

Getting PUSHY

BY JEAN LEEDALE HOBSON

(Based on a true story)

Look up the following scriptures:

Luke 17:3, Ephesians 4:32,

2 Peter 1:7. Circle the one you think fits the story best.

When their fathers said the pond was frozen solid enough to skate on, the boys began clearing the snow to make a skating rink. On Saturday, they'd be able to play hockey.

By the time Jeremy arrived after his paper route, he

expected to see the boys racing up the ice, maneuvering the puck, aiming at the net. But they were just standing around.

"Sorry I'm late," Jeremy said, skating up to them.

"There's a problem," Bill said, "and your brother is part of it! I told those squirts to beat it, but they're still here!"

Jeremy looked at his little brother, Ryan, and his friends. They were standing on the ice, looking scared.

"What's the problem?" Jeremy asked.

"They think they're going to



skate on the part we cleaned off!"

Bill declared angrily.

Jeremy knew that getting mad wouldn't solve anything. He tried to keep his voice calm as he said, "The pond's big enough for all of us. We're only practicing. We don't have a real arena. They can stay out of our way."

"No way!" Bill snapped. "We cleaned it off, we use it!"

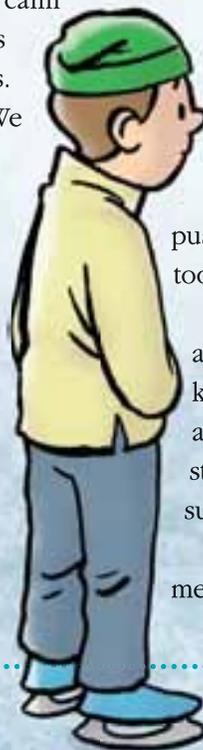
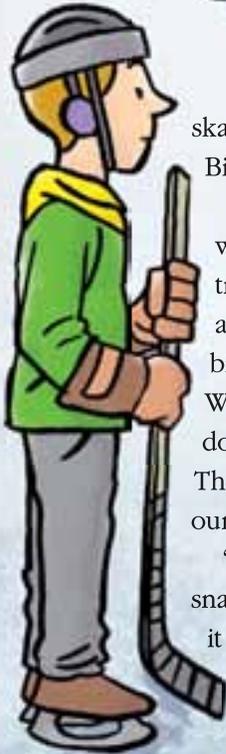
He yelled at the younger boys again, ordering them to leave.

Jeremy could see a confrontation coming.

He had seen Bill in action in the schoolyard too often. Most of the time even the older boys backed off, but pushing smaller boys around was too much.

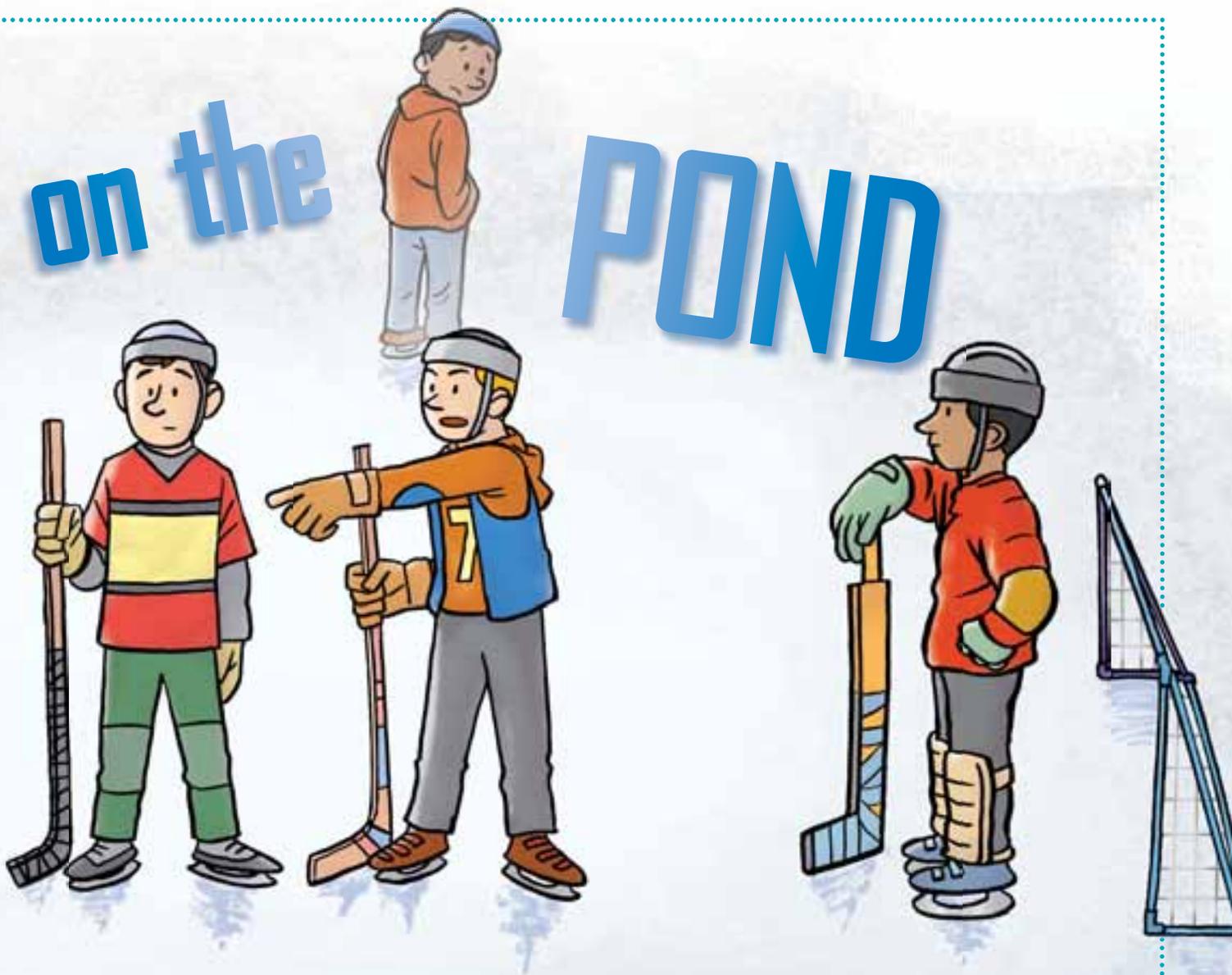
The younger children shuffled around uncomfortably, not knowing what to do. "Skate up and down the edge, boys, and stay away from us, OK?" Jeremy suggested.

