



The Fight

by Dan Rott

I tripped and fell as I scrambled away from the group following me. Since the rounded wall was hard to hide behind safely, I had to get up and push forward without delay. A sense of panic came in waves as adrenalin pumped through my body. I was determined not to be caught by those chasing me. I couldn't tell if they were getting closer or whether my long strides had provided a safe distance to continue my retreat, and then I saw them out of the corner of my eye.

“No. I give!” I yelled as I got to my feet. I hoped they might pause for a second or two, but that strategy rarely worked. Something whizzed by my head and I heard sounds in front of me in my path of escape. I had to push on. I crouched, ran and maneuvered in a zig, zag fashion. If I made it to the barn, I might still get away.

Outside the corn silo was the worst place to get caught. There was no place to hide or take cover. I veered right and ran as fast as I had ever run in my life. I knew what happened to Allan when he was caught earlier in an unexpected ambush. The rotten eggs had coated his head and ran down the side of his face. His blond hair was covered with an ugly orange, slimy mess as sections of his hair darkened and lumped together. The worst part

was when he started getting the dry heaves and wretched uncontrollably, overcome by a putrid smell hard to describe to those unaccustomed to barn yards. No matter how hard we tried to fight it off, the urge to heave overcame all other bodily functions except breathing. We'd spent the morning collecting as many bad, rotten eggs as we could find before splitting up.

“Run! Run! I'll cover you! We're in here.” It was Ricky Sequeira, one of my best friends. His father owned the dairy where we held our egg fight planned earlier in the week at school. Projectiles started flying in the opposite direction over my head to where I tripped a few seconds earlier hitting those chasing me.

“Ha, ha, ha, ha,” was all I heard as I passed Ricky and Darryl. **“I got him right in the head!”** Ricky

screamed with a demented like laugh. Ricky Sequeira's dad operated the small dairy and was an offspring of Portuguese immigrants who settled areas in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys in the early part of the 20th Century to farm and operate dairies. Ricky was small for his age, but scrappy with a socially inappropriate sense of humor. He had the dark hair and thick eyebrows of his dad. His mom donated the blue eye color and despite his small size he was considered “cute” by all the girls.

Darryl Kleeberger yelled from the side of the large barn door, **“They've stopped. Let's get'em.”** He and Ricky charged forward with hands full of eggs. After chasing and throwing at me, our enemies were low on “ammunition” and turned back. I quickly



Sequeira Dairy 60 years after the big egg fight.



The Sequeira Dairy is outside Dixon on Pedrick Road.

reloaded at a conveniently placed pile of eggs on a haybale and joined the fray. Since Allan hadn't rejoined the action, the three of us ran screaming out of the barn, and it was our turn to do the chasing.

Rick Carter, David Nishikawa, Doug Haight and Keith Cameron turned and traced a path around the side of the silo and headed in the opposite direction toward the haystack where they built a fort out of hay bales. Once there, we stopped and were forced to turn around and run back to the safety of our haybarn fort. In a week, the outside alfalfa bales would be moved in and prepared for winter use as feed for the Holstein milk cows. Ricky's dad was not keen on us playing our games once the hay was brought inside for the winter.

"Wait up," Allan yelled as he jogged in our direction. "I thought

I would never stop throwing up." His hair was still damp and sticky looking, but he found an outdoor faucet used to fill buckets to water the cows and washed off as much of the putrid orange egg yolk as possible. "I'm not sure I want to do this anymore. I'm not coming back. These wars stink."

We laughed with Allan as he held his nose. "Yeah, sure," I answered.

"It's getting late," replied Darryl. "I have homework to redo for school tomorrow. I better go. Mr.

Fritch will kill me if I don't correct my spelling book mistakes." Most of us had

Mr. Fritch for a 5th grade teacher and we knew why he was concerned.

"Okay, I'm thirsty anyway. Let's get the other guys and get some milk from the cooling tank," Ricky offered.

The early morning milking had been completed hours earlier and was in the refrigerated tank waiting to be picked up by the Crystal Dairy milk truck and taken to the plant in Sacramento.

We loved to finish our days getting fresh, cold milk that poured from a spicket at the bottom of the tank into large metal cups hanging nearby. For whatever reason,

fresh, cold milk at the dairy is the best tasting milk I've ever tasted. Allan quietly added, "I'll pass this time."

In a few months, Allan was back with us for more adventures at the dairy. The endless opportunities along with the earthy smell of cow manure and rotting straw energized us as we sought the freedom to be wild and creative in our play. Perhaps we'd figure out how to make parachutes out of our dads' handkerchiefs to see which carried the largest load. There was always something unique waiting for us to discover, all on our own. We were a unique generation; one with free time, unburdened with tasks and chores to help our families survive and before the revolution in technology. We planned, took risks and

made things while using our imaginations without relying too much on adult interventions. I wouldn't have it any other way.



Ricky Sequeira, left, and Allan Haight



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Published by OLLIMemoirs, the publication of memoirists in writers' workshops given by the Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. All rights reserved by the author. Contact: info@ollimemoirs.org. May, 2019.