

Bullies

and

BY HEATHER KIRBY
(Based on a true story)



Brothers

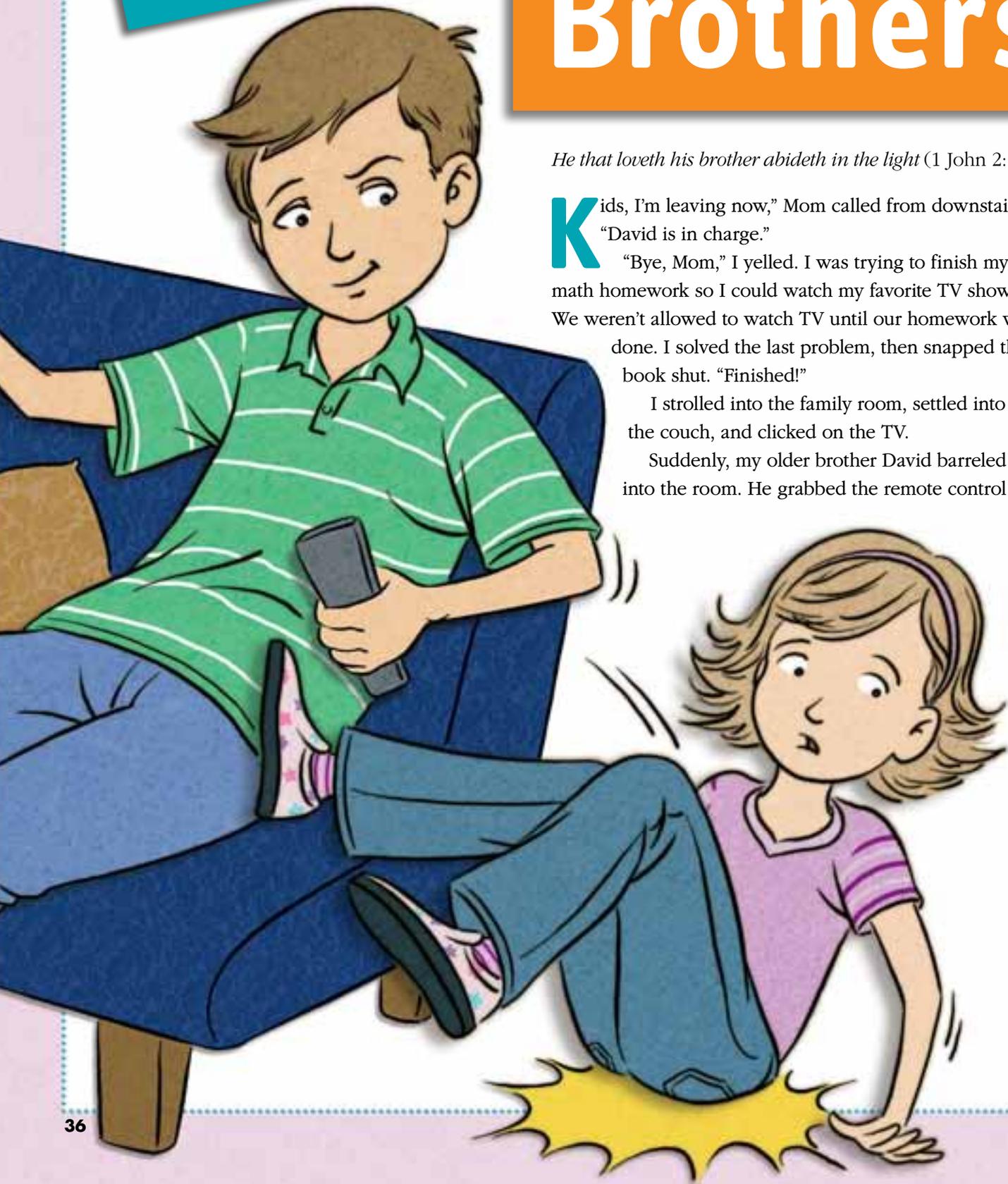
He that loveth his brother abideth in the light (1 John 2:10).

