

THE NIGHT OF THE TEST

BY LEHI L. CRUZ

When I was in my final year of elementary school, all of the students went camping in Negros Occidental, Philippines, before our graduation. We pitched our tents at the campsite and had a good time exploring among the guava and mango trees. When night came, my parents came to check on me. They told me to be very careful, and then they left.

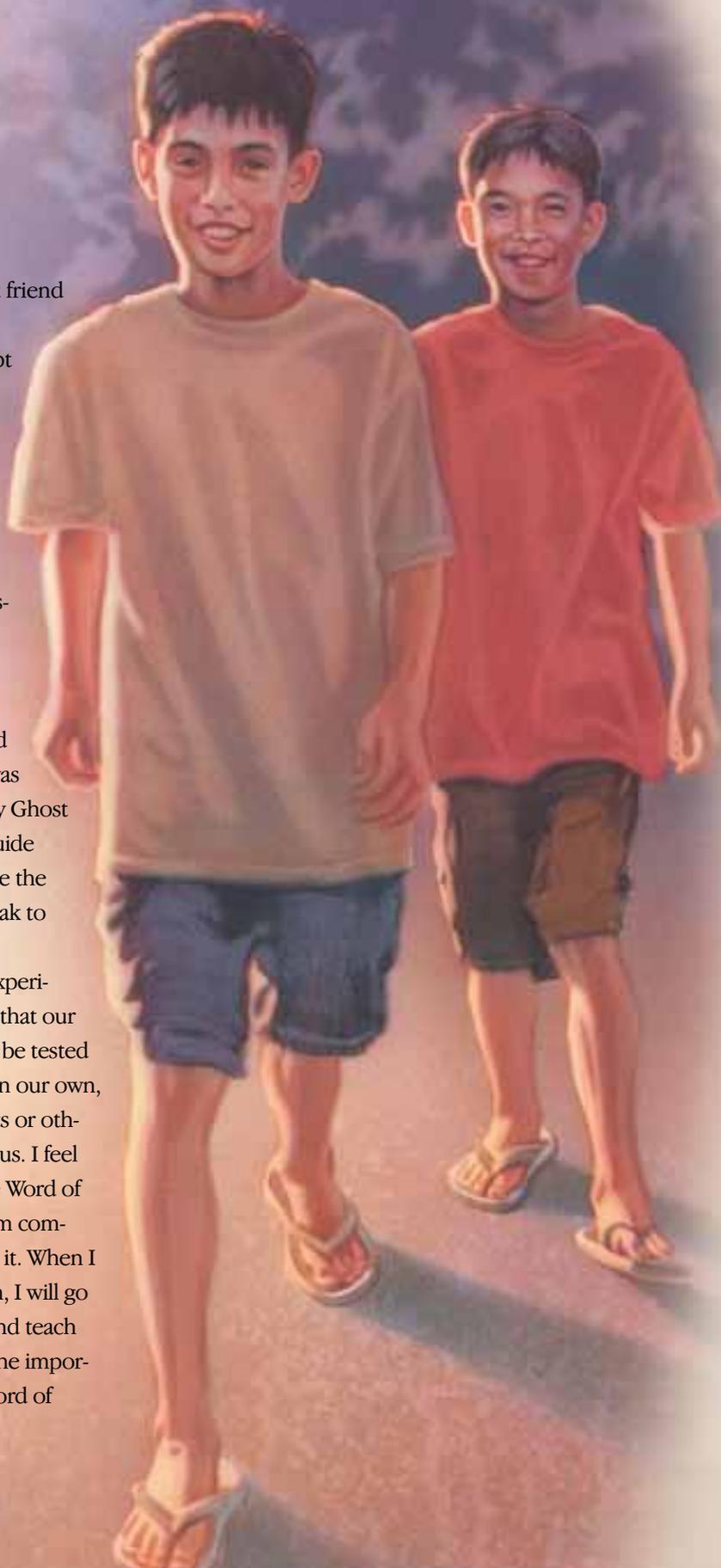
One of my classmates invited my friends and me to take a ride with him and his older cousin. His cousin drove us around, and we had fun until—to my surprise—my classmates brought out beer and cigarettes. We parked the car near the campsite, and they began to drink the beers and smoke in the car. They invited me to join them, but I refused.

I said I wouldn't join in because smoking would shorten my lifespan. I also said that it is against my beliefs, because I have been taught the Word of Wisdom. I told them that the Word of Wisdom is a law that teaches that we should keep our bodies clean, because they are temples of God. I told them we must avoid smoking; drinking alcohol, tea, and coffee; and taking

drugs. My best friend and I left the group and slept in our tent.

When I went home, I was happy to tell my dad that I had not joined my classmates but instead had taught them about the Word of Wisdom. I was happy the Holy Ghost was there to guide me and give me the courage to speak to my friends.

From this experience I learned that our obedience will be tested when we are on our own, without parents or others to support us. I feel grateful for the Word of Wisdom and am committed to obey it. When I am old enough, I will go on a mission and teach many people the importance of the Word of Wisdom. ■



RECOGNIZING THE SAVIOR

BY JADE SWARTZBERG

I was sitting at a table with some friends in our middle school cafeteria when the topic of Christ's Second Coming came up. My friends were not very religious, but they had been to church enough times to have heard of the prophesied event. They also knew that I went to church regularly and that I had a firm belief in the Savior.

We talked about it for a while, and in response to their questions I told them that no one knows exactly when Christ will come again. One of my friends turned to me and said quite seriously, "Jade, if the Second Coming happens soon and Jesus Christ comes, I may not recognize Him. Will you point Him out to me?"

Of course I said I would, and we started talking about other things.

My friends have probably never thought about that conversation again, but I have thought of it many times. Based on what I said and did, my friends assumed that I knew the Savior. In fact they counted on me to know Him! But do I really? Could I answer yes to Alma's question, "Have ye received his image in your countenance" (Alma 5:14)?

That casual question asked by my friend has caused me to evaluate my relationship with the Savior

many times. For example, is my personal prayer and scripture study meaningful enough that it brings me closer to Him? I hope so. And I hope that one day when Christ does come, I can stand before Him with a pure heart and clean hands. Then not only will I be able to easily recognize Him, but He will be able to recognize me because I will have His image engraven upon my countenance (see Alma 5:19). ■

