

DON'T SHOOT!

Bob and I sat in our police car, waiting for a sign of movement down the street. We had begun our stakeout two hours earlier after spotting the car mentioned in a police radio alert.

"Stickup in progress," the alert had said. "Two males, both armed. They were just seen in an orange car.

Witnesses say the men are brutal and willing to shoot."

A rash of recent armed robberies had occurred in the area, yet despite our best efforts, the robbers had repeatedly escaped. These thoughts fled my mind as soon as I saw two figures come out of a home on the darkened street and hop into the

orange car. They were now heading our way.

"Requesting a backup unit," I said. "Suspects rolling northbound from our location."

Our backup, two plainclothes detectives in an unmarked car, pulled ahead of the car while Bob and I followed. After our three vehicles

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had entered a bridge, our backup suddenly stopped crossways on the bridge in front of the orange car and we parked behind it, boxing in our suspects. Almost immediately, the car stopped and both figures ducked out of sight.

"Step out of the car with your hands on your head!" I ordered after getting out of my car. No one responded.

Braced and ready to fire, I again commanded, "Step out of the car with your hands on your head. Do it now!"

Suddenly the driver rose up and turned toward me. I could see a nickel-plated object flash in his hands.

My police training and common sense dictated that I pull the trigger to save my life. But above the tension of the moment, I heard a voice. It was calm but authoritative and powerful: "Don't shoot!"

I expected to be shot any moment, but I waited for someone in the car to open fire first. Instead, the driver raised his hands, lifted over his head what looked like a gun, and dropped his hands into his lap.

"Freeze!" I said as I rushed to the car. "Don't move!"

The moment felt like a TV show—until I realized that the hardened criminals in the car were actually two frightened young girls. What I had thought was a gun was only a seat-belt buckle.

The girls, we soon learned, had loaned the car to their boyfriends.

They had no idea what kind of men they were.

"I thought you were dead, Cal!" Bob told me later. "I almost opened fire. I don't know why I didn't."

The two detectives in the unmarked car said the same thing, though no one but me heard the voice. I know that only the power of heaven could have saved those two girls from death and four police officers from making a tragic mistake. This experience gave me a sure knowledge that our Heavenly Father can and will intervene for our benefit. ■

Name withheld

TEACH THEM TO READ THE BOOK OF MORMON

During our service in the Geneva Switzerland Mission, I was called and set apart to be the branch president, and my wife was called as the Relief Society president. Together we worked with all our strength to revitalize the struggling branch. Although organized in the 1960s, the branch had not seen any baptisms for many years and had not sent any missionaries to the mission field for 15 years.

It was evident that we needed the Lord's help in order to find solutions for the numerous difficulties the branch faced. After I had prayed about the branch's challenges, the Spirit of the Lord said to me, "Teach the members to read the Book of Mormon, and you will be successful."

Immediately, we made plans to commit all the members to start reading the Book of Mormon.

Extraordinary results followed. Peace and the Spirit returned to the branch. New families joined the Church. Motivated by his desire to serve, a young man left on a mission. Several struggling marriages were strengthened, and families became closer. This branch continues to progress today.

We and the branch members witness for ourselves the miraculous power of the Book of Mormon. It truly is the keystone of our religion and of our testimonies of the gospel and of Jesus Christ. We love it with all of our heart. It is a source of unending and unalterable knowledge.

This experience taught us that the Book of Mormon is the surest means of helping our brothers and sisters move out of the shadows of spiritual darkness that cover the earth. This book brings peace, joy, happiness, and a strong desire to follow the Savior Jesus Christ. ■

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