

# STARS FOR SYLVIA

by

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### AN INVITATION TO LA VON

MONDAY MORNING, Sylvia waited anxiously on the front porch for Nancy. She had hurried through her breakfast, and had come out of the house with her sweater in her hands, afraid that Nancy might be early and go on without her. She was anxious not only to make up with Nancy but to tell her the glad news about Claudia. She felt sure that, once Nancy knew how important it had been for her to see Claudia, she would rejoice with her.

She spied Nancy down the street, her plaid skirt swinging as she strolled along. Sylvia ran off the porch and up to Nancy. "I'm sorry I couldn't come over yesterday, but I just had to see Claudia."

Nancy arched her dark eyebrows and said coldly, "I didn't realize Claudia was your special friend, but of course, if she is—"

"Don't be like that." Sylvia fell in step beside her chum. "This was special. What do you think? Claudia's going to start going to church with us. Aren't you thrilled?"

"Well, she ought to go," Nancy replied without enthusiasm.

"But don't you understand? Yesterday, she . . ."

But somehow the words would not come. She sensed that her perfectly glorious news that Claudia believed in Christ as her Saviour would not mean as much to Nancy as it did to her.

Sylvia changed the subject. "Got your math?"

"I've got something that will have to pass for it. I sure wish it didn't take so much math to be a flyer. Flying sounds keen until they cram this navigation stuff down you."

Sylvia nodded. Nancy had always planned to be an aviatrix, and flying sounded super. Sylvia didn't know what she wanted to be when she graduated. Lots of jobs sounded interesting. Meanwhile, she was going heavy on domestic science for, of course, some day she'd marry. She went back to the math. "I think I have mine. We'll check the answers at lunch period."

"Good."

Sylvia smiled. Nancy was herself again. When Nancy was in the right mood, she'd have to explain to her about Claudia because now that Claudia was a Christian, Sylvia wanted her to be one of the gang.

As the girls walked onto the grounds, the warning bell rang. They broke into a run and just managed to make their home room in time. After that, the morning went along in its regular way until fifth period, when they had lunch.

They strolled across the grounds to the steps of the gymnasium and opened their lunch boxes, sharing lunches. Sylvia promised, "As soon as we eat, we'll check the answers."

"Good. I've just got to pass," Nancy answered, making a face as she bit into a sour pickle.

"You'll make it," Sylvia cheered, eating her sandwich.

"There you are!" a voice called. Sylvia glanced up and saw Claudia hurrying toward them.

"It's that Claudia," Nancy whispered. "Why does she have to butt in?" "But—"

"Hi, Nancy. Hi, Sylvia. I've been looking all over the grounds for you."

Claudia sat on the step below Sylvia, a distressed expression on her face. "Last night, when Dad got home, I wanted to tell him I was a Christian; and instead he argued about the Bible with me and I got all mixed up, and couldn't even remember those verses you told me."

Sylvia gulped down the last bite of her sandwich, and offered, "I'll copy them for you."

"No, you finish eating, and I'll write them down."

Claudia opened her notebook, and while Sylvia munched chocolate cake she repeated the verses and Claudia copied them. Nancy watched with a slightly bored expression.

"What goes on here?"

Sylvia looked up to see La Von and Sarah strolling toward them. La Von was one of the prettiest girls in the class. She was small, with deep blue eyes and the longest lashes. She wore a black-and-white checked skirt, a white angora sweater, and had two perky white bows in her dark curls.

Sarah was taller, with long, straight black hair, and large black eyes. Her features had a definitely oriental cast. Sylvia couldn't explain even to herself why the Jewish people looked different, but they did. Sarah was plump and wore a white cotton blouse and a black cotton skirt with an uneven hem. Sylvia remembered that Sarah had called the senior sweaters "regimentation," but that had probably been sour grapes because she couldn't afford one.

“Hi,” Sylvia called, and La Von and Sarah joined the group.

“I don’t think you girls will be interested,” Nancy spoke up. “Claudia and Sylvia are talking religion.”

“What a way to say it!” Sylvia flared, shocked by Nancy’s attitude. Why, Nancy was supposed to be a Christian! She reminded, “You go to church.”

“What if I do? My mother taught me not to flaunt my religion.”

“I think everyone is religious, in his own way,” Sarah broke in.

Appreciating Sarah’s defense, Sylvia thought, “What nice thing can I say about the Jews?” and said, “If we are, we have the Jewish people to thank for our knowledge. The three great religions of the world came from the Jews.”

“Three? Which ones?” Sarah looked puzzled.

“Judaism.”

“Of course.” Sarah nodded. “Mohammedanism.”

“What makes you say that?” Nancy asked. “The Mohammedans are the descendants of Ishmael, Abraham’s son.” “Oh!”

“And the third is Christianity.”

“Ugh! Christianity,” Sarah shrugged.

“Well, it’s true,” Sylvia defended. “Jesus was a Jew. All the disciples were Jews and the Bible was written by Jews.”

“The Torah, the Old Testament was,” Sarah nodded again.

“And the New Testament, also.” “All of it?” Sarah persisted.

“All but the Book of Luke. No one is sure whether he was a Jew or a Gentile. But they know that all the other writers were Jews.”

“I didn’t know that,” Sarah admitted.

“My, you have to know a lot to be a Christian!” La Von said with a titter in her voice.

“But you don’t have to know everything about the Bible to be a Christian,” Claudia told her with a serious note in her low-pitched voice.

Sarah stood up abruptly. "I have to get my books for the next class."

"I guess I'll go with you," Nancy brushed the crumbs off her lap, and rose to her feet.

"What about the math?"

"I guess my answers are as good as yours," Nancy retorted, walking off arm in arm with Sarah.

"I'd better be going, too." La Von jumped up. "There's plenty of time for religion when you're old."

One of Sylvia's new verses flashed into her mind and she repeated, "**Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.**"

"What was that?"

"I was only repeating a verse. **'Remember now thy Creator in the days of thy youth.'**"

"Maybe."

"More than maybe! La Von, I'm going to a youth rally Friday night. Why don't you come with us?"

"Thanks, but I think not. Fern and Marguerite have a heavy date to drive out to the Shore Club with Knox and Charlie. Knox is getting his dad's car and if they can round up an extra boy, I'm going too."

"But Knox's dad has only a coupe. Won't it be crowded?"

"There's the rumble seat. A little tough on the hair, but worth the trip," La Von replied gaily.

"Besides, I want to go. I've never been to the Shore Club. Even so, I won't go unless they get an extra boy friend for me. I won't be excess baggage."

"If it doesn't pan out, do come with us," Sylvia urged; then she turned to Claudia. "You'll go, won't you?"

"I'd like to. I had a date with Ed, but I'll break it. He wouldn't want to go to church."

"And I'm sure Nancy's going." But even as she said it, Sylvia wondered if she would. The school bell rang.

Sylvia picked up her empty sack and books and said, "I'll ask you later in the week, La Von, when you know how things are going to work out."

“Okay.” La Von ran on ahead.

Sylvia and Claudia walked across the grounds together and Sylvia thought:

“Now I’ve made a start as a witness. If only I can persuade La Von to come to youth night.”

She frowned. “I wonder if I ever will be able to speak to Sarah about the Lord?”

**~ end of chapter 5 ~**

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