

Fishing Buddies

By **Gerry H. Moore**

(Based on a true story)

The cabin wouldn't be the same without Grandpa.

"I will turn their mourning into joy, and will comfort them"
(Jeremiah 31:13).

"I don't want to go to Grandma's cabin," Jacob cried.

"Jacob," Mom said gently, "I know going there will be hard, but we want to do this for Grandma. We've always celebrated your birthday at the cabin."

"But that was before . . . before . . . Grandpa died."

"I know," Mom said. "We're all sad about losing Grandpa, so we need to help each other. We'll get through this together, OK?"

"OK," he said softly.

Jacob had always looked forward to being at the cabin together. He and Grandpa had been fishing buddies. But now Grandpa was gone.

"There's Grandma and Big Red!" Mom said the next day as they pulled into the cabin's driveway. Dad and Mom hopped out of the car to hug and kiss Grandma. Big Red barked and wagged his tail.

Jacob took his time getting out of the car. With dragging feet, he slowly approached Grandma.

"Oh, I'm so glad you came," Grandma

said, hugging him.

"I love you, Grandma," Jacob said softly.

When Jacob walked inside the cabin, he saw a fire crackling in the fireplace. The table was set, and colorful balloons and streamers were everywhere. A big banner over the fireplace read, "Happy Birthday, Jacob!"

Jacob tried to look happy, but memories of Grandpa were everywhere. It just hurt so much that he wasn't here. Jacob bit his lip to keep the tears back.

After dinner Grandma brought in Jacob's birthday cake with 11 twinkling candles. "Make a wish and blow out the



candles,” she said.

Jacob felt a stab of sadness remembering how Grandpa always put one trick candle on his cake. He blew hard. All the candles went out. Then one sputtered and lit up again. Everyone laughed.

“I couldn’t let your birthday pass without playing Grandpa’s silly little trick on you,” Grandma said.

After cake, Grandma gave Jacob a birthday card. “Grandpa wanted me to give this to you.”

Jacob noticed her tears. He took the card. “Could I open it by myself outside?” he asked quietly.

“That would be just fine,” Grandma said.

When Jacob came back inside, his eyes were red, but he smiled and said, “Grandpa said I could have his fishing rod and his good reel.”

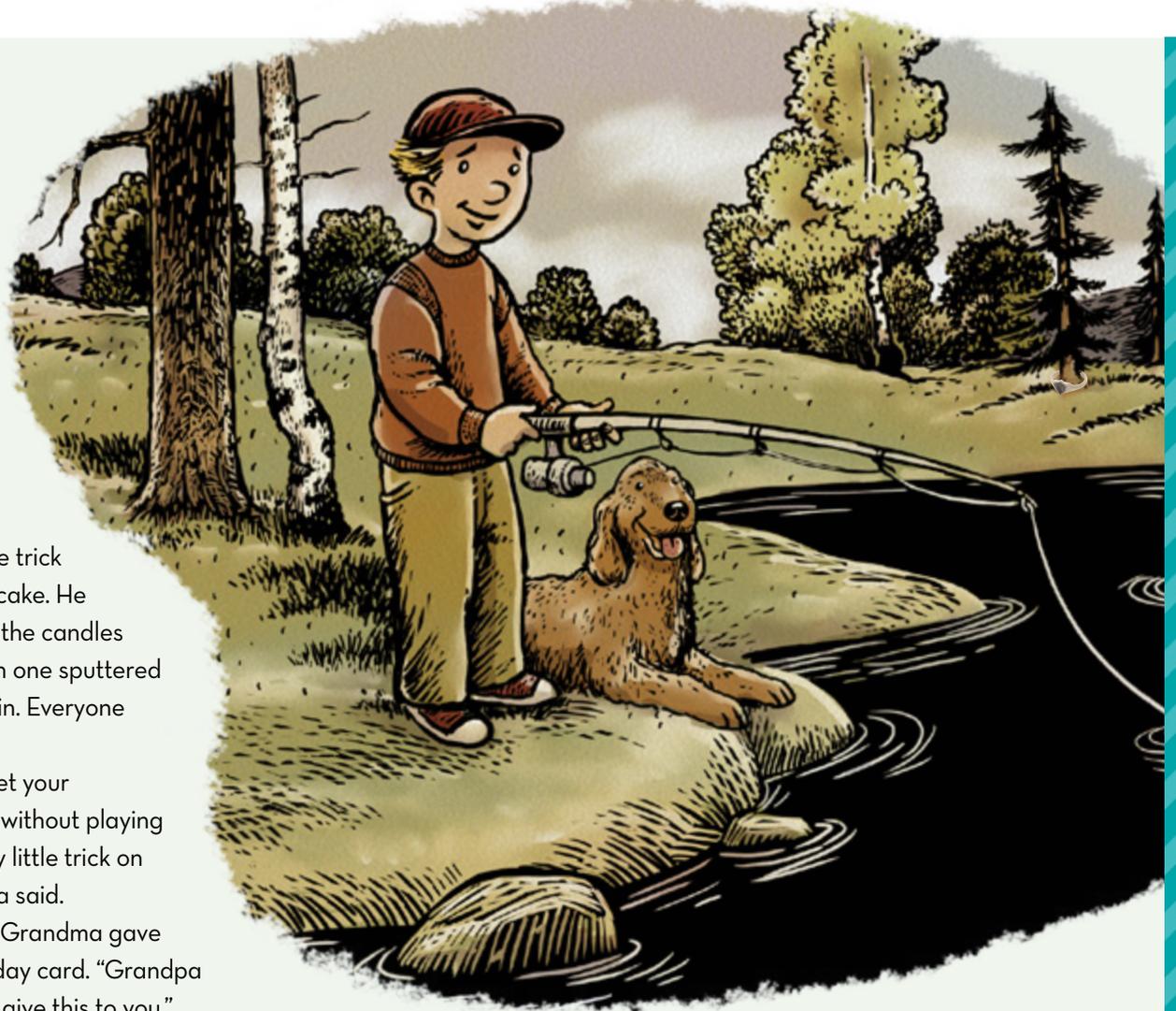
“Yes, I know.” Grandma took the rod off the pole rack and handed it to Jacob. “Grandpa found a new lake last summer. He asked me to take you there for your birthday.”



