

# RIGHT TURN

BY HILLARY HOLBROOK

*We left, and that was the safest thing to do.*

**M**y best friend, Liz, and I were always eager for girls' camp. Since we were 12, we had excitedly gone every year. The hot, muggy Texas weather didn't bother us a bit. We loved spending time with the girls and leaders from our ward and stake, attending fun activities, and bearing our testimonies on the last night of camp. Now, as 18-year-olds, we were being given the chance to serve as music leaders in our seventh and final year before going to college.

The Saturday before camp started, we decided to drive to the location, an hour away from where we lived, to look at the unfamiliar campgrounds and get a feel for how to prepare our tent and cabin. Both of our mothers advised us not to go. They warned us that a storm was coming from the direction where we were headed. A thunderstorm in Texas is no small matter, especially in the early summer months of May and June. Downpours mixed with heavy thunder and flashes of lightning are not unusual. But we were excited and a bit rebellious, and we went anyway.

The moment we drove into the state

park, immense drops of rain pounded the windshield of the small car I was driving. The wipers flipped back and forth, splashing the rain off. The sky was gray, and evening was quickly approaching. We didn't have much time to find our campsite. We drove into the main part of the park, near a closed convenience store and park headquarters. The parking lot was empty, and everything looked secluded. There was no trace of anybody anywhere.

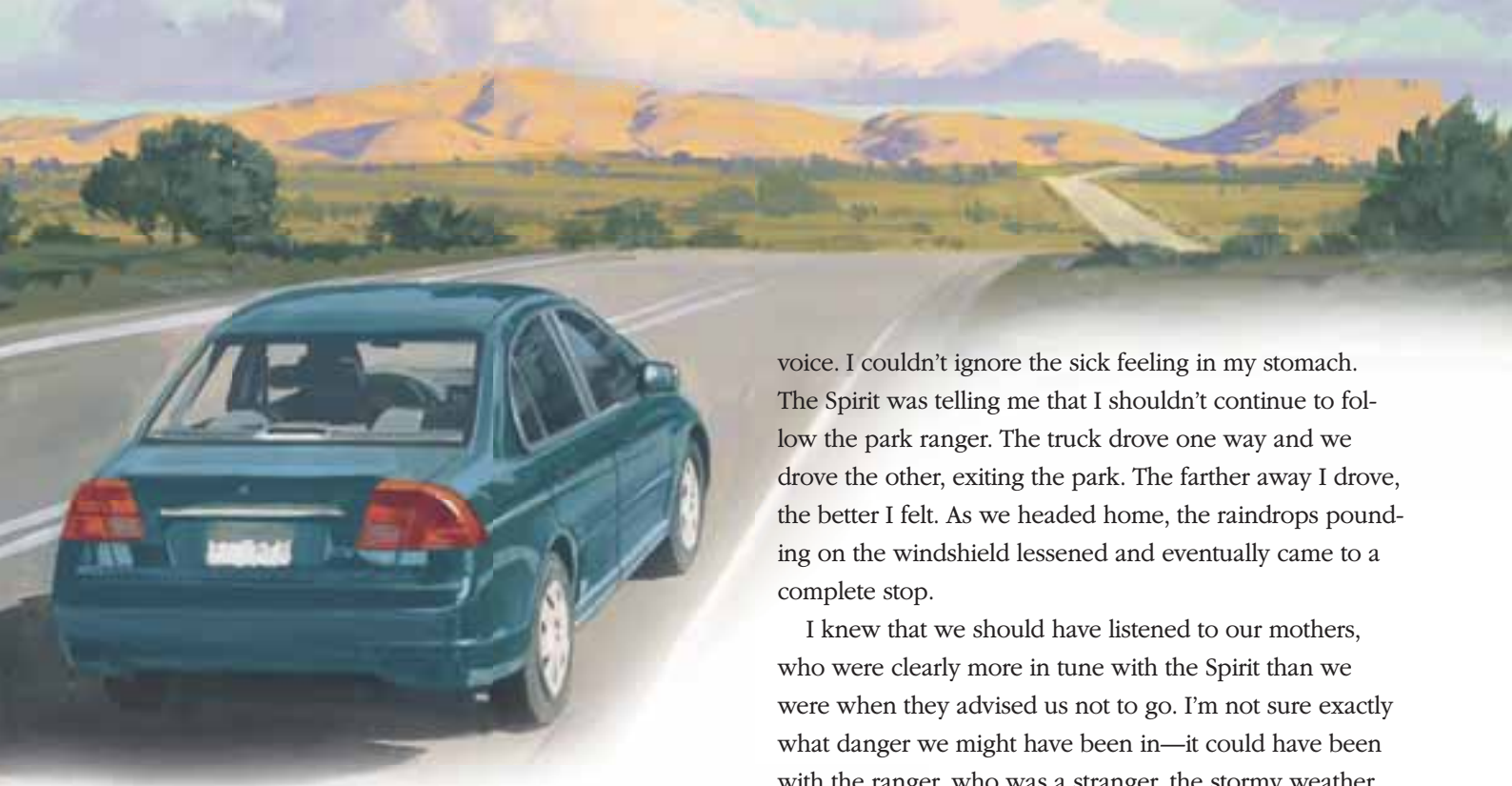
"What should we do?" I asked. "We can't find these campsites from here."

