



By Melanie Marks
(Based on a true story)

Every man is given a gift by the Spirit of God. To some is given one, and to some is given another, that all may be profited thereby
(D&C 46:11–12).

How is your letter coming along, Ryan?" Sister Woodland asked.

"Not great," I said.

For our Cub Scout activity, we were writing letters to Easton and Aiden. They were brothers who used to come to church, but they had stopped coming for some reason. Their whole family had stopped coming.

"It's been a long time since they've come to church," one of the Cub Scouts said.

I had never seen them because I had just moved into the ward. I felt weird writing them a letter since they didn't know me, and I didn't know them. I had no idea what to say. Besides, I wasn't very good at writing letters.

"Just let them know we'd love to see them at our activities," Sister Woodland said. "Make them feel welcome."

"OK," I muttered. But I didn't

understand how my letter would make a difference. "If they have stopped coming to Scouts and church, an invitation from a total stranger won't help," I thought.

I slumped down in my chair and tried to think

of something to say—*anything* to say.

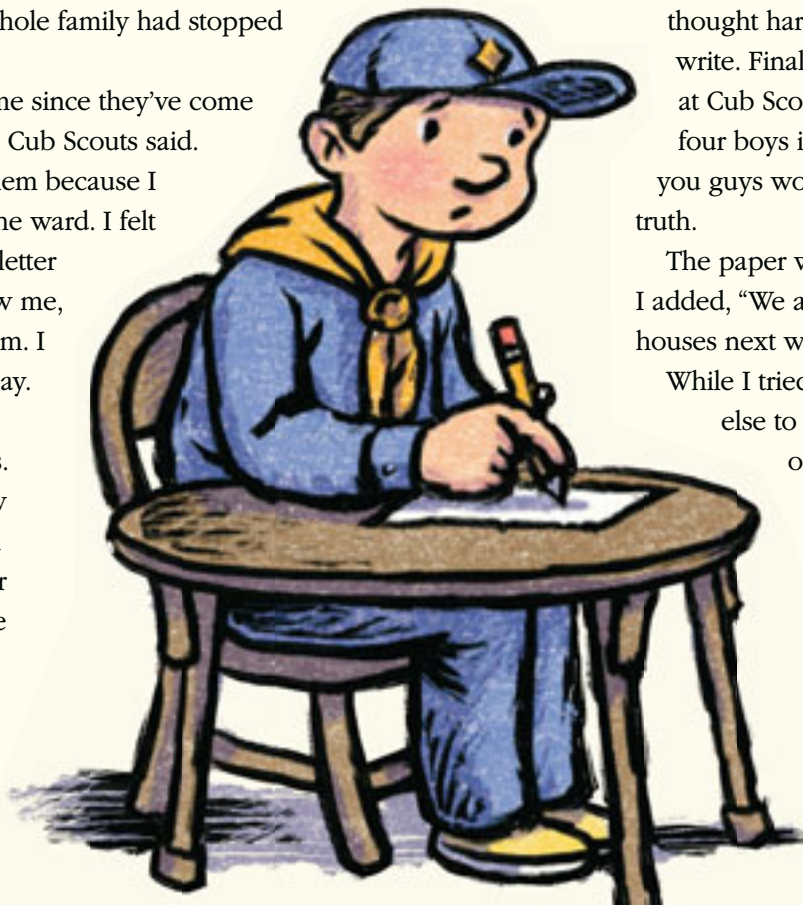
"Hi, I'm Ryan," I wrote. "I'm new."

That didn't seem like a great thing to say, but I couldn't think of anything better, so I left it.

I slumped further down in my chair and thought harder about what I could write. Finally I added, "We have fun at Cub Scouts, but there are only four boys in our den. I really wish you guys would come." It was the truth.

The paper was still almost blank, so I added, "We are going to build birdhouses next week. You should come."

While I tried to think of something else to say, I started drawing on the letter. Though I am not great at writing, I *am* good at drawing. I drew a birdhouse. It looked pretty good. Then I started drawing lots of birds around the





birdhouse. I drew many different kinds of birds until the paper wasn't blank anymore.

I looked at the paper. There was no way that it was going to help Easton and Aiden come to church again. I was a stranger. I wasn't a missionary or an adult. I couldn't get someone to come to church. I was a little embarrassed as I handed the letter to Sister Woodland.

The next week was our activity to build birdhouses. And guess what? Easton and Aiden were there! I was shocked.

"Hey, I really liked your letter," Easton told me. "I like to draw too."

"Yeah," Aiden said, "and I've always wanted to build a birdhouse."

I couldn't believe it. They actually came—because of *our* letters! I became good friends with Easton and Aiden, and they started coming to Scout activities every week. Then they started coming to church too. Sometimes their family came to church with them. Now, years later, they still come to church every week.

So, I guess you really can make a difference in someone's life—even if you are a stranger, even if you are just a kid, and even if you aren't very good at writing letters. ♦

"You may feel that there are others who . . . could fulfill your callings and assignments better than you can, but the Lord gave you your responsibilities for a reason. There may be people and hearts only you can reach and touch."

President Dieter F. Uchtdorf, Second Counselor in the First Presidency

