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Giant's Strength

Written for The Western Home Monthly
By Theodora Horton

"It's my ball," said Roland.
"No, it's mine," said Lionel.
"I tell you that's my ball," said Roland
again, and if you don't give it to me
I'll make you."

Roland was nine years old, and so very
much bigger and stronger than Lionel,
and Lionel knew quite well he had no
chance if it came to a struggle, so he
took to his heels and ran off. Roland
after him, covering as much ground in
one of his long strides as Lionel did in
three. Lionel looked back over his
shoulder and saw that Roland was
catching him up, so he made for the fowl
house and running in slammed the door
in Roland's face.

The day before Auntie had come to
pay them a visit, and had brought each
of the boys a ball. Roland was quite
sure that the one Lionel had been playing
with was his, and he made up his mind
to get it. He began banging at the fowl
house door and pushing it with all his
might, but inside Lionel had his foot
against it. Roland grew very angry;
he put his shoulder against the door and
pushed harder than ever. Lionel sud-
denly moved away and the door opening
unexpectedly, Roland went in far quicker
than he meant to and fell sprawling on the
floor. Lionel seized the opportunity
to make his escape with the ball, and sets
off for the house as fast as his short legs
could carry him. Roland now thoroughly
angry picked himself up and again gave
chase. This time he caught Lionel up
before he was half way to the house.
He took him roughly by the shoulders
and shook him. "You mean little beast,"
he said, "to take my ball, give it to me
at once."

"It's mine," panted Lionel, struggling
to free himself.

"I'll just show you who's it is," said
Roland, and he picked up the struggling
Lionel bodily and carried him kicking
to the fowl house. He laid him on his

back on the floor, and took the ball from
him saying, "Now you can just stay
there for a bit and see how you like it."
He went out and taking a piece of string
from his pocket he tied the door securely
and then strode off stuffing the ball in his
pocket. He went down the street to
borrow a book one of his schoolmates had
promised to lend him, and it was half
an hour before he came back. As he
went into the house he saw the other
ball lying under the table and picked it up.
As he looked at it he saw R he had printed
on it that morning. Then it had been
Lionel's ball after all! Now that he was
less angry he began to feel uncomfortable
when he thought of his little brother
shut up in the fowl house. He would go
at once and let him out. When he
arrived at the door of the fowl house he
took out his knife and cut the strong then
he pushed open the door and looked in.
There was no sign of Lionel, the place
was empty, but he noticed that the little
window high up in the wall had been
pushed open. But surely Lionel had
never tried to get out there, it was too
high from the ground. Yes, he must have
climbed on the roosting poles, and so
escaped, but where was he? Roland
went out and called "Lionel, Lionel,"
but there was no answer. Then he
walked round to the back of the fowl
house to see if he was hiding, and there
lying on the ground under the window
was Lionel, his face very white, and the
blood trickling down from a cut on his
forehead.

"Lionel, Lionel," said the terrified
Roland. "What's the matter?" but Lionel
did not answer, and Roland picking him
up carried him to the house. Mother
saw him coming and ran to meet him.
They laid Lionel on the couch and mother
bathed his forehead with water. Presently
he opened his eyes and sat up, and seeing
Roland standing by he said with a little
sob, "It was my ball."

Roland said nothing, but he took the
ball out of his pocket and handed it to
Lionel. He was feeling very sorry and
thoroughly ashamed of himself. Mother
found that the cut was not very deep,
and after she had put some plaster on it
Lionel felt much better. Mother, of
course, wanted to know how he came to be
shut up in the fowl house, and when
Roland had told her the whole story she
looked grave and sorry.

"I am very proud of my tall strong
son," she said, "but I shall not be proud
of him if he uses his strength in this way.
You have heard of the great Shakespeare
haven't you, Roland? He once wrote:

"Oh it is excellent
To have a giant's strength, but it is
tyrannous to use it like a giant."

Always let your strength be on the
side of right, and to help those that are
weaker than yourself, and then you may
be justly glad and proud of it.

The sweetest bird builds near the
ground,
The loveliest flowers spring low,
And we must stoop for happiness
If we its worth would know.

ON THINKING GLAD
Never mind a change of scene—
Try a change of thinking;
What if things seem sordid, mean,
What's the use of blinking?
Life's not always storm and cloud,
Somewhere stars are shining,
Try to think your joys out loud,
Silence all repining.

By degrees, by thinking light,
Thinking glad and sweetly,
You'll escape the stress of night,
Worry gone completely.
Get the habit looking for
Sunbeams pirouetting,
Tapping gayly at your door—
Surest cure for fretting.

Needn't fool yourself at all,
For there's no denying
E'en above a prison wall
Song-birds are a-flying;
Wherefore hearken to the song,
Never mind the prison,
And you'll find your soul ere long
Unto Freedom risen.
—John Kendrick Bangs.

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