

BREAD,

BIRTHDAYS,

and the

BROWNS

BY LINDSAY LAW
(Based on a true story)

Every man should love his neighbor (Mosiah 23:15).

The smell of warm bread greeted Aiden as she walked through the door after school. She sat down, eager for a slice of bread with butter.

“Before you eat, will you please take this over to Brother and Sister Brown?” Mom asked, pointing to a small loaf she had just wrapped.

Aiden sighed, grabbed the loaf, and headed out the door. Sometimes she wished her mom would only make bread for her family. She trudged through the backyard and around the corner, slowing down when she saw the Browns’ house.

Brother Brown was in his eighties, but he still took great care of his lawn. Aiden and her brother, Patrick, would often see him mowing the lawn or trimming the hedges and bushes. He always waved when he saw them and usually talked with them over his white picket fence.

But Sister Brown was never outside. She had osteoporosis, which meant that her bones were very fragile and could break easily. She couldn’t walk very well, and it was painful for her to leave the house.

Today, Aiden didn’t want to visit with them. But even though she wanted to go back home for some of Mom’s yummy bread, Aiden tried to be happy as she opened the screen door and rang the doorbell.

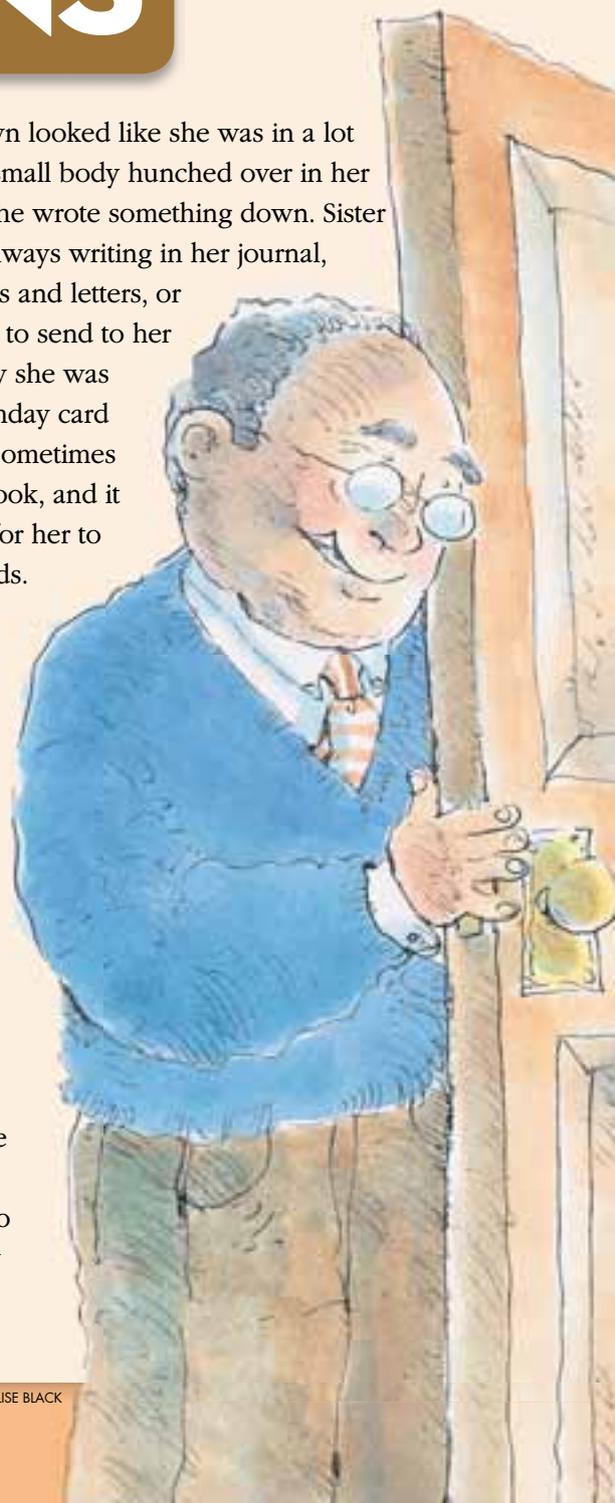
Brother Brown opened the door, and a big smile lit up his face. “Why, hello! Come on in, Aiden!” he said.

Aiden felt a little better already. The Browns were always so nice and so happy to have company. Brother Brown dug into the candy jar and gave her a piece of butterscotch candy as he asked her questions about school.

Sister Brown looked like she was in a lot of pain. Her small body hunched over in her armchair as she wrote something down. Sister Brown was always writing in her journal, writing poems and letters, or making cards to send to her friends. Today she was writing a birthday card very slowly. Sometimes her hands shook, and it was difficult for her to print the words.

“Why do you write so many cards and letters?” Aiden asked.

“It gives me something to do,” Sister Brown said. “I can’t see my friends very often since I can’t leave the house, so I like to write to them to show I care about them.” She



finished writing the card.

Aiden chatted a bit more with Brother and Sister Brown and then walked home. She thought about Sister Brown and how much pain she was in. She felt ashamed about not wanting to visit the Browns. "If Sister Brown can serve others, I can serve her too," Aiden thought.

So whenever Mom made bread or cinnamon rolls, Aiden took some over to the Browns, often with

Patrick or her sister, Emma. She and her family sang for the Browns, especially around Christmas. Dad even recorded Aiden, Patrick, and Emma singing so Sister Brown could listen to it.

A few years after Aiden graduated from Primary, Sister Brown passed away. Aiden and her family attended the funeral.

At the end of the service, the bishop surprised Aiden by asking the members of the congregation to stand up if they had received a card from Sister Brown on their birthday. Nearly every person stood up.

As she looked around at all the people that Sister Brown had remembered on their birthdays, Aiden smiled. She thought that she and her family had been serving Sister Brown, but she was wrong. Sister Brown had served them and so many others each day of her life. ●

