

CHOICES

[Scooter is sitting on a chair looking discouraged. Beth enters.]

Beth: Hey, Scooter! I've been looking all over for you. We were supposed to ride bikes. Remember?

Scooter: Oh, yeah. Sorry, Beth. I forgot.

Beth: That's OK. What's up?

Scooter: Well, I have a choice to make. You know my birthday is next Wednesday?

Beth: Yeah.

Scooter: Well, Mom said I could have my birthday party at our house or at the bowling alley.

Beth: Cool! Which one did you choose?

Scooter: That's the thing. I REALLY want to have my party at MR. PARTY'S, but Mom said no.

Beth: Oh. Those parties are really expensive.

Scooter: I know. But Jake and Ben and everyone cool has their party at MR. PARTY'S. I think my mom is just being mean.

Beth: Do you really think your mom doesn't want you to have fun on your birthday?

Scooter: No, I guess not. [pause.] She just doesn't understand.

Beth: Maybe she understands better than you think. After all, she's known you for almost 12 years!

Scooter: Yeah....

Beth: Remember how she surprised you with laser tag for your birthday last year?

Scooter: Yeah! That was awesome! [Scooter jumps up and relives his stealth laser tag tactics.] Jake didn't even see me coming! I was the terminator! I was like [mimes sneaking around a corner] and he was like [mimes putting hands in the air and running for cover]. It was awesome!

Beth: See?!

Scooter: I guess my mom really does know what I like.

Beth: You know, Scooter, it's the same thing with God. He knows us best and wants only good things for us.

Scooter: Yeah, but sometimes it doesn't seem like it. Like when I sit on the bench in basketball...

Beth: [smiling] Or your mom doesn't give you the party you want?

Scooter: You make a good point, Beth. Let's go ride bikes!

[Both exit.]

SEEING IS BELIEVING

[Beth leads Scooter on stage wearing a blindfold.]

Scooter: Beth, where are you taking me?

Beth: It's a surprise.

Scooter: A birthday surprise? Did you get me a pony?

Beth: No way! You're too old for a pony.

Scooter: But I've always wanted one.

[Beth leads Scooter back across stage as if they're still walking to their destination.]

Scooter: You're not leading me on a wild goose chase, are you? By the way, do you know why it's called a wild goose chase? Why not a wild monkey chase? That sounds MUCH more exciting.

Beth: Do you THINK I'd lead you on a wild monkey chase?

Scooter: No. You're too good of a friend.

Beth: Thanks for the vote of confidence. OK, we're here. I'm going to open the door. Are you ready?

Scooter: Yes! I mean, No. [Smooths out his clothing.] Do I look OK?

Beth: You look fine! [opens imaginary door at front of stage] You can take off your blindfold. [sweeps arms wide as Scooter removes blindfold] Voila!

Scooter: [looks up] WOW!!! Thirty-one flavors of ice cream! This is amazing.

Beth: And, you can pick out a triple-scoop for your birthday...with a WAFFLE CONE.

Scooter: Thanks, Beth! You're an awesome friend.

Beth: NOW do you know you don't have to worry when I lead you somewhere?

Scooter: Yeah! I already knew that. I was just teasing. It's like with God—I can always trust He's taking me to good places when I follow Him.

Beth: Except HE can take you to way better places than the ice cream shop.

Scooter: That's right! Thanks for my birthday surprise, Beth! This is WAY better than a wild monkey chase.

[Both exit.]

ALMOST FAMOUS

[Scooter walks on stage and sighs heavily. Then he paces a bit and sighs again.]

Beth: [enters] Hey, Scooter! What's wrong? You look like you lost your best friend.

Scooter: [sighs again] I have some bad news.

Beth: What is it? Can I do anything to help?

Scooter: I'm afraid not.

[Beth stands silently, waiting for Scooter to speak.]

Beth: Well?

Scooter: I'm not going to be famous! [Puts his face in his hands and pretends to weep.]

Beth: That's all? You do know that like 99 percent of people on this earth aren't famous, don't you?

Scooter: I know that...but I was going to be a famous basketball player. And coach didn't even put me in during the second half of our last game. [sigh]

Beth: That's a bummer. But, you know, God just may have a different plan.

Scooter: He couldn't possibly! [Takes Beth by both arms.] I was born to play basketball, Beth!

Beth: It may seem like it now, but God knows what's best for you. Maybe you'll be a baseball player instead. Or drive an ice cream truck.

Scooter: *Mmm.* Ice cream.

Beth: Or take care of animals. Or preach in a church. There's a lot of things you could do, Scooter.

Scooter: *Hmm.* I see you're point. And I guess I don't have to be famous either.

Beth: You're famous to me!

Scooter: Thanks, Beth.

Beth: Now let's go work on those free throws.

[Both exit.]

NOT ALONE

[Scooter walks on stage, grinning, with a huge Band-Aid on his elbow.]

Beth: [enters] Hey, Scooter! I've been looking all over for you. [Notices Band-Aid] Whoa! What happened to you?

Scooter: Beth, check out my super-cool INJURY. [sticks elbow in Beth's face]

Beth: [pushing elbow gently away] I see it. Looks like you took a fall.

