

be chilled and frightened by Mr. X's ugly tone. But Jennie, who knew what to expect screamed, "Oh father, don't please don't!" and began to sob hysterically. Before our horrified eyes Mr. X laid the lamb's tail across the block and chopped it off.

Blood spurted, the lamb cried in agony, all the other sheep joined in as did the cows, distant chickens and pigs until the clamor was deafening.

Jennie and I ran for the house, through the kitchen, past the mother's inquiring eyes, up the narrow stairs to throw ourselves on Jennie's creaking bed and cry our hearts out.

"He said he wouldn't do it to my lamb," Jennie kept repeating,

"He promised - - -"

After a long time Jennie's mother came upstairs, ~~compassionately~~ compassionately wiped our swollen faces with cold water and said, "Come down to supper, children, everything is on the table."

We went down the narrow stairs, took our places at the kitchen table, hands trembling, eyes downcast and ate silently, while Mr. X, seemingly in a jovial mood, made silly jokes and laughed--alone--at his own coarse wit.

After supper we helped with the dishes, still in silence, Mrs. X respecting our sick apathy.

Finally, I found courage to say that I would like to go to bed, and Jennie followed me into her room where we snuggled down into the deep feather mattress, neither able to speak at all.

I tossed and turned all night making new hollows in the thick feathers, awakening every few moments to wonder if I could endure to remain in that place over Sunday, visualizing all over again the sharp ax, the blood, the suffering lamb, and most of all