Cherene put the phone up and hurried back into her bedroom; there was still a lot of packing to get done before the moving van came in the morning. Her father and mother had told her brother and her that the movers would be there early, God willing. In fact, they said they expected the big van to pull in sometime during the night so the men could begin loading bright and early in the morning, having had everything made ready during the night.
Cherene sighed, wondering if the movers, whose job was just that -- moving peoples’ things from one place to another, one state to another state -- were ever saddened by the fact that they were "transplanting" people from one culture to another and leaving many a sad tear failing as they pulled their enormous vans out of the driveways and drove away. But, of course, it wasn't their fault that people moved, she realized; they were only doing what their job demanded and what their boss had told them to do.

She put the clothing she would need for traveling into the suitcase and discovered that the lid wouldn't close. She had done what she thought she wouldn't do: packed too many things. Still, she wanted everything inside that case to travel with her.

She felt perplexed. Then she tried again to close it; still no success. She got to her feet and stared at the bulging but neatly packed case. She must get that shut. Yes, she must.

"Hey, you have quite a dilemma!" It was Earl, her brother, who made the light-hearted but truthful exclamation.

Cherene giggled softly. "I really do," she remarked. "But it's nothing earth shattering, thankfully. But I'm sure that if a certain brother would add his weight to my 'dilemma' we'd get these two locks to meet."

Earl laughed heartily. "I shall be glad to give my fair-haired, fair-skinned, dainty little sister a hand," he remarked, putting his knee on the lid and closing the suitcase easily.

"Oh Earl, you big, strong thing! Thanks heaps," Cherene said happily. "It just proves who carries the most weight around here," she added, teasing. "And by the way, Maxine called. I just hung up a few minutes ago. She's coming over soon, the Lord willing. She can't understand how you and I can take this move so easily and smoothly. She said she feels devastated. Utterly devastated. She declares she'll never, never allow her roots to go so deep again.

"Poor girl" Earl remarked.
"I told her that she, like we, had a lot of lovely things to look forward to. You know Earl, in a way, I'm quite excited about this move. True, we'll be in a totally new environment, and we'll have to get used to a different type of cuisine; but I'm getting excited about it all. Sure, we'll miss our many many church and school friends and our neighbors; but it's thrilling to know we'll be enlarging and expanding our roster of friends. And like I told Maxine, it's quite unusual that both her father and ours are being transferred to the same plant. And both of our families belong to the same church, too. Talk about unusual!"

"Say, you're right, Cherene, this is quite unusual. I hadn't thought about that. And I'm really happy that Maxine's father was chosen to be transferred; I'd have missed Maxine dreadfully."

"I know," Cherene answered, giving her brother an understanding smile.

"Are you ready for that big monster?" Earl asked cheerfully, changing the subject abruptly.

"Almost, my big, strong brother. I have some last minute things to get done, however, and if a certain fine young man will vacate this lonely looking room I shall endeavor to put the final touches to this sad task. Oh, I wonder who will occupy my room once I am gone, and if it will feel just a teeny, tiny bit sad that I have left. After all, maybe it will never again hear praying and praising and singing in it. In this case, I feel very sad, Earl."

"Oh you dear, funny sister!" Earl remarked. "Rooms don't feel; they're inanimate objects; they have no heart."

"Maybe not," Cherene said sadly. "But I'd hate to think that this dear little room would never again hear praying and singing in it. Why Earl, it was bathed in prayer and song. This has been a sacred and a hallowed place to me. I've prayed a lot of things through in this room."

"And you'll be able to do the same thing in your new bedroom, Cherene. God isn't limited to a particular area, you know."

"And isn't this wonderful, Earl! You and our parents and I are taking Him with us. Oh I'm so happy I know Him in an intimate and very personal way. Are you finished packing?"
"Every bit of it!" Earl said. "I'm going out to see if Dad needs help in the garage then I'd like to go by Don Brady's house for one last bit of encouragement to him and a season of prayer. I suppose I feel sorry most of all for Don, in this move of ours. He's so new in Christ. But I know he's going to make it; God is helping him wonderfully. Well, I must run along."

"Thanks for your help, Earl."

Cherene was just finishing her last box when Maxine called to her from the bottom of the stairs.

"Come up" Cherene answered, taping the box in preparation for stacking it with the others that were along a wall near the door.