Scooter: That's EXACTLY what I did. [leans forward into imaginary handlebars and mimes incident] I was on my bike. And I came over the hill on Turner Avenue. And there was this GINORMOUS rock ... which I hit. Then I ejected from my bike, did a triple somersault, and landed in the grass on the side of the road.

Beth: That's sounds terrible! Are you OK?

Scooter: Yep! I was wearing my helmet. Safety first, Beth.

Beth: I agree! But your elbow...

Scooter: It's cool, right? A REAL injury. When Mom was fixing me up, she said, "Somebody was sure watching out for you. It's a miracle you didn't get hurt worse!"

Beth: That's true. One time when I was younger, I got separated from my parents while camping. I just prayed and asked God to help me find them. Then some other campers found me and helped me get back to Mom and Dad.

Scooter: I guess God looks out for us in a lot of situations.

Beth: He sure does. And He's always right there ready to help.

Scooter: Phew! That makes me feel a lot better.

Beth: You still might want to avoid taking your bike down dangerous hills.

Scooter: [stretches out arms] I LIVE for danger. [grabs elbow] Ow.

Beth: C'mon. I think a little ice cream might make that BIG injury feel a little better.

Scooter: I think you're right!

[Both exit.]

PEOPLE FOOD

[Scooter walks on stage with cleaning gloves, a bucket, and sponge. He can even have a clothespin on his nose. He stoops down and starts cleaning, clearly disgusted by the chore.]

Beth: [enters] Hey, Scooter! Want to come over and jump on my trampoline?

Scooter: Aw! I wish I could, but I'm kind of being punished here.

Beth: Punished for what? [catches a whiff] WHAT is that smell?!

Scooter: Uh, believe me, you don't want to know. Let's just say Molly had a little accident.

Beth: Your dog made a mess? Is she OK?

Scooter: Oh, yeah. She'll be fine. After her tummy settles down. It turns out there's a reason Mom made the rule of no feeding people food to the dog.

Beth: Oh. Gotcha.

Scooter: Last night, I didn't like the tuna sausage sardine noodle casserole with extra sardines...

Beth: *Ugh.* Sounds awful.

Scooter: So I fed some of it to Molly under the table. [pause] Bad idea.

Beth: Most rules do serve a purpose. Like when God gave the Israelites the Ten Commandments. Those rules were given to keep them out of messy situations.

Scooter: I sure wish I would have thought about that BEFORE I fed Molly that toxic casserole.

Beth: Yep, keep the people food for the people!

Scooter: Does tuna sausage sardine noodle casserole really qualify as PEOPLE food?

Beth: Doubtful.

Scooter: That's what I thought.

[Both exit.]

RUMOR HAS IT

[Scooter walks on stage acting bored. He can sit down, yawn, look at his fingernails, etc.]

Beth: [enters] Hi, Scooter! I'm on my way over to the Nelsons to say hi. Wanna come?

Scooter: No, thanks. Rumor has it that they don't have any kids our age.

Beth: Where did you hear that?

Scooter: Around.

Beth: Um, OK. Well, they are our new neighbors so it would be nice to at least welcome them to the neighborhood. I'm taking them this plate of chocolate chip cookies.

Scooter: I wouldn't do that if I were you.

Beth: Why not?

Scooter: Rumor has it that they don't like cookies. You just better leave those here to be safe.

Beth: Scooter, you sure aren't being very neighborly.

Scooter: Sorry, Beth, but...

Beth: I know, rumor has it! Where did you hear all of this stuff anyway?

Scooter: Jeremy told me.

Beth: I don't think Jeremy is exactly a reliable source.

Scooter: But you have to admit, he does know everything that goes on in the neighborhood. He was the first one to know that the Johnsons were moving away.

Beth: OK, well, I need to go and meet my mom over there. I'll tell you what I find out.

[Scooter sits on chair bored. He can change positions, examine his feet, get rid of his stale gum, or anything else unimportant.]

Beth: [runs back on stage] The Nelsons have TWO kids our age! Henry and Adrianna. They're twins!

Scooter: [stands up] Really?! How did Jeremy not know about this?

Beth: Sometimes it's best to check things out for yourself. Especially when you know it's the right thing to do.

Scooter: I was a HORRIBLE neighbor. [melodramatically] Can you ever forgive me, Beth?

Beth: Sure I can. C'mon, we're going to eat some of those cookies and get to know each other better ... or at least, rumor has it.

[Both laugh and exit.]

HELP! I NEED SOMEBODY

[Scooter walks on stage carrying a box of junk. There is already an empty box or bag on stage.]

Scooter: [removes first item, which is a silly stuffed animal, and puts it in empty box] OK, Mr. Snuggles, I hate to do this to you, but it's for a good cause.

Beth: [enters] Hey, Scooter. What are you up to?

Scooter: Oh, hi Beth. I'm deciding which items to give away to the homeless shelter. They need more stuff for kids.

Beth: That's great! I'm sure they can really use your donations.

Scooter: [pulls out a silly t-shirt and reluctantly puts it in the empty box] Ouch! It hurts to see that go.

Beth: Really? *That*?

Scooter: [closes eyes and takes a deep breath] Think about the children. [Takes out some strange toy or gadget] Goodbye, you amazing thing!

Beth: What *IS* that?

Scooter: Beth, it takes a special person to recognize the worth of that item.

Beth: I guess so.

Scooter: [pulls out board game] And finally, my prized possession. I'll miss you!