Kids, I'm leaving now," Mom called from downstairs. "David is in charge."

"Bye, Mom," I yelled. I was trying to finish my math homework so I could watch my favorite TV show. We weren't allowed to watch TV until our homework was done. I solved the last problem, then snapped the book shut. "Finished!"

I strolled into the family room, settled into the couch, and clicked on the TV.

Suddenly, my older brother David barreled into the room. He grabbed the remote control



and pushed me off the couch.

“Ow!” I cried as I hit the floor with a thud. “Hey, I was here first!”

“Yeah, but Mom left me in charge. And I say we’re going to watch my favorite show.”

“Fine,” I said. “I have a new book I want to read, anyway.” I walked back to my room. Pulling the book off a shelf, I sat in my special reading chair.

“Heather, go get me something to eat,” David called.

“I’m busy,” I called back, turning a page.

“So am I. This is the best part of the show. Go get me something to eat.”

“Why should I?” I asked. “You can do it yourself.”

“If you don’t I’ll take your book and hide it.”

I sighed. If I got him a snack, maybe he’d stop bothering me. “David is such a bully,” I thought as I grabbed some chips. “Why can’t I have a nice older brother?”

At dinner, I noticed the red plate by my seat at the table, which meant I had done something special.

“Why do I have the red plate?” I asked.

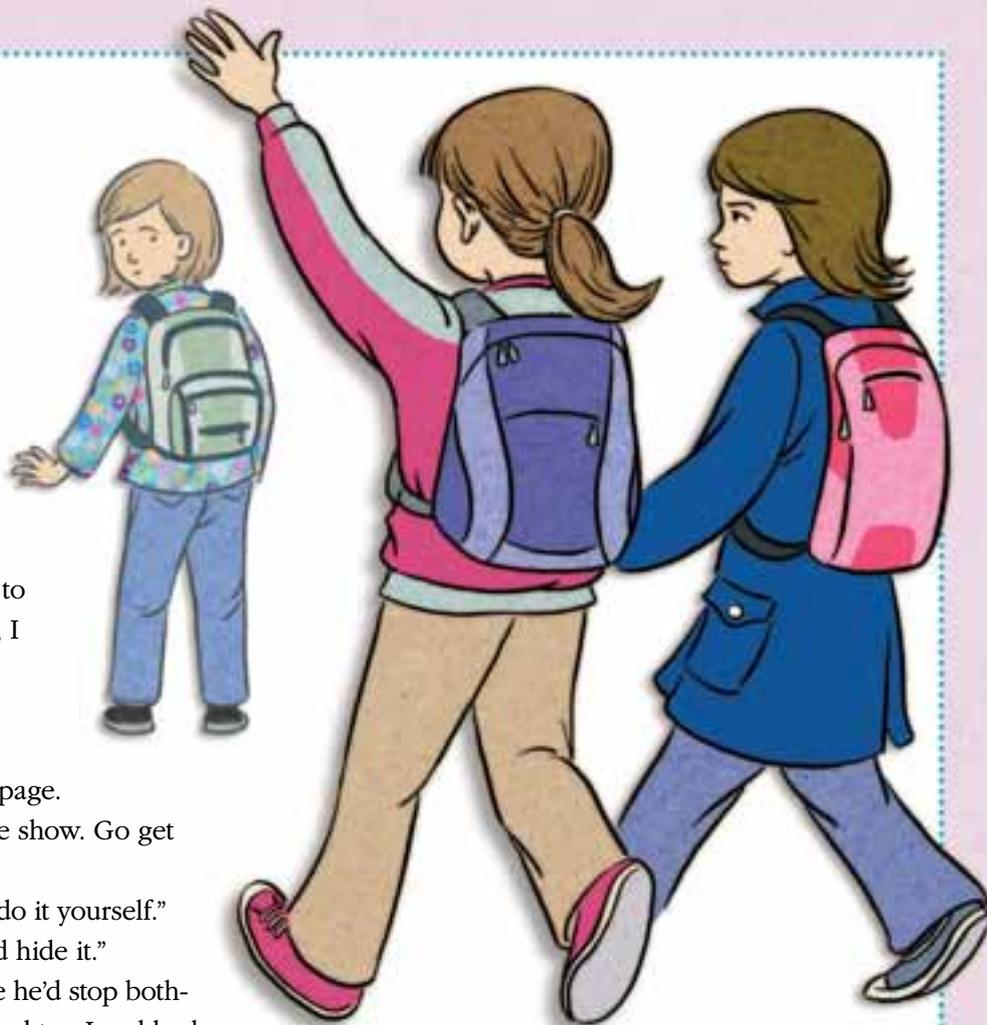
“Your teacher called me today,” Mom said. “Your reading and writing skills are very good, and your teacher wants to challenge you more. So, during your class’s English section, you will go to the fourth-grade class.”

