

Strange News from Another Star

By Hermann Hesse

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Strange News from Another Star By Hermann Hesse

"Strange News from Another Star" is a short fairy tale written by Hermann Hesse in April 1915, one year after the start of the 1st World War. In the fairy tale, two stars are juxtaposed.

On one star, life is valued, beauty is appreciated, reason is respected, humane traditions are cultivated, love and happiness are experienced and peace prevails.

On the other star, jealousy, hatred and despair are cultivated, wars are waged incessantly, battlefield murder is officially condoned, the countryside is left strewn with unattended cadavers and fear prevails.

The latter is clearly our world as Hesse saw it, rendered mythical, and the former is an idealized world that ours could be.

Unlike his earlier works, the story does not lend itself to rational interpretation. It is essentially a fairy tale dealing with the subconscious, magic and the dream world.

The fairy tale represents an intermediate stage between Hesse's initial ambiguous stance to the war, as an internationalist who tolerated war and a pacifist who looked forward to a German victory, and his later active anti-war campaign.

The story, which was titled “Merkwürdige Nachricht von einem anderen Stern” in German, was one of several that brought Hesse into conflict with supporters of the war, his country and its government.

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Editorial Review

Language Notes
Text: English, German (translation)

About the Author
Nobel Prize-winner Hermann Hesse was a German-Swiss poet, novelist and painter who is best-known for his seminal novels Siddhartha, Steppenwolf, and The Glass Bead Game. A child of missionaries, Hesse s writings are heavily influenced by Eastern mysticism, spirituality and the search for self-knowledge, themes that resonated with the hippie culture of the 1960s and which contributed to a resurgence in interest for Hesse s work following his death in 1962.

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