Beth: Scooter, you love that game. You play it all the time!

Scooter: Yep. But some other kid who doesn't have a game will love it, too. God wants us to help each other.

Beth: That's definitely true. Someone will be really happy to receive that game.

Scooter: Plus, other people help ME out all the time! Just last week, you helped me with my spelling homework. Not to mention, GOD always helps me.

Beth: That's a good way of looking at things. Hey, can I help you right now?

Scooter: Sure!

Beth: [pulls out weird stuffed animal from box] Don't donate this.

Scooter: [hugs animal tightly] Oh, Mr. Snuggles! I thought I'd never see you again!
[clears throat and puts stuffed animal down] Thank you, Beth.

Beth: You're welcome. Now why don't I help you go through the rest of this stuff.

Scooter: Sounds good.

[Both exit.]

BEST FRIEND DOWN

[Beth walks on stage reading a book.]

Scooter: [enters looking down] Hey, Beth.

Beth: Oh, hey, Scooter! What's wrong?

Scooter: I lost my best friend.

Beth: I'm right here.

Scooter: No my OTHER best friend. Sam and I got into a big fight.

Beth: That's too bad. What happened?

Scooter: Well, we started arguing about how to build this really sweet bike ramp we were making. It's the kind that shoots you up in the air three feet! Sam thought we needed bigger pieces of wood, but I liked the ones we had.

Beth: Sometimes friends disagree, Scooter.

Scooter: I know, but then I broke the friendship code.

Beth: The friendship code?

Scooter: Yeah. I dissed his bike.

Beth: Oh.

Scooter: I told him his bike wasn't as cool or expensive as mine and so I should get to decide how to build the ramp. Then he got mad and went home.
[moans] I've lost my best friend.

Beth: Did you ask him to forgive you?

Scooter: No. He couldn't possibly forgive me. I broke the FRIENDSHIP CODE.

Beth: Scooter, people make mistakes, but you can always make things right. And God will always be there to help you.

Scooter: I didn't think of that. I guess God could help me fix my friendship with Sam.

Beth: He sure could.

Scooter: Thanks, Beth. I'm going to go talk to Sam right now!

Beth: Good idea.

Scooter: I've learned from my mistakes and I'm a new person. I vow to never the break the friendship code again.

Beth: Well, you definitely care about your friends. No mistake about that!

[Both exit.]

GUEST LIST

[Scooter walks on stage with a notebook and a pen. He's making a list.]

Scooter: [writing] There's Beth, and Sam, and I can't forget Theodore ...

Beth: [enters] Hey, Scooter! What are you doing?

Scooter: Hi, Beth! I'm making a list of who to invite to my super-fun, cool-people-only party.

Beth: Hmm. Who's on the list?

Scooter: Well, there's you, of course. And Sam. And Theodore and Emma.

Beth: That's it? What about Manny?

Scooter: Manny? Well ... I ... um ... I wasn't going to invite Manny.

Beth: Why not? He comes over and says hi to us every day at lunch. He's really nice.

Scooter: I know, but ... [leans toward Beth and whispers] HE'S WEIRD.

Beth: What do you mean?

Scooter: He brings a hot dog in a thermos instead of peanut butter and jelly for lunch. And he wears the same t-shirt with a dog on it EVERY DAY.

Beth: Scooter, do I need to remind you that YOU wore the same t-shirt with a robot on it EVERY DAY last year? Plus, Manny has some food allergies, so his mom has to pack him special food.

Scooter: I guess you're right. He does tell some funny jokes.

Beth: Exactly! And God wants us to be kind to everyone. He created each person special.

Scooter: So I guess that makes everyone cool, huh?

Beth: Definitely!

Scooter: Everyone in our class?

Beth: Yep.

Scooter: [looks at list] If everyone's cool, I think I'm definitely going to need more popcorn for my super-fun, cool-people-only party ... AND cheese whiz!!!

Beth: [looks like she's going to ask a question but changes her mind] I don't want to know.

Scooter: [walking off stage] And I'll invite Cassie and David and Braden ... This is going to be great!

Beth: [follows] Wait for me!

[Both exit]

LISTEN UP

[Scooter walks on stage listening to an iPod and dancing. Can hum or play air guitar for added humor.]

Beth: [enters] Hi, Scooter. I'm glad I found you! I have something very important to *tell you!*

Scooter: [Removes one earbud.] Hi, Beth! You *smell stew?* [sniffs air] I don't smell anything.

Beth: No, *tell you!* I have something to tell you.

Scooter: Just a minute, Beth. This is my favorite song. [replaces earbud and grooves]

Beth: [folds arms] I wanted to invite you my art show.

Scooter: [removes earbud] Sorry about that. You want to *delight me with your dart throw?* I didn't know you played darts!

Beth: I don't.

Scooter: I tried it once, but it was DEFINITELY not the best idea. Dad almost got an ear pierced—and believe me, he didn't want that!

Beth: What I said was ...

Scooter: [replaces earbud] Oh, hang on just one second. I love this song!

Beth: My art show is on Thursday night!

Scooter: [takes out earbud] What? You *know the worst playwright?*

Beth: [holds out hand] Hand it over!

Scooter: But I'm listening to music.

Beth: But you aren't LISTENING to me.

