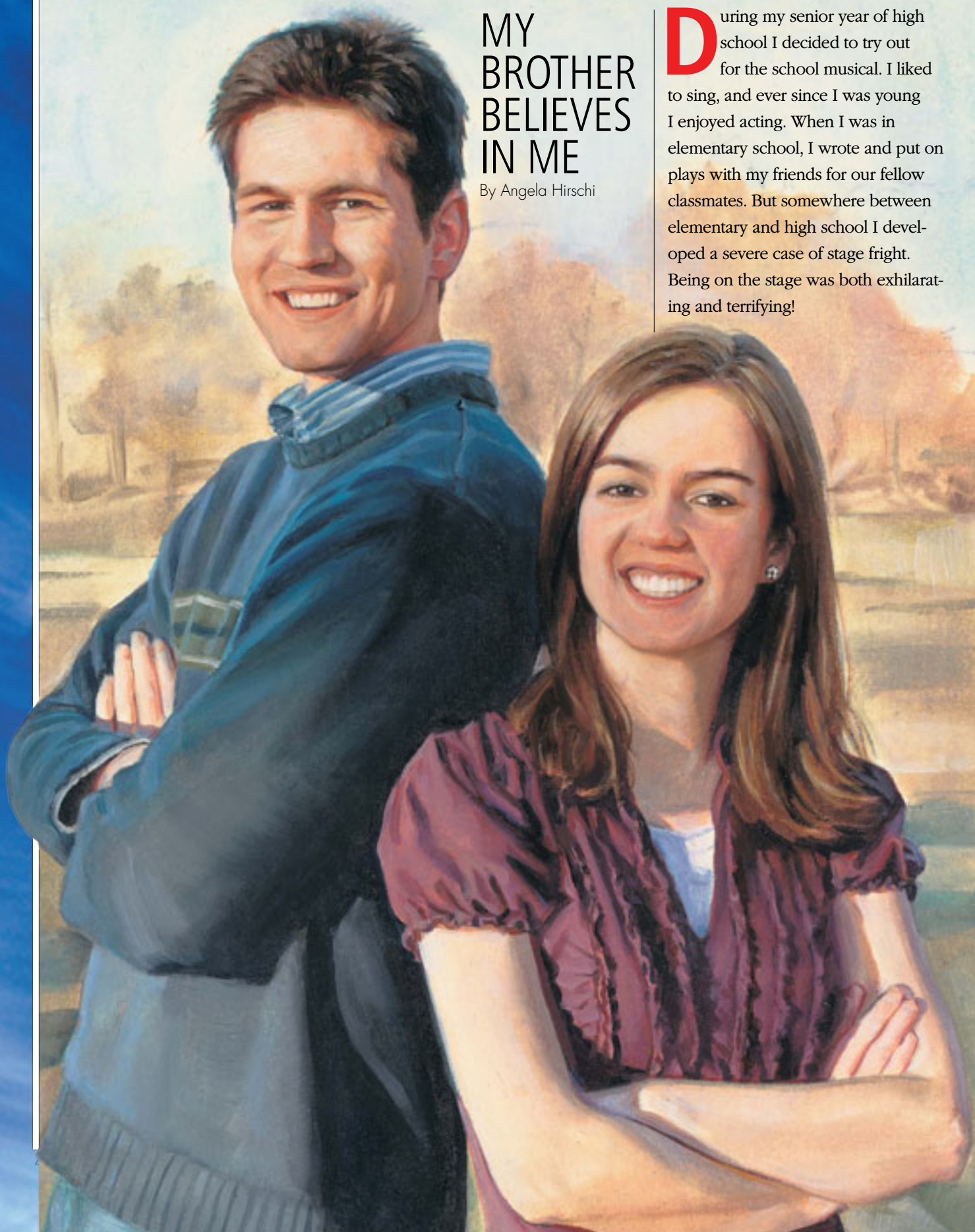


MY BROTHER BELIEVES IN ME

By Angela Hirschi

During my senior year of high school I decided to try out for the school musical. I liked to sing, and ever since I was young I enjoyed acting. When I was in elementary school, I wrote and put on plays with my friends for our fellow classmates. But somewhere between elementary and high school I developed a severe case of stage fright. Being on the stage was both exhilarating and terrifying!



