

Two brothers worked adjoining farms in harmony for many years. Then a small misunderstanding became a major rift. They spat out hurtful words, insulted each other's families, and nearly came to blows until the younger brother decided to stop the madness. He diverted a stream into a meadow between the two farms, creating a permanent barrier between them.

One morning a carpenter came to the older brother and asked for work. The older brother pointed to the creek and said, "My brother diverted that creek to separate our farms, so I'll go him one better. I'll build a high fence."

"I think I understand," said the carpenter. He went to the lumber mill then set out to build.

When the older brother returned that evening, he was surprised to find no wall, but instead, a bridge over the stream. As he walked toward it in wonder, thinking that the carpenter had misunderstood, he saw his estranged brother walking across the bridge towards him. His brother was reaching out. "Thank you," said the younger brother, "for having this bridge built to bring us back together."

As they shook hands, then embraced, the older brother saw the carpenter preparing to leave. "Please stay with us awhile," he said.

"I'd like to," replied the carpenter, "but I have other bridges to build."