

## READING TIME FOR YOUNG FOLKS

### THE YOUNGER BROTHER

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TEN-YEAR-OLD TONY was a schoolboy in the fifth grade. According to his teacher, he was one of the brightest pupils in the class. He always had his lessons well prepared, and received good grades.

He was a topnotch pupil because he had good habits. He liked his books, studied his lessons carefully, and listened attentively to his teacher's explanations. He was never late to school, and did not like to be absent. He was not absent unless he was sick.

Tony was obedient and polite. He had good manners, and he used them; he had, also, a pleasing personality and a pleasant disposition. In fact, the youngster seemed to have all the good traits of character which make a boy become a good man.

As he was alert in class, so he was full of life on the playground. He liked very much to play ball and to take part in other games. He could run a race, or throw a ball, or jump farther and higher than any other boy of his age in school.

To keep his body strong and healthy, he played outdoors where he could breathe fresh air and enjoy the health-

giving sunshine. And so he had a robust body. He was a brave boy, too—nothing ever frightened him.

Tony liked to do practical things. He was handy with tools, and liked to work with discarded parts of old clocks and watches. Once he made a toy boat which was propelled by the mechanism of an old alarm clock.

Tony had a big brother named Edil-

berto, but Tony always called him Manoy. Tony was a *Bicolano*, and so called his brother Manoy, but if he had been a *Tagalog* boy, he would have used the name Kuyang. Tony idolized his elder brother, and the two never quarreled.

Edilberto was an auto mechanic. He

had built a little shop not very far from their home. In it he had installed benches, vices, lathes, and other necessary equipment. Edilberto worked in his shop alone, but occasionally, after school had been dismissed, Tony would go to his brother's shop to help Manoy in any way possible.

And now we come to the events of this story.



"Hands up, or I'll shoot!"

One day Edilberto, as usual, was out working in his shop. He was busy examining the engine of an auto which had been brought in for repairs. He did not notice that a dangerous looking man had entered the shop, and was stealthily walking up behind him.

Quietly the intruder advanced toward Edilberto whose back was toward him. The man evidently intended to commit a robbery. Picking up an auto wrench, he moved toward his victim and was within a few feet of him when Edilberto turned around.

Quick as a flash the desperado struck Edilberto on the head with the iron wrench. Stunned and bleeding, the young man fell to the floor.

Just at this moment the younger brother appeared on the scene. He saw what had happened, and knew that he must help Manoy. Quickly, but quietly, he ran to the house with the idea of calling the police by telephone. He had forgotten for the moment that the telephone had been taken out only the day before. Tony glanced around. Evidently nobody was at home. What could he do? He wanted to prevent the escape of his brother's assailant, but he was only a ten-year-old boy, and of course was no match physically for the robber.

But Tony had a mind which worked fast, and he was courageous, thanks to his good habits and athletic life outdoors. He quickly ran to his father's desk, opened a drawer, and took out his father's revolver. Tony had often seen his father shoot at a target, so the boy was sure he knew how to use the gun.

Revolver in hand, Tony started back to his brother's workshop. Through the window he saw the robber looking in the cash register in Edilberto's tiny office.

Advancing to the door of the office, Tony pointed the gun at the man.

Summoning all his courage, the boy shouted, "Hands up, or I'll shoot!" The robber turned, and there stood brave little Tony with gun in hand pointed straight at him. Up went his hands.

"Help! Help! A thief! Help!" shouted Tony as loud as he could. Two men, not so very far away, heard the cry. "Help! Help! Thieves! Murder! Help!"

The two men rushed toward the direction of the cries. They could hardly believe their eyes when they saw a ten-year-old boy with a revolver pointed at a desperate looking man who stood with hands up.

The men soon overpowered the thief and tied him with a piece of rope. Then one of the men stood guard while the other went for a policeman. Tony ran to his beloved Manoy.

Edilberto was just regaining consciousness, although he was still dazed. The police soon arrived, and in a short time the thief was locked up in prison.

Edilberto's wound was not serious, and in a few days he was back at his work. After that Tony, the younger brother, was the hero of the whole town.

"Son, you were a brave boy," said Tony's father, soon after the event.

"Thanks, daddy," said the boy.

"Do you know, Tony," continued his father, "that revolver with which you captured the robber was not loaded? For the sake of safety, I never leave it in the house loaded. When you pointed it at the thief, it was empty—not a bullet was in it. But I am glad the thief didn't know that."

"So am I," said Manoy's younger brother.