

When Marion reached the house with Bruno, after her walk, she was met by Delia in a great state of excitement.

"There is a letter from Gertrude, and I opened it although it was addressed to you. And, Marion, they will be here the day after to-morrow. Jessica is already with them, and Tom wants to know if we can send a wagon to meet them."

"I expect we can. Are they going to stay here or with the Bryants?" asked Marion, looking thoughtful; for, although the house was larger than in the old days, still there would not be much room to move when Mr. and Mrs. Bryant and Jessica arrived, in addition to the people who were already under the roof.

Delia began to laugh. "Don't worry yourself. The dear romantic things are going to camp down on the shore just where we had the tent three years ago. Jessica wants to have a tent down there too; but, as Gertrude does not like the thought of her being alone at night, she wants to know if you can spare me to camp with them. I should love it, if only for the sake of finding out how different I am to the silly little girl I was three years ago."

"You can go, of course, and if canvas palls upon you it would be nice to let Miss Ellis have a night or two on the shore. She has never slept in a tent in her life, and, after all, one of the pleasantest kinds of holiday is to sample a new experience, I fancy." Marion took the letter as she spoke, and began reading it, while a sort of homesick longing for a sight of Gertrude's face came over her, and she turned her head quickly, so that she should not betray to Delia what a little stupid she really was.

It was in that moment of turning her head that the date of the letter caught her attention, and she noticed that it had been somehow delayed.

"Why, it is to-day that they are coming!" she cried.