

BY KATHY ELLIOTT ZEYER

(Based on a true story)

Ye have entered into a covenant with [the Lord], that ye will . . . keep his commandments, that he may pour out his Spirit . . . upon you (Mosiah 18:10).

How many more boards do you think we need?" Jordan* asked as he and Derek huffed and puffed up the driveway to Ben's backyard.

"Oh, maybe one more load," Derek said. "My dad says we can use all the scrap wood we need from the pile in our backyard."

The boys were hauling wood in Derek's wagon for the treehouse they were building in Ben's oak tree. When it was finished, it would be their clubhouse.

During the summer, the boys had formed a club. The treehouse would make their club extra special.

Jordan and Derek dumped their load on the pile of boards. Jordan called up to the tree, "How's it coming?"

"Pretty good," Brandon answered. "The floor is a little crooked, but we've nailed it in tight. We'll start on the walls next. Send up a couple of really straight boards."

All week long they worked on the treehouse, and even when it got really hot outside, they didn't mind. Ben's mom sent out frozen treats, and the four boys sat in the tree, eating the treats and talking about how fun their treehouse would be when it was finished.

Finally the treehouse was ready. It was getting close to dinnertime, so they all climbed on their bikes to go home. Derek yelled over his shoulder, "Remember, Jordan, ten o'clock tomorrow—our first meeting in the treehouse!"

* All names have been changed.

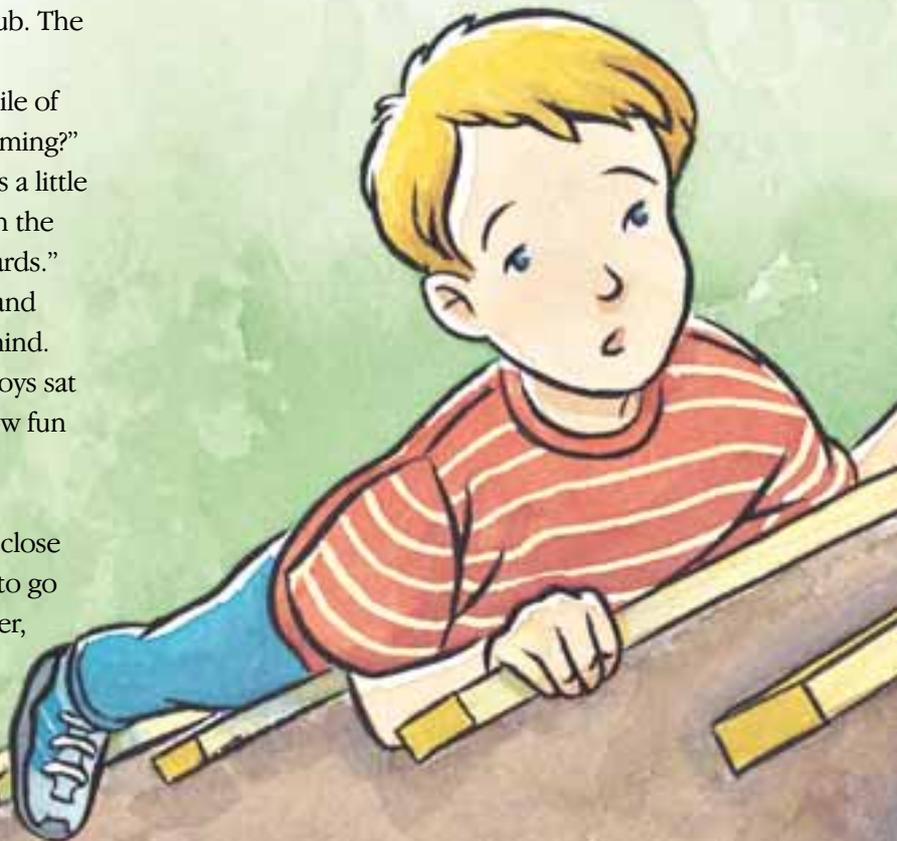
"I'll be there!" Jordan hollered back.