Scooter: [hands over iPod] Sorry, Beth. What did you say?

Beth: I came to tell you about my art show on Thursday night. Some of my paintings are on display at the library.

Scooter: That is SO COOL! Why didn't you tell me sooner?!

Beth: I did. You just weren't listening.

Scooter: I'm sorry, Beth. I almost missed something really important.

Beth: That's OK, Scooter. Maybe lay off the iPod for awhile.

Scooter: [places arm around Beth's shoulder as the exit] Now, tell me more about this fear of throwing darts you have. Did it start when you were a child?

[Both laugh and exit]

SPEECH PROBLEM

[Scooter enters wearing a tie with his regular clothes and begins pacing.]

Scooter: I, Scooter, promise to be nice to puppies, to pick up juice boxes, and to get cafeteria peas and carrots changed to corn—a far superior vegetable ...

Beth: [carries sign that reads: Scooter for Class President.] Hey, Scooter!

Scooter: Hi, Beth!

Beth: How is your speech coming along?

Scooter: Pretty good.

Beth: Let me hear some of it!

Scooter: [clears throat] And as your class president, I hope to help us raise money to get school supplies for local kids who need them.

Beth: Wow, that's awesome!

Scooter: Furthermore, I plan to ... uh ... um [pulls crumpled notes out of pocket and begins fumbling with them]. As I was saying, I will ... um ... pick up puppies and be nice to carrots ... oh, that's not what I meant.

Beth: What's wrong, Scooter?

Scooter: I'm nervous about giving my speech tomorrow. I have to stand up in front of the WHOLE class. What if I mess up and they laugh at me?

Beth: They won't laugh. You have such good plans for our class.

Scooter: I know. And I'm really excited about those ideas.

Beth: Then don't be afraid to talk about them. There was a kid in the Bible who had to stand up in front of a lot of people. His name was David.

Scooter: Like David who fought the giant, Goliath?

Beth: That's the guy. He had a lot to be afraid about, but he wasn't scared. He knew that he was doing the right thing and that God would help him.

Scooter: Wow! I guess God will be with me when I give my speech, too.

Beth: Sure, He will. He'll help you be brave.

Scooter: OK, let's give this another try. As your president, I promise to be nice to puppies ...

Beth: Um, Scooter.

Scooter: Yeah?

Beth: What puppies are you talking about? Pets aren't allowed at school.

Scooter: But everyone loves a guy who is nice to puppies.

Beth: Maybe start with something that is actually AT SCHOOL?

Scooter: OK, I, Scooter, promise to be nice to dust bunnies ...

Beth: Very funny, Mr. President.

Scooter: Just trying to give the people what they want, Beth.

[Both exit.]

SECOND CHANCES

[Beth enters reading a book or magazine.]

Beth: Fascinating.

Scooter: [enters looking down] Hi, Beth.

Beth: Oh, hi, Scooter! Isn't it a beautiful day?

Scooter: I guess so.

Beth: I love walking outside after it's rained and the sun has just come out. Everything's fresh and clean. Is something wrong?

Scooter: No. I mean, yeah. I mean I don't know.

Beth: Tell me about it. Maybe I can help.

Scooter: Well, you know Manny at school?

Beth: Yeah. He sits with us at lunch sometimes.

Scooter: That's the guy. Well, he and I were kind of becoming friends. We shot some hoops after school one day, and he's really funny.

Beth: That's cool. What's the problem?

Scooter: After school today, I saw some kids making fun of Manny because of his dog t-shirt ... and I kind of pretended like I didn't see what was going on. I just got on the bus without saying anything.

Beth: Oh, I see.

Scooter: I didn't want those guys to think I wasn't cool. But I didn't do what I knew was right. Now I feel terrible.

Beth: It's not too late to make things right, Scooter.

Scooter: Really?

Beth: Sure. All you have to do is ask God for forgiveness. He always forgives the wrong things we do and gives us second chances.

Scooter: What about third and fourth and FIFTIETH chances?

Beth: He gives those, too. You just have to ask. See how everything around us looks after the rain? All fresh and clean? That's what God does for us when we ask him for forgiveness.

Scooter: I sure am glad he gives us more chances.

Beth: Me, too.

Scooter: Well, I'm going to go call Manny and see if he's OK. I hope he'll give me another chance to be a good friend.

Beth: Just remember that God gives you a brand-new, fresh start! Every time you ask.

Scooter: That's a really good thing for a guy like me! Any chance YOU'D want to give me a FRESH START on our ongoing free throw contest?

Beth: [grinning] No, but I'll give you another CHANCE to catch up with me.

Scooter: That's what I thought.

[Both exit.]

WISE GUY

[Beth enters and begins pacing.]

Scooter: [enters pantomiming shooting a basket] He shoots and he scores and the crowd goes wild! Hey, Beth!

Beth: Hi, Scooter.

Scooter: You look like you have a lot on your mind. What's going on?

Beth: Well, I'm trying to make a difficult decision. Two of my friends came to me and said I had to choose between them because they don't like each other.

Scooter: Uh, oh. Sounds like girl drama.

Beth: Exactly! I like them both, and I don't know what to do.

Scooter: Which one gives you more snacks? I'm KIDDING! Tough decision.

Beth: Tell me about it.

Scooter: Well, Mr. Matheson was talking about wisdom at youth group last week.

