

The boy stared. "What 's the matter?"

Don backed up against the geraniums. "Keep away from me."

Conroy raised a derisive shout. "Do you want to fight?"

The young David swallowed slowly and shut his teeth on the pale-lipped mutter of a prayer. His cousin crept in on him, grinning, and crouched—intending to wrestle him and roll him on the grass—playfully. Don caught him in the mouth with a blow that knocked him off his balance. He jumped to his feet, white; and Don was waiting for him.

They fought in a boyish fury, wrestling, kicking and scratching; Don even bit his cousin's hand. He was whimpering hysterically; half his blows were going wide; and Conroy struck at his head and face and kicked into his legs. He went down on the grass, but before Conroy could more than pant out "Had enough?" he was up again, fighting like mad; and the more Conroy punished him, the harder he fought, whining like an animal, his face covered with blood. He did not feel the blows that blinded him; and his endurance was so unexpected, and his despairing stubbornness so wild, that it frightened Conroy, and he, too, began to cry.

He tried to dodge Don's onslaughts, but the boy flung himself in, clutching and falling, and tearing as he fell; and Conroy had to defend himself with the most frantically brutal blows. Even then, sobbing horribly and so weak he could scarcely stand, Don staggered in again and again after every rebuff; and

when
pairm

Con
distan
torn s
cut th
scared
and r
toward
feet a
he sav
fall on

He
founta
he sat
as a m
do. H
He wa
more fi

It w
the be
less wh

"Do
matter
light .
to touc
you. . .

Don
were n
"You v
Don