

Ric's New Book

By Laura Byrd

(Based on a true story)

*Whenever I am good and kind and help
someone I see, I feel so very happy
(Children's Songbook, 197).*

Ric ran his hands across the gold letters on the front of his new book. His friends crowded closer.

"That's so cool!" Jake said. "I've never seen a red Book of Mormon before."

"It looks like it would fit in your shirt pocket," Jarom added.

"It does," Ric said, slipping it into his pocket and then taking it back out again. Just then the Primary president welcomed everyone to sharing time, so the boys stopped talking. But Ric couldn't help glancing down at his book from time to time.

When Primary was over, Ric stopped by the nursery to pick up his little sister. Dad was already there.

"Have you seen Mom?" Dad asked.

"No, but I hope she's ready to go," Ric said. "I'm hungry!"

Ric's stomach was growling by the time they found Mom, but he smiled when he saw Brother and Sister Bird standing by her. Well, Brother Bird was standing. Sister Bird was sitting in her wheelchair, as always. Mom said Sister Bird had a disease called multiple sclerosis, or MS, which made it hard for her to use her muscles. Sometimes she was in pain, but



she always had a smile for everyone. Brother and Sister Bird were some of Ric's favorite people in the ward.

"Why, hello there, young man," Brother Bird said, shaking Ric's hand. "How was Primary today?"



"If you will extend yourself beyond what is easy to do, you will feel so good inside that kindness will start to become a part of your everyday life."²

Sister Mary N. Cook, first counselor in the Young Women general presidency

"It was awesome. I got to show everyone this." Ric held up his small red book.

"What's that?" asked Sister Bird.

"It's my new Book of Mormon. My grandparents sent it to me," Ric said as he handed it to her.

"I've never seen one of these," said Sister Bird, turning the pocket-sized red book over in her hands. "It's so small and light. I love to read the Book of Mormon, but my hands get so tired holding my scriptures that I have to stop after a few minutes. But I could hold this a long time." She handed it back.

Ric looked at his cool book. Then he looked at Sister Bird.

"Here, Sister Bird. I want you to have this." Ric put the Book of Mormon back in her hands.

"Are you sure?" asked Brother Bird.

"I'm sure," he said.

"Oh, Ric, thank you." Sister Bird's eyes filled with tears. "Reading the scriptures helps me get through days when I'm in pain. Your little book will really help me." She reached out and gave him a big hug.

As they walked to the car, Mom said, "You're awfully quiet. Are you sad you gave your book away?"

"Not really. It was cool, but I have another Book of Mormon at home. Besides, I think that what's inside the book is more important than what's on the outside."

Mom lovingly squeezed his shoulder.

"I just hope Grandma and Grandpa won't be sad that I gave my Book of Mormon away."

"Trust me, Ric, they won't."

Ric had a feeling his mom was right. ♦