Beth: What did he say?

Scooter: He told us the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom.

Beth: Oh, yeah. I've heard that, too. I think it means that if you obey what God says, you will be wise and make good decisions.

Scooter: So what does God say?

Beth: Well ... I know he wants me to be kind to everyone, so I should stay friends with both girls. If they aren't happy, it's their choice whether they want to be friends with me. And maybe I can pray that God will help them work out their differences.

Scooter: Wise words, my friend!

Beth: Thanks, Scooter. I should have known to ask God for wisdom. He's the wisest one of all!

Scooter: Yep, I ask him to help me make decisions all the time ... like which socks to wear, and whether I should give the last Pop-Tart to my sister and even what TV shows I should watch.

Beth: You know, Scooter. You're kind of a wise guy.

Scooter: I'll take that as a compliment.

[Both laugh and exit.]

FOLLOW THE LEADER

[Beth and Scooter enter mid-conversation on their way home from school. They're wearing backpacks.]

Beth: So then Ashley tried to give Tiara a high five, but she accidentally hit her pigtail instead and it flew around like a lasso! It was hilarious.

Scooter: [distracted] Ha. Funny.

Beth: What's wrong, Scooter? You've been quiet the whole walk home. Rough day at school?

Scooter: [sigh] Beth, it's hard work being a leader.

Beth: You mean class president? You're doing a great job so far! I mean you've only been on the job two days, but ...

Scooter: Well, Jeremy and Nick don't think so. They came up to me today and told me that if I didn't plan a class party at Mr. Party's I'd be the lamest president ever.

Beth: Ouch.

Scooter: I know. That would take all the money we have ... plus some. I couldn't do any of the other things I have planned.

Beth: Like what?

Scooter: Plant tulips in front of the school and have a collection to bring in school supplies for kids who need them.

Beth: Those are great plans, Scooter!

Scooter: Then why do I feel so bad?

Beth: You know all leaders have to make tough decisions. And sometimes doing the right thing doesn't make you popular.

Scooter: I figured that one out.

Beth: You'll probably even make some mistakes.

Scooter: Mistakes? Do you think it would be better to plant DAFFODILS in front of the school instead of tulips?

Beth: Not that kind of mistake. I just mean, you might not be a perfect leader, but God will teach you things through your mistakes.

Scooter: Are you sure about that?

Beth: Yep. Once I lied to my little brother about where I was going, because I didn't want him to follow me. Later I felt bad and told him I was sorry. Because of that, God taught me that I needed to always be honest.

Scooter: I think I'm going to stick to my plans. I can't make everyone happy; but I can do the right thing.

Beth: Spoken like a true president. Now about those tulips ...

[Both walk off.]

RUNNER'S REMORSE

[Scooter runs on wearing running gear, sweatband, tennis shoes, etc. He continues jogging in place.]

Beth: [runs on] Good work, Scooter. You're almost there. Just half a mile more!

Scooter: Thanks, Beth! I can't wait for the race on Saturday.

Beth: [looks at stopwatch] You're going to do great. You've already shaved 3 minutes off your time!

Scooter: I really couldn't have done it without you. Thanks for being my coach.

Beth: You're welcome. Sometimes you just need a little extra encouragement.

Scooter: I definitely needed some of that! [starting to noticeably tire] Three weeks ago, I was just sitting on the couch watching TV and eating cheese curls. Phew! I was out of shape. Am I there yet?

Beth: [looks at watch] Nope. One quarter of a mile. You can do it!

Scooter: [starts jogging in place funny, like swaying arms or flailing legs] If you hadn't offered to help me, I never would have gotten ready for the race in time.

Beth: That's what friends are for, Scooter.

Scooter: [tiring and attitude souring] I have to admit, it doesn't feel much like encouragement right now ... more like torture.

Beth: [looking at watch] Just a minute more. You'll thank me later!

Scooter: MUCH later. AM I DONE YET?!

Beth: Not quite ...

Scooter: [getting desperate] How did I ever let you talk me into training with you?!

Beth: Because the race is going to be a blast!

Scooter: [huffing and puffing and wiping sweat from his brow] Maybe training for this race was a bad idea ...

Beth: DONE! You can stop now.

Scooter: [stops jogging] Whew! Thanks, Beth. You can ignore all that other stuff I said.

Beth: I always do! That was your best time yet!

Scooter: I'll race you to the refrigerator for a snack.

Beth: Deal!

[Beth gets a head start]

Scooter: Hey, wait for me!

[both exit]

GET THE MESSAGE

[Beth enters in a huff with Scooter close behind.]

Scooter: I didn't know you were doing that yesterday morning! I'm sorry, Beth.

Beth: [upset] I thought I was pretty clear that I needed your help to make the posters for the bake sale. I called you three times last week!

Scooter: I know. But I didn't write down the details.

Beth: I sent you an e-mail.

Scooter: I remember that, now, but at the time I was playing this really cool computer game where I was a knight in this kingdom and ... [notices Beth glaring at him]

Beth: AND I reminded you on the bus Friday that I'd be making the posters on Saturday morning.

Scooter: I'm sorry, Beth. I woke up Saturday morning and got so caught up in my cartoons that I forgot. Can you forgive me? I really wanted to help you.

Beth: [cooling off] I just don't know how else to tell you things.

