

*"Where is your fort, anyway? We've been walking forever. Are you sure we're not lost?" asked Andy.*

*"We're not lost," replied Mark. "We just left my house five minutes ago!"*

*"I can't see your house from here. We're deep in the forest. I don't understand how you know where we're going," complained Andy.*

*"I've lived here all my life. I've walked in these woods almost every day. My house is just back down the path. Don't*

*worry, Andy. We're almost there," explained Mark.*

*The path went deep into the woods and seemed well worn.*

*Mark did know the way, and soon the boys were standing at the foot of an enormous oak tree.*

*"Wow!" exclaimed Andy. "I didn't know the tree house was up so high! What if we fall down?"*

*"The ladder is very sturdy," said Mark. "My dad climbs it, and it holds him. We're only half his size, so we won't fall.*

*It's*

*really neat up there. Come on and follow me up the ladder."*

*Mark climbed the ladder easily and was soon at the top.*

*He turned around to see Andy slowly climbing up behind him.*

*Andy stopped to look down, closed his eyes, and started to climb again. Finally, Andy reached the top.*

*Andy stood up and looked around the tree house.*

*"Cool!" Andy exclaimed. "There's lots of room up here! We have plenty of space to read our comic books!" He didn't know*

*why he was so nervous to visit the fort in the first place.*