



Our hunger was moving us toward a bad decision.

Driven to

By Danny Spencer

“Thanks for the ride!” I yelled, waving at the red car as it pulled out of the driveway. I was excited to be hanging out with two new friends, Steve and Mark. It had taken a while to persuade Steve’s older brother to give the three of us a ride to the town’s music store, but we’d had a lot of fun there. We had just come back to Mark’s house.

“Is anyone else as hungry as I am?” I heard Steve ask. I realized then that my stomach was growling. I hadn’t noticed with all the fun I was having.

“Do you guys have any money? Maybe we could get a pizza,” suggested Mark. We went inside and pooled our money on Mark’s kitchen table. We found we had just enough for a small pizza but not enough to have it delivered.

“Hey, Mark, maybe your parents can give us a ride,” Steve said.

“No, they just left to see a movie,” Mark said with a frown.

I tried to make a joke, “Too bad none of us has a driver’s license. Then we could go down and get the pizza ourselves.”

Steve and Mark looked at each other. “I have my learner’s permit,” Mark said slowly. “My parents say I’m a pretty good driver, even though I’m only 15.”

“Didn’t your parents take the car?” Steve asked.

Mark answered, “They took my dad’s car, but they left my mom’s.”

We stood still for a moment, looking at

each other. I began to feel nervous.

“Let’s just go outside and sit in the car,” Steve suggested. “We could just see how we feel.”

Mark looked at me. “What do you think, Danny?”

I shrugged. I really didn’t think that we should do it, but I also wanted my new friends to think I was cool.

“Let’s go,” said Mark, and he led the way through his back door and into the garage. Mark climbed into the driver’s seat, and Steve sat in the passenger seat next to him. Hesitantly, I entered the car, sat in the back seat, and shut the door behind me.

It had started out as a joke, but now I felt terrible. I imagined what my parents would think if they knew I was going along with this. What if we got caught? I would feel awful. I knew the Holy Ghost was telling me this was wrong. Then a thought hit me. My friends weren’t bad people. They were probably having the same feelings I was having.

Mark put the key in the ignition, and the engine roared to life. I couldn’t take it any more. “Guys, we really shouldn’t be doing this,” I said quietly. Mark and Steve both looked back at me. I felt myself blush. They were going to make fun of me. I just knew it.

“Yeah, you’re right,” Steve agreed, nodding. “What would our parents think? What would our teachers quorum leaders think?”

Mark also nodded and took the key out of the ignition. The growl of the engine died, and relief came flooding into me. “Sorry,

CHOOSE

A stylized illustration of a young man with short brown hair and blue eyes, wearing a yellow shirt, sitting in the driver's seat of a car. He is looking forward with a slightly surprised or thoughtful expression. The car's interior, including the steering wheel and dashboard, is visible. The background is a soft, warm glow, suggesting a sunset or sunrise. The overall style is painterly and expressive.

guys. I'm just hungry," Mark said. He then looked up and smiled. "Hey, I have a bag of chips and half a loaf of bread. Why don't we make sandwiches?"

"That sounds great!" I said, grinning.

We climbed out of the car and headed toward the house, laughing and joking again. I knew then that all three of us were glad about the decision we had made.

I don't know what would have happened if we had taken the car. Maybe we would have been caught, maybe we wouldn't have. But I know that the choice we made was right. **NE**