Scooter: Maybe you could try stamping them on my forehead?

Beth: [smiling] You remind me of someone.

Scooter: Who?

Beth: Well, a group of people. The Israelites. God was always telling them things—but sometimes they had a hard time getting the message.

Scooter: What happened?

Beth: Even when God told them over and over again what they should do, the people didn't listen ... or they forgot ... or they just plain disobeyed.

Scooter: Wow! They sound like a hopeless bunch.

Beth: Yeah, but God didn't give up on them. He kept working with them and sending messengers to tell them what to do.

Scooter: Do you think you could give me another chance, Beth, and not give up on me?

Beth: Yeah. I think I could do that.

Scooter: The bake sale isn't until Tuesday. We still have time to make some of those posters.

Beth: You do paint some really cool designs.

Scooter: See, I'm not TOTALLY hopeless.

Beth: Next time maybe I'll hire a plane to write the message in the sky.

Scooter: Or have my mom write it on my bathroom mirror in toothpaste?

Beth: Or instant message you every 30 seconds.

Scooter: Good idea! Next time I'll try to get the message.

[Both exit.]

OOPS! NOT AGAIN

[Beth enters; for extra fun, she could be on roller skates, but this isn't necessary.]

Scooter: [enters] Hi, Beth.

Beth: Hey, Scooter! I am SO excited about Ellie's skating party tonight. Did you know I can skate backwards?

Scooter: That's cool. But I have some bad news. I can't go to the party.

Beth: Oh, Scooter. I'm sure you won't accidentally crash into the snack bar this time ...

Scooter: There was soda and popcorn EVERYWHERE. But that's not the reason I'm not going.

Beth: Why then?

Scooter: I was mean to my sister this morning. She was annoying me, so I called her a name. And mom said I couldn't go to the party.

Beth: That's a bummer.

Scooter: Yeah. I'm sad I can't go.

Beth: Well, I'm sure you'll get to go skating another time ... and see my triple-reverse spin.

Scooter: That's not what's bugging me.

Beth: Then what?

Scooter: I just can't seem to get this being-nice-to-my-sister thing right. Mom keeps having to talk to me about it. And I keep getting punished.

Beth: You'll get it right, eventually. Keep trying.

Scooter: God must be mad at me for messing up so much.

Beth: No way! He loves you no matter what. Sometimes there's a price you have to pay for sin, like missing out on a party—and that's not fun—but God still loves you the same.

Scooter: Really?

Beth: Yeah, when the Israelites kept ignoring God's instructions to them, they went through some really hard and sad times. But God kept loving them and had a plan to make everything better.

Scooter: Well, I probably won't get any "Brother of the Year" awards, but I definitely want to do better.

Beth: And God will help you!

Scooter: Because he loves me?

Beth: That's right! Want to watch me practice my backward-forward spin jump?

Scooter: Yeah!

Beth: Why don't you invite Sarah, too! Get started on that "Brother of the Year" thing. You have to admit—she's a pretty cool sister. C'mon! [exits]

Scooter: Right behind you!

[Scooter exits.]

NO. 1 FAN

[Set up two chairs. Scooter and Beth enter. Scooter is dressed in sports garb, carrying a foam finger, popcorn, etc.]

Scooter: [sits down.] Wooooo! Go, Torpedoes!

Beth: Wow, Scooter, you sure are a big fan.

Scooter: That's because the Torpedoes are the BEST! Woooooo!

Beth: Um, Scooter. I hate to mention this, but the Torpedoes are 0 and 10 for the season.

Scooter: That's no big deal, Beth. They're just having a wave of bad luck.

Beth: More like a tsunami.

Scooter: What's a tsunami?

Beth: It's a really big storm ...

Scooter: [distracted by action ahead; stands up] Yeah! Nice shot. Tim the Terminator Johnson strikes again.

Beth: They're actually playing pretty well tonight.

Scooter: Of course they are! The Torpedoes are the BEST!

Beth: Well, you are definitely a loyal fan.

Scooter: I am more than that ... I am the Torpedoes' No. 1 fan! I'll never stop believing in them, no matter what!

Beth: I see that. There was a guy in the Bible who was God's No. 1 fan. His name was Daniel.

Scooter: Oh yeah, the guy with the lions' den.

Beth: He didn't OWN the lion's den, but he did end up in it. Because he was loyal to God and wouldn't go against him.

Scooter: That's cool. I will ALWAYS be loyal to the Torpedoes.

Beth: [looking forward] Wow, I think they might actually win tonight.

Scooter: The first win of many, Beth, in their AMAZING comeback. Have a little loyalty. [hands Beth the foam finger]

Beth: [puts on foam finger] Wooooooooo! Go, Torpedoes!

Scooter: That's more like it!

[End skit.]

BIG DECISION

[Scooter enters carrying a Bible.]

Beth: [enters] Hi, Scooter! What's up?

Scooter: I've made a very important decision, Beth.

Beth: What's that?

Scooter: I am going to follow God!

Beth: Uh, that's great, Scooter. But one question ...

Scooter: What's that?

Beth: I thought you already WERE following God.

Scooter: Well, I was part of his family—because I asked him into my life when I was 7. BUT, I wasn't really FOLLOWING him. At least not all the time.

Beth: What do you mean?

