

大学英语精读第三册UnitTwo PDF转换可能丢失图片或格式，
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https://www.100test.com/kao_ti2020/254/2021_2022__E5_A4_A7_E5_AD_A6_E8_8B_B1_E8_c67_254533.htm Text Aunt Bettie is faced with a difficult decision. A wounded Union soldier is found hiding in a farmhouse near her home. She has to decide whether to help him or let him be captured. What will she choose to do? The Woman Who Would Not Tell Janice Keyser Lester "I never did hate the Yankees. All that hated was the war....." That's how my great-aunt Bettie began her story. I heard it many times as a child, whenever my family visited Aunt Bettie in the old house in Berryville, Virginia. Aunt Bettie was almost 80 years old then. But I could picture her as she was in the story she told me barely 20, pretty, with bright blue eyes. Bettie Van Metre had good reason to hate the Civil War. One of her brother was killed at Gettysburg, another taken prisoner. Then her young husband, James, a Confederate officer, was captured and sent to an unknown prison camp somewhere. One hot day in late September Dick Runner, a former slave, came to Bettie with a strange report. He had been checking a farmhouse half a mile away from the Van Metre home, a farmhouse he thought was empty. But inside, he heard low groans. Following them to the attic, he found a wounded Union soldier, with a rifle at his side. When Aunt Bettie told me about her first sight of the bearded man in the stained blue uniform, she always used the same words. "It was like walking into a nightmare: those awful bandages, that dreadful smell. That's what war is really like, child: no bugles and banners. Just pain and

filth, futility and death." To Bettie Van Metre this man was not an enemy but rather a suffering human being. She gave him water and tried to clean his terrible wounds. Then she went out into the cool air and leaned against the house, trying not to be sick as she thought of what she had seen that smashed right hand, that missing left leg. The mans papers Bettie found in the attic established his identity: Lt. Henry Bedell, Company D, 11th Vermont Volunteers, 30 year old. She knew that she should report the presence of this Union officer to the Confederate army. But she also knew that she would not do it. This is how she explained it to me: "I kept wondering if he had a wife somewhere, waiting, and hoping, and not knowing just as I was. It seemed to me that the only thing that mattered was to get her husband back to her." Slowly, patiently, skillfully, James Van Metres wife fanned the spark of life that flickered in Henry Bedell. Of drugs or medicines she had almost none. And she was not willing to take any from the few supplies at the Confederate hospital. But she did the best she could with what she had. As his strength returned, Bedell told Bettie about his wife and children in Westfield, Vermont. And Bedell listened as she told him about her brothers and about James. "I knew his wife must be praying for him," Aunt Bettie would say to me, "just as I was praying for James. It was strange how close I felt to her." The October nights in the valley grew cold. The infection in Bedells wounds flared up. With Dick and his wife, Jennie, helping, she moved the Union officer at night, to a bed in a hidden loft above the warm kitchen of her own home. But the next day, Bedell had a high fever. Knowing that she must get help or he would die, she went

to her long-time friend and family doctor. Graham Osborne. Dr. Osborne examined Bedell, then shook his head. There was little hope, he said, unless proper medicine could be found." All right, then," Bettie said. "I'll get it from the Yankees at Harpers Ferry." The doctor told her she was mad. The Union headquarters were almost 20 miles away. Even if she reached them, the Yankees would never believe her story. "I'll take proof," Bettie said. She went to the loft and came back with a blood-stained paper bearing the official War Department seal. "This is a record of his last promotion," she said. "When I show it, they'll have to believe me." She made the doctor write out a list of the medical items he needed. Early the next morning she set off. For five hours she drove, stopping only to rest her horse. The sun was almost down when she finally stood before the commanding officer at Harpers Ferry. Gen. John D. Stevenson listened, but did not believe her. "Madam," he said, "Bedell's death was reported to us." "He's alive," Bettie insisted. "But he won't be much longer unless he has the medicines on that list." "Well," the general said finally, "I'm not going to risk the lives of a patrol just to find out." He turned to a junior officer. "See that Mrs. Van Metre gets the supplies." He brushed aside Bettie's thanks. "You're a brave woman," he said, "whether you're telling the truth or not." With the medicines that Bettie carried to Berryville, Dr. Osborne brought Bedell through the crisis. Ten days later Bedell was hobbling on a pair of crutches that Dick had made for him. "I can't go on putting you in danger," Bedell told Bettie. "I'm strong enough to travel now. I'd like to go back as soon as possible." So it was arranged that Mr. Sam, one of Bettie's

neighbors and friends, should go and help Bettie deliver Bedeel to Union headquarters at Harpers Ferry in his wagon. They hitched Betties mare alongside Mr. Sams mule. Bedell lay down in an old box filled with hay, his rifle and crutches beside him. It was a long, slow journey that almost ended in disaster. Only an hour from the Union lines, two horsemen suddenly appeared. One pointed a pistol, demanding money while the other pulled Mr. Sam from the wagon. Shocked, Bettie sat still. Then a rifle shot cracked out, and the man with the pistol fell to the ground dead. A second shot, and the man went sprawling. It was Bedell shooting! Bettie watched him lower the rifle and brush the hay out of his hair. "Come on, Mr. Sam," he said. "Lets keep moving." At Harpers Ferry, the soldiers stared in surprise at the old farmer and the girl. They were even more amazed when the Union officer with the missing leg rose from his hay-filled box. Bedell was sent to Washington. There he told his story to Secretary of War Edwin M. Stanton. Stanton wrote a letter of thanks to Bettie and signed an order to free James Van Metre from prison. But first James had to be found. It was arranged for Bedell to go with Bettie as she searched for her husband. Records showed that a James Van Metre had been sent to a prison camp in Ohio. But when the ragged prisoners were paraded before Bettie, James was not there. A second prison was checked, with the same result. Bettie Van Metre fought back a chilling fear that her husband was dead. Then at Fort Delaware, near the end of the line of prisoners a tall man stepped out and stumbled into Betties arms. Bettie held him, tears streaming down her face. And Henry Bedell, standing by on his crutches, wept,

too. NEW WORDS
Stell v. act as an informer 告发
Yankeen. (in the Civil War) a native of any of the northern states. a citizen of the U.S.
北方佬 ; 美国佬
great-aunt n. an aunt of ones father or mother.
sister of ones grandfather or grandmother
civil a. 国内的 ; 民间的
Confederate a. of or belonging to the Confederacy 南部邦联的
capture vt. make a prisoner of. seize 俘虏 ; 夺得
unknown a. whose name, nature, or origin is not known
former a. of an earlier period 以前的
farmhouse n. the main house on a farm, where a farmer lives
groan n. a sound made in a deep voice that expresses suffering, grief or disapproval 呻吟 (声)
attic n. the space just under the roof of a house, esp. that made into a low small room 阁楼
Union, the n. those states that supported the Federal government of the U.S. during the Civil War. the U.S.A. (美国南北战争期间的) 联邦政府 ; 美国
a. of or having to do with the Union
rifle n. 步枪
awful a. terrible. very bad
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