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NEW SCHOOL
By Mrs. Paul E. King

"Don't look so glum, Cherie. It's not becoming to you." And Barry shook the duster over his sister's head.

"Oh, Barry, please! Just leave me alone. It's bad enough to know I'll have to start in from the very beginning to make new friends without being

bugged about looking glum. And please, don't shake that dirty old duster over my head: I just shampooed my hair. Please, Barry. . . ."

"Smile, Sis. Smile," Barry insisted, holding Cherie's arms and shaking the lamb's wool duster fiercely over her head. "Barry, please. Stop it."

"Not until you replace that frown with a sunny smile, I won't," the eighteen-year-old brother teased.

Smiling a forced half-smile, more like a "chipmunk" grin, Cherie said, "There. How's that?"

"It's better than that glum expression on your face, Sis. I'm not used to seeing you looking that way. And why all the fuss over this move anyway? It's not like we've never moved before. This has been a part of our life for so long as either one of us can remember. Our dad's made a career of the Air Force, remember?"

"Oh, Barry, please don't remind me. Sometimes I wonder what a normal life would be like."

"Ours is normal, Cherie; for us."

"I mean a settled-down, settled-in kind of life."

"We always settle down, Sis, and settle in," Barry teased, tossing the duster on top of a box near by.

"You know what I mean," Cherie said. "Take Jenny, for instance, she's never moved once in her life. She has roots and stability. She's settled in. No changing schools for her, and she's gone to the same church all her natural life. She has friends galore. Permanent, bosom friends. Me? I think I have a bosom friend, a permanent friend, when wham-o, Dad comes home with the news that he's being transferred out again. There goes my bosom friend, or friends, as the case may be."

"But just look at it from the bright side of things, Cherie: Who has more friends than you and I? We have friends from all over; some, even, in Germany and Italy and England. I feel we are blest by God to have a father such as we have. Dad's not only good and kind and loving and caring to

Mother and you and me, but he's spiritual and is Spirit-filled, as well. Added to all this is the fact that we have traveled more and have seen more of our beautiful world than most young people will ever get to see in their entire lifetime."

Cherie sighed. Leaning her face into the palms of her hands, she said, "You're right, Barry, And I honestly do appreciate all my many blessings. It's just that I can hardly bear the thought of leaving Jenny. I've never had any friend more spiritual than she. She has helped me immeasurably. Oh, but I'll miss our prayer times together. Her faith strengthened mine far more than I have words to tell. I've grown spiritually with her as our young people's leader. Sometimes she seems old beyond her years, in spiritual things."

"Did you ever think that God may be wanting to use you like He has been using Jenny?"

"I could never do what Jenny does, Barry. She's extremely talented and dedicated."

"So are you."

"Nothing like Jenny."

"Allowing the Spirit of God to have free course in one's life, and letting Him flow through you, makes all the difference in the world. Jenny's motto seems to be, 'not I, but Christ.' We are lights, Sis: the Lord needs shining lights in this new place Dad's going to. It's up to us to shine."

Again Cherie sighed. "I know you're right. But really, Barry, I don't think I've ever hated to move as much as this move. I like everything about this area. For one thing, this church has the most spiritual group of young people I've ever seen. I love the church here."

"Prayer, Sis. Prayer. Jenny keeps those prayer meetings going."

"That's what I mean. And I love our Christian school here. It's been great. I've grown spiritually, and I've never enjoyed school work more. The teachers are so kind and patient and so eager for each of us to do our best. They've made getting my studies an enjoyable thing. A challenge, really."

"I agree with you on that. And we'll have to trust the Lord to help us where we're going. I'm going to miss a lot of things too, but I've accepted everything that comes my way as God's will for me. This makes each new move a challenge to me. Plus, we must not forget that the Lord was infinitely good to us to allow us to finish out the school year here before Dad's orders to transfer arrived. This is a blessing for which I've thanked the Lord over and over. Just think what it would have been like if we'd have had to move two months ago, Cherie."

Cherie shivered. "That would have been catastrophic," she replied.

"Not catastrophic -- we'd have adjusted -- but it would have been pretty difficult trying to 'pick up' the last two months' school work, and lessons, in a new school. I've thanked the Lord every day, since Dad told us of his orders to move, that we were able to finish everything for the school year."

"You're right, Barry, and I'm going to concentrate more on my blessings than on my losses. After all, it's not like we can never visit back and forth: planes put a speedy end to distance and to miles. Jenny said she's going to begin saving now so she can fly up to Alaska to see us next summer, God willing. Already, I'm all excited about her visit. It will be so much fun to have her visiting and living in with us."

"Well, now that the sun's shining on your face and old Mr. Glum has vanished and disappeared, I'll get busy with the last of my packing. I never realized how many things a fellow my age can accumulate in a couple of years. It's amazing. Shocking, really."

Cherie laughed. "You weren't called a pack rat for nothing, Barry. Pity your wife, when you marry," she teased, and ran, squealing, from the room as Barry reached for the handle of the lamb's wool duster.

Long after Barry had disappeared down the hallway into the confines of his bedroom, Cherie thought about the many different places in which she had lived and, all in all, she had to admit that each move had improved her academic performance and prowess. She had settled in and settled down to achieve her very best, having been stimulated by each new challenge and by the change in her surroundings.

Furthermore, her parents had told Barry and her, over and over, that, with Christ as head and center of their lives, they were well able to adapt positively to each new move. And, as she had prayed, and had cast her fears and frustrations over upon the Lord, she marveled how calm and peaceful she had always become heretofore.

She felt tears sting her eyes now. Why hadn't she turned this move over to the Lord? she wondered with a sudden awakening. Always, God's grace and help had sustained her and seen her through each of her many other moves, and she knew that, again, He was waiting to supply the needed grace and the courage for her. Yes, even now, with yet another move.

Hurrying to her bedroom where boxes were stacked in readiness for the moving van, Cherie, clutching her much-read Bible to her heart, dropped beside the bed on her knees and poured out her feelings to the Lord. Almost instantly, she felt the help of the Holy Spirit and in that moment she knew that all things were, indeed, working together for good. Yes, even the new move and adjusting to a new school.

Suddenly and spontaneously, she found herself praising the Lord and, with the praising, her heart broke out in a song. God was in His Heavens and still had everything under control. O blessed thought!