

ENGLISH

CHAPTER 3: THE QUARREL



THE QUARREL

~Summary~

-by Eleanor Farjeon

The entire poem is centred around a **fight** that **Eleanor** had with **her brother**. It shows how **fight**s **start** and **end** between siblings. The perfect emotional train of **denial**, **anger** and **acceptance** is shown in the lines.

1. **Denial:** The first takes us directly to the fight. She admits that she **doesn't know** the **reason** they had fought, showing that the reason was **not important** and the **emotions** played a **bigger role** in the fight. The **reason** would be **tiny** and in most cases, **not worth fighting**. She says that the **beginning** of the fight was **little**, but it soon **grew** with **time**. She ends the first stanza by telling us that **both** of them **thought** they were correct with their ideas and **were not able to accept** the other person's idea.
2. **Anger:** Although they were **siblings** and had grown up **together**, this fight between them had caused them to **hate each other** openly. Time passes quickly, and the afternoon becomes evening while **both** of them had **continued** hating each other. The **anger** that **one sibling** has over the **other** is expressed in two short yet beautiful verses.
3. **Acceptance:** Soon, Eleanor's **brother** **takes** the **first step** towards solving this fight by playfully **thumping** her on the back. It shows that no matter how much they fight with each other, the reality is that **they can never stay angry forever**. The poet realises that by telling her that he was **wrong**, he was actually **correct**, so when he **accepts** his fault, she accepts her fault as well, and the fight **ends**. It shows how when two **members** of the **same family** fight against each other they can **never stay angry forever** because they **know each other** very well and the love that they share is far **stronger** than any **fight**.

~Conclusion~

The poem is about the relationship between siblings. They fight with each other for petty things. But in difficult times, they are inseparable. The poetess wrote about her unpleasant relationship with her brother.

NCERT SOLUTIONS

Questions (Page No. 40) (Working With the Poem)

Question 1. With your partner try to guess the meaning of the underlined phrases.

- a. And some how we fell out.
- b. The afternoon turned black.

Answer:

- a. fell out – quarrelled or argued.
- b. turned black – was spoiled or wasted due to bad or tensed mood.

Question 2. Read these lines from the poem:

- a. One thing led to another
- b. The start of it was slight
- c. The end of it was strong
- d. The afternoon turned black
- e. Thumped me on the back

Discuss with your partner what these lines mean.

Answer:

- a. During the argument, one thing led to another.
- b. The start and cause of the quarrel was petty and small.
- c. The quarrel ended on a sour note which had a long lasting effect.
- d. The quarrel spoiled the mood of the quarrelling persons and the afternoon became intolerably sad.
- e. Patted on the back in an amiable manner.

Question 3. Describe a recent quarrel that you have had with your brother, sister or friend. How did it start? What did you quarrel about? How did it end?

Answer: Sohan is my best friend at school. I invited him to my birthday party, but he did not turn up for the celebrations. Suddenly he started behaving awkwardly and our relationship turned bitter. At school the next day, we had an argument about the incident. We both didn't talk to each other for a few days. Both of us remained tense and sad on those days. Since we were missing each other, we decided to patch up. Therefore, we confronted each other and resolved our differences amicably. We shook hands and hugged each other and promised to renew our friendship in a fresh manner.

(Note: Students can attempt this question as per their personal experience)

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