I couldn’t believe it! They were moving me up two whole grades!

“That’s my girl. So smart,” Dad said.

David didn’t say anything. He was quiet during dinner. Was he mad at me?

The next day, I was nervous as I made my way to the fourth-grade class. My teacher had given me directions and a note, then sent me off. As I made my way to the upper elementary classrooms, I felt like I was entering enemy territory. Our playgrounds didn’t even mix—first through third grade were on one side, and



fourth through sixth on the other. I was sure that at any moment someone was going to shout: “Stop! You don’t belong here!”

But the fourth-grade teacher, Mrs. Randall, helped me feel better with her smiling face. She introduced me to the class and pointed me to an empty desk.

I listened carefully to the lesson, and tried not to stand out. When Mrs. Randall dismissed me, I hurried back to the safety of the second grade.

After school, I waited for the bus with the other kids.

“Hey. Hey, you!” someone yelled. I turned around and saw two girls coming toward me. I recognized them from Mrs. Randall’s class.

“Hi, little second grader,” the taller girl said. “My name is Janna, and this is Kylie. So how’d you like class today?” she asked sweetly.

“Oh, it was . . . fine,” I stammered.

Janna made a face. “You must think you’re so smart being in our class. Smarter than us, even.”



I looked down at my feet. “I don’t think that.”

“Good! Because you’re not smart. You’re a freak!”

“Yeah.” Kylie laughed. “And a geek.”

Janna stepped closer. “I don’t like you,” she said, “and I don’t like you in our class.”

“What’s the problem?”

I turned to find my brother David standing beside me.

Janna stepped back. “This little nerd thinks she’s smarter than me.”

“She’s not a nerd. She’s my sister.” David put his hand on my shoulder. “And she hasn’t done anything to you. If you keep being mean to her, I’m going to hear about it.”

Janna looked at my brother. He was taller and wider than she was. “What grade are you in?” she asked.

“Sixth.”

“Oh,” she said. She and Kylie took a few more steps back. “Well, OK. We’ll leave her alone.”

David turned me around and guided me to the bus. Then he went to join his friends.

I got on the bus and sat down, feeling a little dazed. I couldn’t believe it. David had stood up for me! I

knew then that even though we didn’t always get along, David was my brother and he loved me. I suddenly felt very grateful for him.

At dinner that night, David seemed surprised when he noticed the red plate at his seat. “What’s this for?” he asked.

“I put it there,” I said. “It’s for being a great older brother.”

David laughed as I told our parents what had happened. I made David sound like a superhero.

“We’re proud of you for helping your sister,” Dad said.

David smiled. “It’s good to be a hero,” he said.

I grinned at him. “It’s even better to have one as an older brother.” ●

“We often take our families . . . for granted. But in times of danger and need and change, there is no question that what we care about most is our families!”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles³