The next morning, Jordan wolfed down his scrambled eggs and toast, then hurried through his chores. "May I go now, Mom? We're having our first club meeting in the treehouse."

"Sure, Jordan. Just be back at noon."

Jordan hopped on his bike and headed to Ben's house. He could tell by the bikes in the driveway that his friends were already there. As Jordan climbed the wooden planks nailed to the tree trunk, Derek popped his head out of the treehouse door.

"Stop right there, Jordan," he said. "You have to give the password first."



“Huh? We’ve never had a password.”

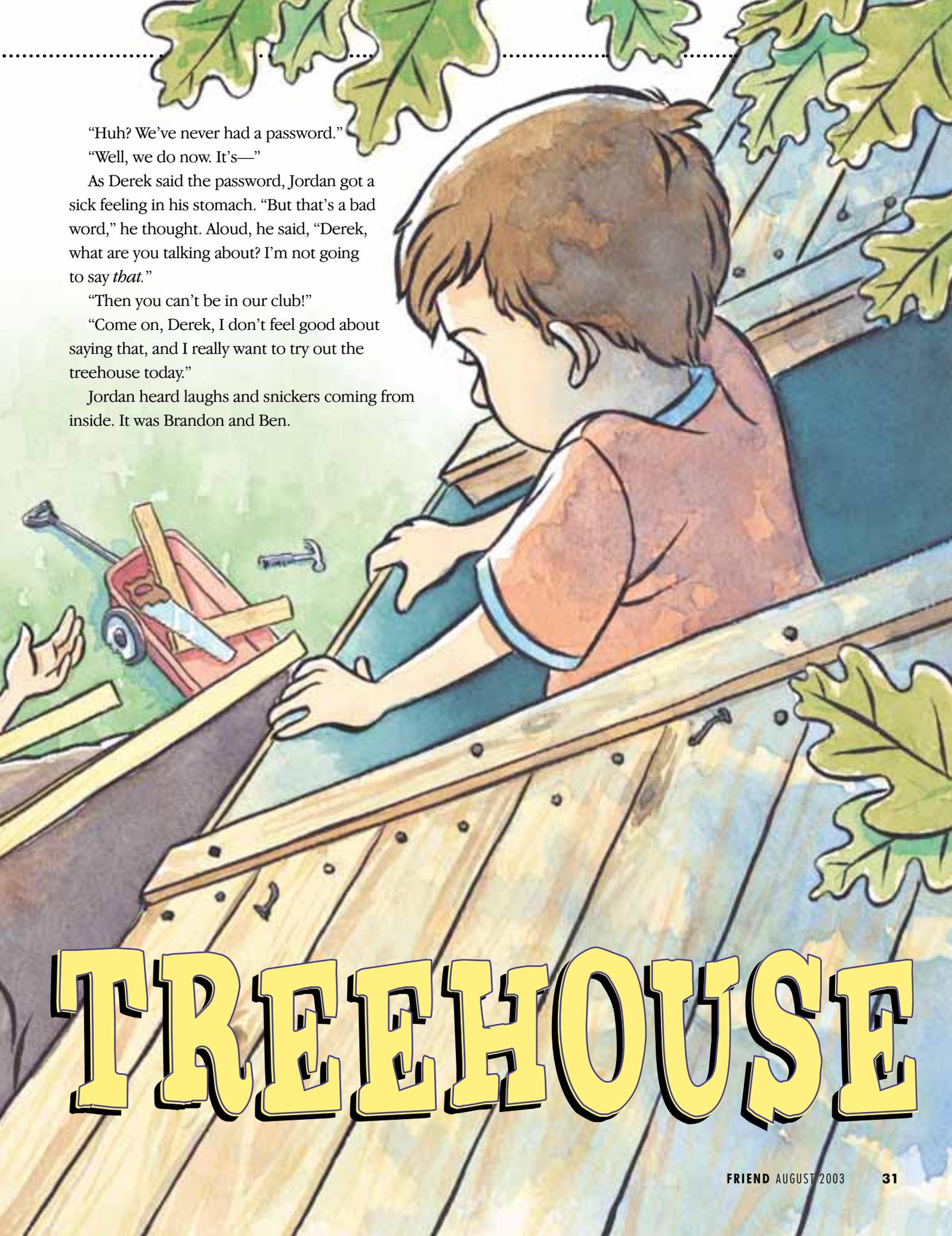
“Well, we do now. It’s—”

