

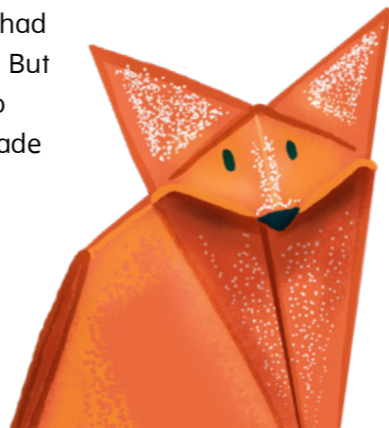


By Jane McBride
(Based on a true story)

This story happened in the USA.

Ryan closed the last envelope and grinned. His birthday was almost here, and he couldn't wait to invite his friends to his party! Mom had helped him make invitations with rocket ships and stars. He was sure it would be the best birthday ever.

The first friend Ryan wanted to invite was Chad. Chad was really nice, and Ryan always had fun with him. Sometimes Chad stumbled over his words, and he wasn't very good at sports. But Ryan didn't mind. Chad was good at other things. He liked to make tiny origami animals by folding paper. One time he made Ryan a little bear. Ryan kept it on the dresser in his room.



Ryan walked to Chad's house and gave him an invitation. "It's for my birthday party on Saturday," he said. "I hope you can come!"

Chad smiled big. "Thank you. I'll b-be there."

Before Ryan left, Chad showed him his new origami. He had deer, chipmunks, squirrels, and owls—a whole forest of tiny paper animals. It was so cool!

Next, Ryan found Ty and Braden at Ty's house. He gave them each an invitation.

"Who else is coming?" Ty asked.

"I'm inviting Alex, Matt, Jacob, and Chad."

"Ugh," Braden said. "Why are you inviting Chad? He's weird."

Ryan froze. "Because he's my friend."

"Well, he's not *our* friend," Ty said. "If Chad's coming, I'm not."

"Me neither," Braden said.

Ryan walked back home. He didn't know what to do. He wanted Ty and Braden to come to his party, but he also wanted Chad to come.

When he got home, he told Mom what happened.

"I'm sorry they feel that way," Mom said. "It sounds like they haven't given themselves a chance to get to know Chad. What do you think you should do?"

Ryan was quiet for a minute. Mom and Dad had taught him that when he needed help, the Holy Ghost could guide him. They said it was like a quiet voice you could feel in your heart.

Ryan said a silent prayer. *Heavenly Father, what should I do?*

When he thought about Ty and Braden, he felt nervous and a little sad. But when he thought about inviting Chad, he felt calm and happy. He knew the Holy Ghost was telling him that inviting Chad was a good choice.

On Saturday, Ryan helped Dad set up games to play in the backyard. Mom set out Ryan's favorite snacks, popcorn and pretzels. One by one, Ryan's friends arrived.

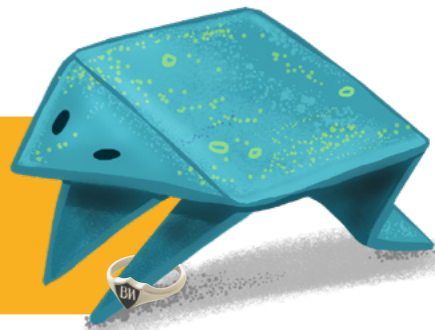
Ty and Braden didn't come. But Ryan had lots of fun with his other friends. Chad even showed them how to make origami. They all went home with their own paper animal.

It really was the best birthday ever! Ryan felt happy and grateful.

Ryan gave Chad a high-five. "Thanks for coming!" he said. "I'm glad we're friends."

Chad smiled back. "Me too." ●

How did the Holy Ghost help Ryan?



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