Scooter: [holds up Bible] Part of following God is reading the Bible, right?

Beth: Yeah, definitely.

Scooter: I never made TIME to read the Bible. I slept in late, so I barely had time to get dressed before school. And then I had to catch the bus. And then I came home and did homework. And then I played video games. And then I went to bed. See the problem?

Beth: I think so. You didn't have a PLAN to follow God.

Scooter: EXACTLY, Beth! And a man without a plan is ... well, it's not good. I was grouchy with my sister and selfish at school and sassy with my mom. All because I never read the Bible. You can't follow someone if you don't know him.

Beth: That is a problem. So what's the change?

Scooter: [pulls a folded paper out of Bible—this could be colorful and impressive—and speaks in announcer voice] Introducing ... SCOOTER'S AMAZING BIBLE-READING PLAN.

Beth: Wow!

Scooter: [announcer voice] SCOOTER'S AMAZING BIBLE-READING PLAN will allow me to read one chapter of the Bible each day either on the bus, at lunchtime, or before bed.

Beth: I'm impressed, Scooter. Think you could share the plan with one of your followers?

Scooter: For you, Beth, anything. But I must warn you ... [announcer voice] SCOOTER'S AMAZING BIBLE-READING PLAN may produce unusual results, such as BEING NICE TO YOUR MOM, LETTING YOUR LITTLE BROTHER GO FIRST, AND SHOWING RESPECT TO YOUR TEACHER.

Beth: Sounds good to me!

Scooter: Follow me! I'll make you a copy.

[Both exit.]

ZOMBIE STALKER IV

[Scooter enters and begins pacing.]

Beth: [enters] Oh, hi, Scooter! I was looking for you. Mom said we could have Popsicles.

Scooter: [without enthusiasm] Oh, uh ... great.

Beth: What's up? Is something wrong?

Scooter: Not really.

Beth: Scooter, you LOVE Popsicles. There's something you're not telling me. Spill!

Scooter: OK, here's the deal. I told Micah and Joe that I'd go see a movie with them this weekend, Zombie Stalker IV...

Beth: [exhibits disgust] Ew! Why?!

Scooter: [meekly] I thought maybe I wanted to see it ... But that's beside the point. Mom told me I absolutely, definitely, could not, in any universe or at any time see it.

Beth: Good call, Mom.

Scooter: Yeah ... I was feeling weird about it anyway. But now I have to tell Micah and Joe. They are going to think I'm such a loser.

Beth: [grabs Scooter's shoulders] Scooter! You are NOT a loser. You are making a GOOD choice. On many levels.

Scooter: I get it, Beth. I'm just afraid of facing those guys and looking weak.

Beth: Good thing you have somebody who goes with you to help out with challenges.

Scooter: [excited] You're going to come with me, Beth? That's GREAT! Oh yeah, I could tell them that I forgot that WE were doing something this weekend ...

Beth: That's not what I meant. GOD helps you when you face a challenge.

Scooter: Oh, yeah.

Beth: Do you really think Jesus—your Best Friend—would want you to see Zombie Stalker IV?

Scooter: No. I KNOW he wouldn't. But it's still not easy to try to explain that to those guys.

Beth: The thing is, Scooter, you can be confident knowing you're making the right decision and God is going to bless it. You never know what might happen because of your boldness.

Scooter: You make it sound like a secret mission, Beth.

Beth: It kind of is like a secret mission!

Scooter: Are you SURE you don't want to come with me tomorrow?

Beth: No, it's all you! I wouldn't want to be a STALKER.

Scooter: Very funny.

[Both exit.]

DOUBLE TEAM

[Scooter enters wearing a glove and tossing a baseball.]

Beth: [enters] Hey, Scooter! How did tryouts go?

Scooter: [unsure] OK, I guess.

Beth: Not so good?

Scooter: I think I played OK. My pitching was decent and I hit a couple into the outfield.

Beth: Then what's wrong?

Scooter: The other guys, like Jeremy and Andrew, kind of teamed up and ignored me.

Beth: Ouch!

Scooter: Yeah. It's hard to get psyched about playing when it seems like nobody's on your side.

Beth: It reminds me of this guy Nehemiah in the Bible. God gave him this big job to do—rebuild the wall in his home city—but when he got there, it seemed like he was all alone.

Scooter: Yuck! I would have just turned around and said, "Forget about it."

Beth: That's not how Nehemiah reacted. You know what he did first thing?

Scooter: What?

Beth: He talked to God about it. Even though Nehemiah felt alone, he knew God was on his side.

Scooter: What happened?

Beth: With God's help, Nehemiah convinced the people to start working together—and he got the job done!

Scooter: That's a cool story, but I don't see how it helps me.

Beth: Scooter, if God wants you on this team, he'll help you make a difference—even if you feel alone at first. When other people seem to be against you, God is on your side.

Scooter: That does make me feel a little better.

Beth: Would it make you feel better to play a game of catch?

Scooter: Yeah, maybe.

Beth: Would it make you feel better to know *I'm* on your side?

Scooter: Definitely! Thanks, Beth.

Beth: That's what friends are for. C'mon! We've got some work to do.

[Both exit.]

GOOD NEWS!

[Beth enters.]

Scooter: [rushes on stage] Beth, guess what! I have some REALLY good news!

Beth: You do? What is it?