As Derek said the password, Jordan got a sick feeling in his stomach. “But that’s a bad word,” he thought. Aloud, he said, “Derek, what are you talking about? I’m not going to say *that*.”

“Then you can’t be in our club!”

“Come on, Derek, I don’t feel good about saying that, and I really want to try out the treehouse today.”

Jordan heard laughs and snickers coming from inside. It was Brandon and Ben.

A colorful illustration of a young boy with brown hair, wearing a blue shirt and an orange vest, working on a wooden treehouse. He is leaning over a wooden beam, holding a long wooden plank. To his left, a red toolbox is open, containing a hammer, a saw, and other tools. A hand is visible on the left side of the frame, reaching towards the toolbox. The background shows green leaves and a blue sky. The title 'TREEHOUSE' is written in large, bold, yellow letters with a black outline at the bottom of the page.

TREEHOUSE



“Jordan’s chicken!”

“Come on, Jordan—we *all* said it.”

Jordan was quiet for a minute. Then he squared his shoulders and said, “I guess I can’t be in the club, then. I won’t say that.” He climbed down the steps, got on his bike, and slowly rode home.

When he came in the back door, Mom said, “Hi, buddy. You’re home early.”

“I guess I didn’t feel much like playing today.” His lip quivered just a bit.

“What’s wrong, honey?”

Jordan hesitated, then blurted out, “The treehouse is finished, but the others say unless I say the password, I can’t be in the club.”

“Well, what’s the password?” Mom asked.

“I can’t tell you. It’s not a nice word.”

“I see.”

Mom walked over to the refrigerator, poured him a glass of chocolate milk, and sat down at the table. She was quiet for a minute, and then said, “Jordan, do you know the story of Abinadi and King Noah?”

“Yes, Sister Nielsen told us that one in Primary.”

“Well, when Abinadi was brought before King Noah and tried to teach the king and his priests about Jesus Christ, Abinadi told them to repent. Do you remember what King Noah thought about that?”

“Didn’t he tell Abinadi that if he didn’t take it all back and deny Jesus Christ, they would kill him?”

“That’s right. And what did Abinadi do?”

“He wouldn’t say it, because he knew it was wrong.”

“Well, isn’t that like what you did today?”

Jordan was puzzled. “I don’t get it, Mom. What does that have to do with my club?”



“Well, Abinadi wouldn’t say something he knew was wrong. He stood up for what was right, and so did you.”

“I guess you’re right, Mom.” He took another gulp of chocolate milk. “But even though being kicked out of the club isn’t anywhere near as bad as getting burned to death, choosing the right can be hard sometimes.”

Mom smiled. “That’s true. But don’t you feel better for making the right choice?”

“Yes, I do. You’re right, Mom. Thanks.”

Just then the doorbell rang. It was Brandon. “Jordan,” he said, his head down a little, “I’m sorry. We never should have had that crummy password. I wish I could have been brave like you. Can we still be friends?”

“Sure, Brandon! What do you say we go over to the park and shoot some baskets?”

“OK! I’ll go home and grab my ball!”

Jordan smiled as they rode their bikes to the park. “Mom was right,” he thought. “It feels lots better to choose the right!” ●



“Some, unfortunately, choose the wrong. But many, so many, choose the right, including so very many of our choice young men and young women. . . . May they be blessed as they pursue lives of virtue, of learning, of growing with faith . . . , all

the time remaining ‘True to the faith that [their] parents have cherished, True to the truth for which martyrs have perished’ (*Hymns*, no. 254).”

President Gordon B. Hinckley
From an April 1995 general conference address.