The next morning Jacob and Grandma loaded their fishing gear in the car. As soon as Big Red saw they were ready to leave, he took one leap and landed in the seat next to Jacob. Grandma’s laughter and happy memories of Grandpa lightened Jacob’s heart as they drove to the lake.

“Hang on,” Grandma said as the car bounced over the road. “We’ll have to hike now,” she said, stopping the car.

After they’d walked for a while, Grandma stopped and pointed ahead. “There’s the lake. You can see it just



through those trees.” She sat down under a big tree with a book. “I’ll stay here and watch. Big Red will go with you, but call out if you need anything.”

Jacob was glad Grandma was letting him go to the shore alone. It made him feel closer to Grandpa.

Two hours later Jacob came trudging back to Grandma with Big Red romping beside him.

“Any luck?” Grandma called.

Jacob frowned and shook his head. But then he pulled his hand out from behind his back. “Ta da!” He held up his line with five beautiful trout dangling from it.

“Native cutthroats!” Grandma said. Those were Grandpa’s favorite trout. “We’ll fry them up for dinner.”

“Grandma, it was great down there,” Jacob said as he sat down beside her. “Next time will you come with me? Maybe we could be fishing buddies.”

“I’d like that,” Grandma said.

Jacob wrapped his arms around Big Red. “I felt like Grandpa was with me.” Tears slowly trickled down his face.

“I cried really hard, but then I felt like I could talk to him.” He looked at Grandma, and she was crying too.

“I didn’t want to come here for my birthday because of Grandpa, but now I’m glad I did.”

Grandma stared up at the trees. “I felt that way too. I cried a lot the first day I was up here.” Grandma put her arm around him. “It’s all right to be sad. Even though we know Grandpa is in a good place, we miss him, don’t we?”

Jacob nodded. They sat quietly for a long time, thinking about Grandpa and enjoying the mountains he had loved.

“Let’s go, shall we?” Grandma finally said. “We’ve got to get ready for our fish fry tonight.”

Jacob reached down to help Grandma up. Big Red raced ahead of them to the car. “This is the happiest but saddest birthday I’ve ever had. Does that make sense?”

“That makes perfectly good sense to me.”

“I’m thankful that Heavenly Father gave me such a good grandpa,” Jacob said.

“Oh, yes. I am too.”

“And you know what? I’m thankful He gave me a wonderful grandma like you.” ♦

The author lives in Colorado, USA.



WHEN SOMEONE WE LOVE DIES

We all grieve (or react to death) in different ways.

- There’s no one way to feel. You might feel angry or lonely or numb. You might not cry or even feel sad right away.
- It might take a long time to not feel so sad. Even after grief fades, it can still come back.
- It’s OK to have fun or laugh or feel happy. It doesn’t mean you don’t love the person who died.
- Even if you trust Heavenly Father and know you’ll see your loved ones again, you can still be sad when they die.
- It’s OK to talk about and remember the person who died, even if it makes you feel sad.

When Lazarus died, Jesus knew He would bring Lazarus back to life. But Jesus still wept (see [John 11:32-36](#)). Jesus cares when we are sad. Because of His Atonement, He understands our grief (see [Alma 7:11-12](#)).

REMEMBERING LOVED ONES

- Write a letter of things you wish you could say to the person who died.
- Make a memory box of keepsakes or photos.
- Talk to someone else who loved the person.
- Draw a picture of the person or of your family now.

If you know someone who is grieving, show you love them, even if you don’t know what to say. Spend time with them, let them talk if they want, and help them in little ways.

