

FACING MRS. LINCOLN

Near the end of Irving Stone's powerful novel, *Love Is Eternal*, about Mary Todd and Abraham Lincoln, there is a moving conversation between Mrs. Lincoln and the President's bodyguard, Parker, who had been summoned to Mrs. Lincoln's room.

"Why were you not at the door to keep the assassin out?" she demanded.

With head bowed, Parker replied, "I have bitterly repented it. But I did not believe that anyone would try to kill so good a man in such a public place. The belief made me careless. I was attracted by the play, and did not see the assassin enter the box."

"You should have seen him. You had no business to be careless." With this, Mrs. Lincoln fell back on her pillow and covered her face with her hands, and from deep emotion, said: "Go now. It's not you I can't forgive; it's the assassin."



Tad Lincoln, who had spent that miserable night beneath his father's desk in the executive office, drawled, "If Pa had lived, he would have forgiven the man who shot him. Pa forgave everybody."

That comment is reminiscent of Christ, Who, having given His all to reveal love, was rejected by His own and killed by those who should have protected Him. Yet, in the agonies of death, He prayed: "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do" (Luke 23:34).

Forgiveness is an antidote for the soul, a release of bitterness that can cripple the spirit.

Is there someone who needs your forgiveness today?

– Beecher Hunter