"What a gloomy job!" Maxine remarked, looking around the bare walls of the room. "Honestly, I've never had anything so hard to do. I dare say that there isn't a single box of mine but what received its share of tears along with what I packed. Oh Cherene, how can you be so . . . so normal? This is a traumatic experience for me. And I mean traumatic. I . . . I'm almost petrified at the thought of having to change schools. And this will be Earl's and my senior year too! Oh-h-h!" She moaned pitifully. "I . . . I'm scared."

"But why should you be scared, Maxine? You know the Lord. He'll help you make the transition/adjustment. And besides, you and Earl will be in the same classes, God willing. I think you should count your blessings."

"If only I could get over this dreadful fear I have! It bothers me day and night. We had good teachers here in Valley High. And the student body was quite decent too. Suppose, where we're going, the teachers' values are not like what we've been used to; and what if drugs and alcohol and immorality are the norm for the students in the school!"

"Jesus said we were the light of the world, Maxine; so that will be all the more reason for us to let our lights shine. I suppose, like Dad has often said, one's greatest fear is that of the unknown. It's true, we don't know what the school will be like; but God knows. We'll just have to put this in His hands and trust Him to keep us in every circumstance and to bring us through 'more than a conqueror,' as the Apostle Paul wrote."
Maxine shivered. "When I think of seeing all those strange faces I get a panicky feeling inside. Oh, I shall miss Dee Dee and Fran and Jenny! And when I think of their graduating without Earl and me, I . . . I go to pieces."

"Would you rather stay here, Maxine?"

"Oh, I'd never think of staying without my family, Cherene. It's just that I feel it was a rather sad thing that the transfers came before Earl and I could graduate with the students we knew all of our natural lives, and with whom we went to school for all these many years. And now that our goal of graduating together was almost a reality, minus this, our final year, well, it's almost more than I can stand."

"And yet God knew about this all the time, Maxine. It came with His permissive will. It was no surprise to Him, this move of our parents. With all my heart, I feel He has plans and directions for our lives which we will be overjoyed with. But only if we move with the Spirit and keep step with God. And don't murmur or complain. The Israelites got into the habit of complaining and murmuring against God and you know what happened to them for this."

"I didn't mean to sound like a complainer, Cherene. But maybe this is, in reality, what I've been doing all along. Oh, I want the Lord to forgive me."

"You know, Maxine, I'm feeling challenged by this move. There'll be new people to meet and to tell about Jesus and His mighty power to deliver from sin and to sanctify wholly. Just think of it; brand new faces to witness to and point them to Christ! Doesn't this excite you at all?"

"Oh yes, and when I'm over the initial shock of the new environment and all those new faces and new names, I know I'll be doing my share of witnessing for Christ. Like someone said, it'll be nice to make new friends. Only I'm afraid there'll never be anyone so dear to me as Dee Dee, Fran and Jenny."

"That's largely because you're all church friends and Christians, Maxine. I'm sure the Lord will send us all some good, trusted Christian friends where we're moving, God willing. Dad said he heard it's a spiritual church. Where we're moving to, I mean. This makes my heart very happy. I'll
miss my friends here, too. But I told them it would make a nice vacation for them to come and see me."

"Oh Cherene, you think of the nicest things. I never gave that a thought. But you're so right; Dee Dee and Fran and Jenny would love vacationing down there with us, God willing. And wouldn't it be super, super if your friends and mine could come during our District camp meeting!"

"Or our Youth camp!" Cherene exclaimed joyously. Maxine was laughing with excitement now. "I guess moving's not so bad after all. And I know our friends will want to come down," she said, "if their parents allow it, the Lord willing."

"Some of the church parents told Dad and Mother they plan to visit us at least once a year, God willing. This is something to look forward to" Cherene stated softly.

"You know something, Cherene; you're like a rainbow in my cloud. The sun is breaking through my darkness and heaviness and all because of you. Proverbs says, 'A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver: You may be two years behind me in high school but you're far ahead of me in spiritual things, I feel. With God's help, I mean to begin seeing things more through God's perspective than my gloomy pessimism. God can't get glory out of a life like this. And now I'd better be getting home. I want to have one last good season of prayer in the bedroom that was mine for all these many years. Maybe whoever takes possession of it after we're gone will sense a sacred hallowedness in it. Who knows! At least I can pray for the new residents or owners, whoever they may be. Until tomorrow morning, when we'll all be pulling out, God bless you. And thank you, Cherene, for opening my eyes. See you then, God willing."

"Early!" Cherene called after Maxine's disappearing figure.