STANDING UP IN HISTORY

By Kristina Schroeder

On the day before auditions I received some alarming news—the auditions would be “open,” meaning I’d have to sing in front of not only the teachers, but all the students who were trying out. I was devastated. The thought of singing a solo in front of a room full of students made me numb with fear. I couldn’t see how I could possibly go through with it.

That night, I began to debate if I should even try out. I went through the pros and cons with my mom. My older brother overheard our conversation. “I don’t know why you’re so worried,” he said with some frustration. “You can sing and dance just as well as anyone else.” His words surprised me because he rarely said things like that. I knew he cared about me, but at the time he usually didn’t admit to it. The pros won, and I decided to try out.

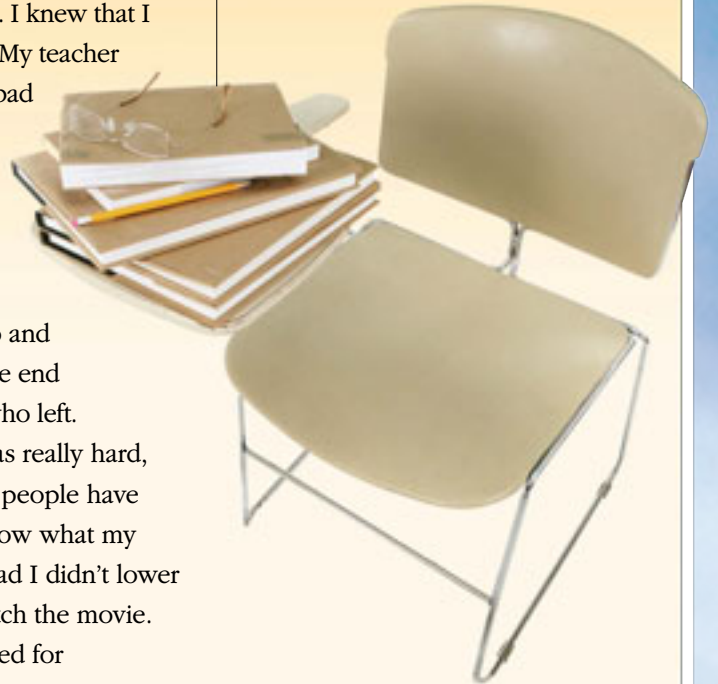
The following day I entered the drama room after school to await my audition. As I sat with the other students in the packed classroom, I could feel the color leave my face, and my whole body trembled slightly. I was nervous and unable to calm myself. Then the thought came to mind: “My brother believes in me. He believes I can do this.” Maybe I would be just fine after all.

With courage in my brother’s words, I walked on stage, phased out all the faces in the crowd, and sang. I sang my heart out. I gave it all I had and finished strong. When I was done, I looked out at my peers and teachers and saw many smiles. I was happy for performing so well and relieved it was over.

In my history class we were studying the Seven Years’ War and my teacher told us that we would watch a film. I was excited until she informed us that it was rated R. I knew that I didn’t want to see it. My teacher insisted it was not a bad movie, but I knew it still wasn’t right. I looked to see what the other kids would do, and I waited for someone to stand up and leave the room. In the end I was the only one who left.

Even though it was really hard, I’m glad I left. Many people have told me that they know what my standards are. I’m glad I didn’t lower them in order to watch the movie. My teacher apologized for

challenging my standards and said from now on I won’t be pressured into watching R-rated movies in her classroom. **NE**



I made call-backs and got a part. I’m glad I tried out because that musical was a highlight of my senior year.

The experience of that audition has stuck with me. My brother’s words, and knowing he believed in me, helped me to conquer something that seemed so impossible to me.

I’ve come to realize that there is someone else who believes in me—Jesus Christ, our Savior and Redeemer. He knows that I am capable of many things. The scriptures teach: “For God hath not given us the spirit of fear” (2 Timothy 1:7). In trusting the Savior, I have overcome my fears. He has supported me. The power of His Atonement can reach all areas of our lives, if we let Him in. **NE**

PART OF THE CIRCLE

By John E. Walter

I have a friend of another faith who is the best example of a true friend. I have never heard him use a swear word, never heard him crack a dirty joke, and never heard about him using drugs or alcohol. He is always honest and hardworking and is a great friend. His friendship has shown me that just because someone isn’t a member of the Church, it doesn’t mean that they aren’t good. I’ve learned that we all need to spread out our circle of friends and invite more in, no matter what their faith is. **NE**