"No, they *won't!*" Bill took a menacing step toward them,



on the

POND



but Jeremy hurried between.

He tried to speak quietly. "I came here to skate, not fight. But if my brother and his friends have to go, then I'm going too."

He whirled away to the bank, and his friends followed. "Way to go, Jeremy. Let Bill skate by himself," they all agreed.

Ryan looked

upset. "No, we'll go. We're just playing. You guys are practicing."

"That's not the point," Jeremy said. "Bill can't always push people around. Let's leave him to cool off by himself."

As they left, Jeremy had an idea. "Say, why don't we clean off that corner of the pond? The younger boys can have a small rink of their own."

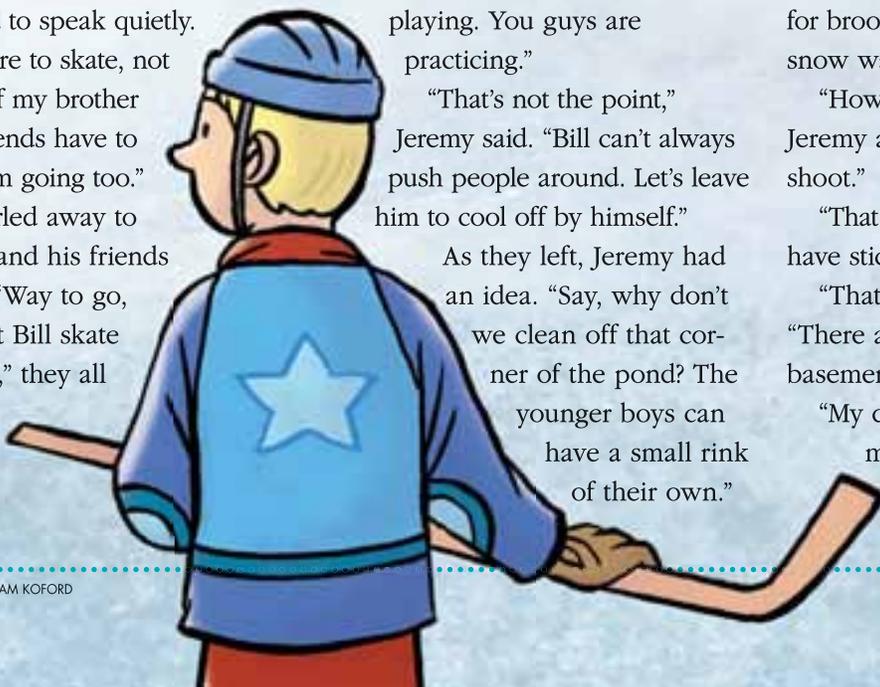
The others agreed and raced home for brooms and shovels. Soon the snow was cleared off the ice.

"How about a hockey school?" Jeremy asked. "We'll teach you to shoot."

"That would be great, but we don't have sticks and pads," Ryan said.

"That's OK," an older boy said. "There are some old sticks in our basement. We could shorten them."

"My dad says they used to wrap magazines around their legs with rubber bands to



“Be kind to one another despite our deepest differences.”

Elder M. Russell Ballard of the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles⁵



make pads,” another said.

“Right! Let’s go, guys!”

After lunch they met at the pond. They fitted the young boys with makeshift pads, hand-me-down gloves, and cut-off sticks. Everybody laughed at the getups.

The younger boys soon learned how to change direction quickly on their skates and use their sticks to keep possession of the puck. Every once in a while, Jeremy glanced back at Bill skating aimlessly on the ice, watching the fun. Then, as Jeremy watched the boys skate, he heard a voice from behind.

“I was a jerk this morning.” Bill stood there, looking embarrassed. “I mean—I’m trying to say I’m sorry, guys. OK with you if I help too?”

The group gave each other questioning looks, then one by one they nodded their approval.

“You have to mean you’re sorry,” Jeremy said. “End of bullying. Period.”

“You’ve got it!” Bill declared.

He skated back across the ice, then returned carrying a load of assorted hockey equipment. “I dug around in our attic while you guys were away, and found this stuff. You’re welcome to it.”

Pulling on proper pads and gloves, the small boys lost their fear of Bill and followed his coaching tips until the sun began to sink and the air grew chilly. But the unexpected friendship between the different age groups was warm enough to melt the ice under their skates.

As they parted, Jeremy called, “Look out, National Hockey League—here’s your future competition!”

“I wish winter would last forever!” Ryan remarked as they

said good-bye, and a chorus of voices chimed in, “Right on!” ●

