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Jerry Mullins
"Bluebells"

I want to write you a letter but there is no way to do that with this terrible war and no way to get it to you, so I will sit here and write you a letter in my head. I think it will come to you as you think about me over there. There is no pencil and paper anywhere here and nobody is safe on the post road over the mountains. My heart calls out to you from loneliness and I need to see you coming up the path along the creek and see your smile as you first see me. I see that in my dreams. I hope and pray you come back safe. This has been a terrible time and I don't know if I will ever get over the things I have seen and had to do. But I know it is worse for you.

From the time they come for you and pulled you out of the house this has not been our war. Whether it was blue or grey did not matter to us up here in this country. You were only a boy and not ready to do soldiering. We were just new together. I am proud of our little house even if it is just a leaning shed. And we started off with a good job on our farming. With the river and the fish and all the things we get out of the woods we have all we need. The spring coming on gives us the mollie moochers when the bluebells bloom, and then the locust blossoms come on to fry up. I only put in a small garden this time because I did not have good seeds but I will get along alright. Yes we have all we need just like the preachers say.

Sometimes I think I am just crazy thinking these things. My mind is racing sitting here on the porch but I am just missing you. I feel like an old woman sometimes but I am still a young girl. I miss the baby who was so dear and come after you left. From the first day her head was pale pink, just like some of the little pink bluebells along the creek. I called her Belle. I knew she was not strong. The granny woman said she would only last a few days. I am sorry you never saw her. I put her on the hill next to the house in the cleared part. I go there sometimes and talk to her like she is sitting beside me and tell her what a good man her father is. And I walk along the creek where the bluebells are and look for the little pink ones and I think they are her.

I worry about you in that war with so many being hurt. You scared me when you woke up screaming last time you got home about so many getting killed. You cried about all the men killed and all the confusion in the battle with horses and men bleeding into the creek so it turned bloody when they tried to get across the red stone bridge that was knocked down. Maybe you remembered that because we were walking by the creek here with the bluebells, and you said the creek bottom there at the battle had bluebells as far as you could see back into the woods.

I wake up shaking when I think about the things I had to do when the soldier hiding in the barn found us together. He was about the same age you are now and I think he was scared just like us. He only had that long knife off the end of a gun, but no gun and he come at you. I grabbed the pitchfork and jammed it in his back and he fell. His breathe was wheezing. It looked like foam coming out of the holes where the pitchfork went in. I did not see his face when he fell but I did not want to. I did not want to see his eyes. It was good you left quick. He looked like a runaway so

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they might be coming to find him and take him back. The river was running fast so I took off his clothes and shoved him off into it. I never heard any more about it. I burned his clothes and shoes and blood was on the ground. It was like the blood yelled out to me as it burned. I thought to myself now it is just like I am in the war. I had bad dreams about it for a long time after that but it is past now. I never had a chance to tell you all this since you were home that time.

I have nothing here to comfort me, to let me think things will be alright. I only have the hills and the green trees and sky and the warm wind going over with the clouds to let me know things will go on. Sometimes I see your face in the clouds. I hope you will be home before winter.

I will be here waiting for you. Maybe it will be a long time but if you don't come right away, I will still be here for you. Maybe if it is spring the bluebells will be on. I will be waiting for you to come up the path. Yes I will be waiting for you. Yes.