

September Story

September 1965



“Dawn, how many books do you have open?” Darcy said as she walked up to the family dining room table with her own schoolbooks.

“We are studying dinosaurs right now,” little sister Dawn answered. “Dallan had a ton of books in his room about them with lots of different pictures. It is great having an older brother with an interest in just about everything.”

“He let you borrow them?” Darcy said in an amazed voice. “Maybe he’ll let me look through his books on Pirates.”

“Are you studying pirates?” Dawn asked surprised by the idea.

“Nope. But what better time to look through his collection than when he is in a generous mood. You never know when that information may come in handy.” Darcy finished clearing a corner of the table for her own homework.

“Be right back,” she said dropping her books. Then she was off, looking for Dallan.

“He’s got basketball practice and won’t be back until later. Can I help?” Deanna was their older sister and had started college this month. Her room was a library of stories from all over the world.

“Yes, I am looking for a new idea for a writing assignment about a favorite book.”

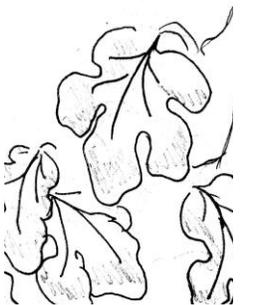
“Go ahead and look through the books on my shelves. Maybe something will inspire you.” Deanna said with that look of excitement she would get when she selected a book for herself. “You never know what adventure you will find.”

Darcy took a step into Deanna’s world of soft rose and forest green. Her room was a totally different space than anywhere else in the house. The books seemed to speak to Darcy, calling out to her with their own stories.

“Ok,” she said to herself. “Where should I begin.”

She ran her fingers over the spines of the books on the first shelf. Looking out the window which faced the front lawn, a squirrel caught her attention and she sat down on Deanna’s bed to watch. Her hand rested on a book laying on the nightstand. Darcy looked down and saw that she had found the perfect book to write about. The book with the pink front cover and the swirls of pink and blue on the back.

(see her story below)



Tomte and the Swede

by Darcy Ann Chase

Once there was a little Swedish elf named Gus. In Sweden they call these little people Tomten as a group. He, by himself, is a Tomte which sounds a bit like ‘tom-tah’. The little man was short and had a long, red sock hat over his light hair. You could barely see his big brown eyes. He wore a blue jacket tied at his middle with a wide black belt. His pants were tan and came just below the knee above his red and white striped socks which were tucked into his red pointy shoes. He was only waist high and could disappear in the blink of an eye. Tomten are best known for their love of animals.

Gus, however, loved to read as well. He would sneak into the Swedish farmhouse and carefully borrow a book from the shelf and sit in the barn for hours fascinated by the stories he read. Then, in the middle of the night, he would reappear at the bookshelf, return the book to its place, and select another. This went on for years and it was talked about by the Swedish farmer with his wife and their ten-year-old son, Sven. The old elf would listen to them talk and smile to himself. He was sure he would never get caught.

The son’s job was to care for the animals. Sven loved to visit with them each day. He would tell them stories about the High Seas and that someday he would be a sailor. One day his mom came home with a surprise. Two white books each with a spiral spine. Neither had a picture on the cover and only empty lined pages on the inside.

“Thank you. But what do I do with these?” the boy asked his mother. She sat down next to Sven and said, “These are for you to write whatever you think of. It could be a happy thought, or just about regular things that happened in your day. Some call it a journal, and others call it a diary. You may call it whatever you would like.”

The boy held the books thoughtfully and thanked his mother again. Then he hurried out to the barn to show his animal friends.

Gus the Tomte was intrigued. A book that you could write in yourself was a new idea for him. He could write his own story and make millions. His eyes grew large as he thought about fame. He could be the best known Tomte of all time! He dared to sneak close to Sven to see these magical books. Sven moved over to talk with his horse who was watching from over her stall nearby and brushed her coat. Gus found the moment to snatch the books and disappeared, just like that.

As Gus was making his getaway, he tripped over a milk can and both books went flying into the evening sky. One book’s cover turned a light blue matching the evening and the other a soft pink matching the sunset. Gus reached out and caught them both causing the

back cover of each book to display swirls of the two colors. Then ‘poof’ the books were gone to reappear in a small far away bookstore. Tomten were honest and giving. This time Gus had stepped over the line by stealing the empty books to keep and write for his own benefit.

The farmer’s son turned when he heard the milk can fall. He called out into the empty space. “Gus, what have you done this time?”

“Wait, how does he know my name? What does it matter now? I am a disgrace,” the Tomte said to himself in his funny nasal voice.

Gus appeared for a few seconds, red in the face and looking down at his feet. And then only his shadow let the boy know he was still there.

Sven looked back to where he had left the books and saw they were missing.

“It’s all right Gus. I didn’t know what to write anyway. I hope they are now with someone who will really enjoy writing in them.” Sven dropped his shoulders and slowly walked back into the house.

The little man couldn’t stand that he had let Sven, a friend of the animals, down. He went in front of the head Tomten and asked forgiveness for his selfishness. It was clear he was truly sorry. He was given two white books with a spiral on each, to give to Sven and told he would have to sing to the animals for the next two weeks.

Gus reached for the new books and bowed to the court. He was willing to serve his sentence, making life a little nicer for the animals of Sven.

“Thank you, Gus,” the boy said the next day as he sat down in his usual place. The white books were sitting in the sunlight right next to him.

“I knew you were a good guy. Why don’t you write in one and I’ll write in the other?” Sven said handing the Tomte one of the white books.

“You never know what adventures we will dream up. Maybe our stories will bring a smile to kids everywhere. That would be gold.”

The little man turned slightly red in the face and quickly replaced it with a wink and a nod. “We could write unbelievable adventures,” he answered eagerly in his unique voice.

We will call ourselves *the Tomte and the Swede*.” Sven said and the Swedish elf agreed.

Gus smiled and began a soft song in his odd, comforting voice that filled the barn with a peaceful air. Sven heard it and added his harmony. The barn radiated with joy.

From then on, the Tomte and the Swede were friends, even when their adventure took them to the lonely island of Far Shores. But that is another story. The End.