"Let's walk around and see if a park ranger could help us," she replied.

Wooden canoes, tied up to a dock on the lake, clanked together as fierce winds blew. The tall trees swayed back and forth, their leaves rustling together like pom-poms. Rain hit the lake like a million pennies falling from the sky. We quickly got back into the car.

"Maybe we should just go home," I said. Just as I started the engine, though, a park ranger's truck approached us. A stocky-built man stepped out and approached my vehicle. I rolled down my window, eyeing





the state park badge sewn on the left sleeve of his stiff, brown button-up shirt.

He hunched over, tipping his ranger hat and placing his hands on his knees.

“Can I help y’all?” He asked. I could smell alcohol on his breath. I looked at Liz, and then back at him.

“We’re going to be attending a camp here this coming week,” I replied. “We just came to look for some campgrounds.”

“Oh,” he said. “I was just heading down that way. Why don’t you follow me?”

“Okay,” I replied, feeling unsure. I rolled up my window.

“Liz, that guy *freaked* me out,” I said. “Could you smell the alcohol on his breath?” I had a sick feeling in my stomach, which is the feeling I get when the Spirit is prompting me to turn away from a bad situation.

As the park ranger drove, we followed. Then we came to an intersection where we could choose to continue following the ranger or exit the park. For a moment, we stopped. I watched as his truck drove through the spillway into the camp. The water from the lake, which spilled over the road, reached halfway up the truck’s tires. I knew that my small car might get stuck on the spillway if the rain continued.

“Let’s get out of here,” said Liz, with urgency in her

voice. I couldn’t ignore the sick feeling in my stomach. The Spirit was telling me that I shouldn’t continue to follow the park ranger. The truck drove one way and we drove the other, exiting the park. The farther away I drove, the better I felt. As we headed home, the raindrops pounding on the windshield lessened and eventually came to a complete stop.

I knew that we should have listened to our mothers, who were clearly more in tune with the Spirit than we were when they advised us not to go. I’m not sure exactly what danger we might have been in—it could have been with the ranger, who was a stranger, the stormy weather, or things completely unknown to us at the time. But the best part of the story is, we weren’t there to find out! I’m absolutely sure that we had to leave, and I’ve learned that when faced with a decision to make, following the inspired counsel of our parents and the promptings of the Spirit is the best and safest direction to take. **NE**

## A PROPHET’S EXPERIENCE

**P**resident Harold B. Lee, the 11th president of the Church (1899–1973), had a similar experience as a young boy. Although he wasn’t sure what kind of danger he might have been in, he still followed the Spirit.

“I was around ten or eleven years of age. I was with my father out on a farm away from our home, trying to spend the day busying myself until my father was ready to go home. Over the fence from our place were some tumbledown sheds that would attract a curious boy, and I was adventurous. I started to climb through the fence, and I heard a voice clearly as you are hearing mine, calling me by name and saying, ‘Don’t go over there!’ I turned to look at my father to see if he were talking to me, but he was way up at the other end of the field. There was no person in sight. I realized then, as a child, that there were persons beyond my sight, for I had definitely heard a voice” (*Stand Ye in Holy Places* [1974], 139).