It ran over everything in its way.

The war stayed such a long time that it felt as if it would go on forever.

But at last, all at once, the war couldn't be heard anymore. Instead of noise, there was a great silence.





That same day, Papa returned. He was very tired.

He said, "Finally the war is over."



But Jon-Jon could see that the thornbush was still outside his window.

He said, "That's not true! The war isn't dead! Why didn't you kill the war?"

His father sighed.

"War never dies, my little Jon-Jon. It just sleeps from time to time. And when it sleeps, great care must be taken not to wake it up again."

"Was I making too much noise when I played with Annette?" asked Jon-Jon .

"No," said his mother. "Children are too small to wake up the war."

Then Jon-Jon went out to the meadow, where he used to play with Annette before the war.

He walked the length of the thornbush.



All of a sudden, he heard Annette calling him.

She had made a little hole in the thorns, and crossed over to the other side of the brook.



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Jon-Jon and Annette
New York, Henry Holt, 1994