

The Strongest Person



"Be strong and of a good courage"
(Joshua 1:9).

Olivia burst through the door after school. "Mom! I'm supposed to write about the strongest person I know! Who should I write about?"

Mom looked up from her computer. "The strongest person you know, huh? Well, how do you know if someone is strong?"

Olivia flexed her arms. "They have really big muscles!"

"What else?"

Olivia thought for a moment. "Um ... they can lift really heavy things."

"Well, that's a start," Mom said.

"When is your paper due?"

"In two weeks," Olivia said. "I'll keep thinking about it."

Later that night, Olivia watched her little brother, Reese, play with their stepdad, Trevor.

"Can you lift me over your head?" Reese asked.

"Sure!" Trevor swung Reese into his arms and held him up high. "How long do you want to stay up there?"

Reese giggled. "Forever!"

Olivia laughed too.

At first she hadn't been sure about Trevor, after her parents divorced and Mom married Trevor. He was all right, but he wasn't her dad. She had clashed with Trevor over a lot of things, especially when he tried to give her chores. But then she started getting along better with him. He

liked a lot of cool things, like biking and running. And she could see that Trevor really cared about her family.

Reese started flapping his arms. Trevor had been holding him up there for so long that Reese was pretending to be a bird. Suddenly Olivia had an idea. She ran to the kitchen.

"I'm going to write about Trevor!" Olivia said. "He's been getting ready for his half marathon, so he's really strong."

"I think that's great!" Mom said. "Are you going to tell him about it?"



She Knew

By Jane McBride and
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(Based on a true story)



Olivia shook her head. “I’ll show him when it’s all done and graded. I want it to be a surprise.”

After dinner Olivia got out a clean sheet of paper. She wrote, “The Strongest Person I Know” at the top. Over the next two weeks, Olivia wrote a little bit every day. At first, she wrote about how Trevor lifted heavy weights and went on long runs.

Then she started noticing all the things he did for their family, like helping Olivia shop for silly hairbows the night before her school’s “crazy hair day.” Or when Mom got sick and he stayed home from work to take care of the family. That week, Trevor hadn’t been able to train for his half marathon, even though it was only a week

away. He was too busy doing laundry, cooking meals, and helping Mom feel better. But Trevor said he didn’t mind. “Family comes first,” he told Olivia.

Olivia realized that there were many ways to be strong, like doing hard things. She wrote about how being strong meant choosing the right. It meant making sacrifices to help those you love.

On the day of Trevor’s half marathon, the whole family came to cheer him on. Olivia found Trevor stretching before the race and handed him her essay. The teacher had given her an A+!

“I wrote this about you,” she said.

Trevor read it. There were tears in his eyes. “Thank you!” he said. “This means so much to me.”

Olivia grinned. “Good luck,” she said. “We’ll see you at the finish line!”

Mom, Reese, and Olivia watched excitedly as runners made it to the end of the race. When they saw Trevor, they waved and cheered.

Nobody cheered louder than Olivia. ●

The author lives in Colorado, USA.



“The way we choose to see things and respond to others makes all the difference.”

President Thomas S. Monson
(1927–2018)

“Living the Abundant Life,” *Ensign*, Jan. 2012, 4.