

The Ripple Effect



ILLUSTRATION BY ALYSSA TALLENT

By Heidi Poelman

(Based on a true story)

“Ye are laying the foundation of a great work. And out of small things proceedeth that which is great” (D&C 64:33).

Ryan tossed Matt the football and asked, “So, what should we do?”

Matt tossed the ball back and leaned against the bright blue wall.

“I don’t know,” he said.

The boys sat on Ryan’s top bunk, surrounded by his favorite books and magazines. Matt looked around. He picked up a black book with gold letters. “What’s this?”

“Haven’t you seen that before?” Ryan asked. “That’s my Book of Mormon.”

“Oh, yeah!” Matt nodded. “That’s kind of like your Bible, right?”

“Sort of,” Ryan said. “It’s scripture, like the Bible, but it talks about a different group of people. They lived in the Americas when Jesus was alive. And He visited them too.”

“Cool,” said Matt, flipping through it.

“I actually have an extra copy,” said Ryan. “Do you want to take it home?”

“Sure, why not?”

The boys walked downstairs to the bookshelf. Ryan found the copy and handed it to Matt.

“Thanks! I can check it out when I get home,” said Matt.

“Wanna go jump on the trampoline?” Ryan asked.

“Definitely!”

The boys raced outside and kicked off their shoes. They climbed on the trampoline and bounced until it was time for Matt to go home. On his way out, he picked up his new book and said goodbye.

Later that night, as Ryan was reading scriptures before bed, Mom came in to say good night.

“Guess what, Mom?” said Ryan. “I gave Matt a Book of Mormon today.”



My teacher asked me to come and talk about my church in school, and I brought in my scriptures. My class asked me questions about what I believe. Then I gave my teacher the Book of Mormon. She said she would read it.

Chloe D., age 11, Somerset, England

“Really?” said Mom, sitting on the bed. “That’s great! Do you think he’ll read it?”

“I don’t know,” said Ryan. “He might just put it on his dresser and forget about it.”

Mom nodded. “That might happen, but you never know. Sometimes doing one little thing can have a ripple effect, like when you throw a rock in a lake. The ripples from one small rock can get surprisingly big.”

Ryan remembered throwing rocks into Silver Lake last month and watching the ripples grow bigger and bigger.

“Did you know that on Dad’s mission in Japan, every person he baptized told him that another Church member or missionary had talked to them about the Church before?” Mom said. “Even though they didn’t get baptized the first time they heard about the Church, they remembered the people who had talked to them, and it helped them choose baptism when they were ready.”

Ryan wondered if Matt remembered the times Ryan had invited him to church. Matt had come twice, but he was usually busy doing other things with his family on Sundays.

“I hope Matt at least opens it,” Ryan said. “Maybe not now, but someday.”

Mom stood up to leave. “Remember, you can’t always see the impact right away, but little actions make a big difference.”

The next day before school, Ryan found Matt. “So did you check out the book?”

Matt nodded. “I read a couple of pages,” he said. “But the funny thing is, my older brother Sam found it. And he read the whole first chapter.”

“Really?” said Ryan. “Cool!”

The bell rang to go inside. As Ryan walked to class, he smiled. *I guess I just saw my first ripple.* ♦

The author lives in Utah, USA.