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**COUSIN ETHEL'S SCHOOLDAYS**

Vol. 1 (New Series), No. 7.

**A Tale of Tom Merry's Chum. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.**

A Letter from D'Arcy.  
Dolores nodded without answering.  
She seldom had letters far away, and seldom wrote. She had no relatives in England. It gave her a wistful feeling to see that letter in Cousin Ethel's hands. She wondered what Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was like. She did not foresee that what exceedingly good acquaintances they were to become, or what curious results were to follow.  
Ethel smiled as she read the letter:  
"Study 6, School House,  
"St. Jim's."  
"Dear Ethel,—We are playing a match with the New House to-morrow (Saturday) afternoon. Would you care to come and see it? It will be rather a good match. I am playing for the School House.  
"I am sure you will come, like a dear girl, and so I shall come over and fetch you in a trap. If I'm not to come, send me a wire; but don't send a wire, because I've got special early leave from Lathom, so as to get over to St. Freda's in time to catch you when you leave your lessons.

"It will be a good match, and I think you will enjoy seeing it."  
"Your affectionate cousin,  
"ARTHUR."  
"P.S.—It will be a very good match."  
"P.P.S.—Perhaps you might care to bring a friend."  
Dolores looked at Cousin Ethel as she laughed.  
Ethel looked up and met her eyes, her own sparkling with fun.  
"Will you read the letter, Dolores?" she asked.  
"May I?"  
Dolores read the letter, and smiled.  
"Will you go?" she said.  
"If Miss Penfold will give me leave, certainly," said Ethel; "and in that case, Dolores, will you come with me?"  
"Oh, I should love to!"  
Ethel squeezed her hand.  
"I will go and ask Miss Penfold at once. It will be jolly at St. Jim's, Dolores! The football match will be kind. The boys are so good and worth watching, too, as I suppose Figgins will be playing for the New House—I mean," said Ethel, colouring a little, "it will be a junior match, but the play is very good indeed."  
And Cousin Ethel went to Miss Penfold's study at once. She found

the head-mistress of St. Freda's there, and Miss Penfold greeted her with a kindly smile.  
Ethel showed her the letter.  
"May I go, Miss Penfold?" she asked.  
The principal read the letter.  
"Certainly," she said. "But what friend would you wish to take?"  
"Dolores."  
Miss Penfold looked at her.  
"Dolores Pellham?"  
"Yes, please, Miss Penfold."  
"I have no objection," said the Head of St. Freda's, after a pause. "So you have made a special friend of Dolores, Ethel?"  
"Yes," said Ethel.  
"And you like her?"  
"Very much."  
"I am sure your friendship will be good for her, at all events," said Miss Penfold. "Yes, you may certainly go."  
"Thank you, Miss Penfold."  
And Cousin Ethel left the study with a very happy face. Pleasant as she was finding her surroundings at St. Freda's, she was glad enough at the prospect of seeing again all her old friends at St. Jim's, and glad, too, to introduce Dolores to them. And during morning lessons in the big school-room, both Ethel and Dolores were looking forward keenly to the afternoon, and listening for the sound of wheels in the Close.

THE Runaway.  
THAT Ethel Cleveland's cousin was coming after morning lessons to take Ethel away to St. Jim's for the afternoon, was soon known to St. Freda's. Naturally enough, the interest in the matter was great. Under cover of lessons, Ethel was asked all sorts of questions about Arthur Augustus—what he was like, whether he were nice, and so forth—and Ethel more than once drew a disapproving glance from Miss Tyrrell by speaking in class.  
But she could hardly refuse to do so, when she was spoken to almost incessantly. She told all she could of Arthur Augustus; quite enough to increase the general interest the girls felt in him.  
D'Arcy of St. Jim's would have been flattered if he had known how his coming to St. Freda's was looked for.  
As a rule, the girls' visitors were relatives, and generally ancient and respectable relatives; and however kind and affectionate uncles and aunts might be, they had not the same interest as a young and handsome cousin, of course. Claire Pomfret had been a great heroine once when her brother, a midshipman in the Navy, came to see her; but Arthur Augustus seemed likely to have a greater vogue than even Midshipman Pomfret.  
When morning classes were dismissed, Ethel glanced out into the Close. But there was no sign yet of

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. The distance by road was considerable, and D'Arcy had said that he was coming in a trap. But dinner was scarcely over in the big dining-room when there was a sound of wheels.  
Ethel started a little.  
"It is the little cousin," said Dolores, with a smile.  
Ethel laughed.  
"Arthur is not so little," she said. "Yes, I think it is he."  
The girls fled out of the dining-room, and Ethel and Dolores stepped out of the great door. A trap with a handsome horse was standing outside, and beside the horse Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was standing.  
He raised his hat in his graceful way to Ethel.  
"Then he came up the steps. "You will be able to come, dear girl!" he exclaimed.  
"Oh, yes!" said Ethel brightly.  
"Good!"  
There were a crowd of girls peeping round the door and from the hall window as D'Arcy was introduced to  
**NEW READERS should turn to the foot of next page.**



