

# Two Little Soldiers

*Guy de Maupassant*

## Summary

The story 'Two Little Soldiers' is about a triangular love with a completely unexpected twist at the end. Luc and Jean are the major characters of the story. They are soldiers and spend their free time on Sundays away from the barracks, in the countryside. Their outing has taken on the character of a ritual. Every Sunday, they bring food to the same place in the woods and lie back to enjoy the food, wine, and sights of an area that reminds them of home.

Their ritual comes to take in a bit of innocent gazing of a young village girl who brings her cow to pasture and milks it every week at the same time. One Sunday, the girl talks to them on her way to the pasture. When she returns later, she offers them the cow's milk and leaves them with a promise to meet the following Sunday.

The next weekend, Jean suggests that they should bring something for her. They buy candies as a suitable present. When the girl arrives, they don't dare to give her the candies. Finally, Luc tells the girl that they have brought something for her. Jean hands the little paper bag to her.

As the weeks pass, the girl turns out to be the topic of conversation for two soldiers when they spend time at the barracks. The three become fast friends. They tell each other little incidents and details of their villages. The girl begins to eat their meal with them and appears to devote equal attention to them. Then, in an unexpected move, Luc seeks leave on a Tuesday, and again the following Thursday. He borrows money from one of the friends but offers no explanation for it.

The following Sunday the girl appears as she always does. When she is near them, Luc gets up and goes towards her. Then, she kisses him passionately. Jean is upset and heartbroken because he is left out and does not understand why the girl has suddenly turned all of her attention to Luc. He comes to know that why Luc had gone out twice during the week.

Luc and the girl go together to attend to the cow and disappear into the woods for a long time. Jean remains motionless and panicky. When they return, they kiss again. She doesn't offer Jean any milk that day. Neither of the soldiers talks about the incident.

While returning to the barracks, they stop momentarily on the bridge over the Seine as usual. Jean leans over the railing. He falls into water. Luc can't do anything. He watches in grief as his good friend drowns. He runs to the barracks with his eyes full of tears.