Scooter: I, Scooter B. Wilson, am going on vacation! [puts on sunglasses] There will be swimming and boating and jet skiing. [mimes driving a jet ski] Isn't that GREAT news, Beth?!

Beth: [looking glum] Yeah. For you.

Scooter: Oh, I'm sorry, Beth. I didn't mean to make you feel bad.

Beth: That's OK. I'm happy for you.

Scooter: But good news is best when it's for everyone?

Beth: [grinning] Yeah. Like the good news that you have enough money to buy us BOTH ice cream cones.

Scooter: Or like the good news that one of our moms is driving us home from school so we don't have to ride the bus!

Beth: Yeah. But you know the best news of all, don't you?

Scooter: That broccoli is no longer going to be considered an edible substance? I'm kidding!

Beth: That Jesus came to earth to be our Savior, and that he died for our sins and rose again!

Scooter: Oh, yeah! That is GOOD NEWS!

Beth: Think of how happy people must have been that first Christmas, when the shepherds left the stable and spread the word that the person who would save the world had arrived.

Scooter: They would have been happy. Kind of like how happy you are going to be when I say what I'm about to say.

Beth: What's that?

Scooter: Your family is going on vacation, too! My parents talked to your parents and we're all staying at the same hotel.

Beth: Really?

Scooter: Really!

Beth: [pauses then suddenly gets excited] That is so COOL! Thanks, Scooter. That IS good news.

Scooter: That's me—always trying to be the bearer of good news.

Beth: Well, today you succeeded! I need to go look for my sunscreen!

[Both exit.]

POWER SOURCE

[Scooter enters and slumps down in a chair.]

Beth: [enters] Hi, Scooter!

Scooter: Hi, Beth.

Beth: Is something wrong?

Scooter: [could be holding face in hands glumly] Yeah. I keep messing up. I CAN'T control my words with my mom and little sister. I CAN'T be nice to kids I don't like at school. And I CAN'T quit playing bad video games.

Beth: You're right. You can't.

Scooter: [perks up] What? That's not very nice!

Beth: Well, you can't do those things.

Scooter: Now I feel even worse! I can't do ANYTHING right.

Beth: I wouldn't give up quite yet.

Scooter: What do you mean?

Beth: What I'm saying is you CAN'T do those good things that you know you're supposed to ... at least not on your own. But God can give you the power to do them.

Scooter: Oh ... why didn't you say that in the first place?

Beth: Because you were making a good point! No matter how hard we try to live for God, we won't be able to succeed without his power. Even Jesus needed God's power to do miracles on earth.

Scooter: So you're saying there is hope for me?

Beth: Definitely! God will help you to control your words. He'll give you the strength to be nice to your enemies. And he can help you have self-control to keep away from bad video games.

Scooter: Phew! I was beginning to worry!

Beth: The best part is, when you do things with God's help, you'll be much more successful.

Scooter: So then I can say: I CAN?

Beth: Yes, you can!

Scooter: I can SAY, "I can," or I actually can?

Beth: [gives Scooter a look] Both.

Scooter: It's good to know that someone more powerful than I am can help me with hard things.

Beth: Yep. Now let's get going on that can-do attitude. You can start by helping your friend figure out her math homework.

Scooter: [grinning] I think I can handle that.

[Both exit.]

FAMOUS ONE

[Scooter enters and begins to play air guitar and jump around.]

Beth: [enters] Hi, Scooter! Getting ready for the school talent show?

Scooter: Kind of. I was just working on my STAGE PRESENCE. I'm going to be famous someday.

Beth: You are? How do you know?

Scooter: I just know, Beth. That's what I want to be—FAMOUS! [gives a second air guitar demonstration]

Beth: Well, lots of people want to be famous, Scooter. But that might not be God's plan for you.

Scooter: Why not?

Beth: I don't know. I DO know you can make a big difference even if you're not famous.

Scooter: But I want to be like the guitar players I see on TV; they travel all over the world giving concerts and they're REALLY important.

Beth: That doesn't mean that they're the happiest or that they know the most.

Scooter: [disappointed] I hate it when you're right.

Beth: You know, when Jesus was on earth the famous people were teachers? They were called rabbis and everyone listened to them. You had to study the Scripture for years to be able to be a rabbi.

Scooter: That sounds like a lot of work!

Beth: It was. But once someone was a rabbi, he could have followers called disciples.

Scooter: Like fans?

Beth: Yeah, kind of. They would follow the rabbi around and learn everything he had to teach them and try to be just like him.

Scooter: That's kind of cool. Rabbis sound like important people.

Beth: They were. When Jesus was on earth, his followers called him "rabbi." He taught them all kinds of things about God. Sometimes he told stories to make a point. And other times he just preached a sermon. But Jesus always had important things to say.

Scooter: And people followed him around just to hear what he would say next?

Beth: Yeah. Sometimes it's better to be the student.

Scooter: Well, yeah! If I could follow Jesus around every day, I'd want to be a student!

Beth: Even if you weren't famous?

Scooter: [pauses] Yeah.

Beth: Well, Scooter, you CAN follow Jesus around every day and learn from him. All you have to do is read your Bible and become his friend.

Scooter: Cool! Maybe I don't want to be famous when I grow up.

Beth: You don't? Why not?

Scooter: Because it's cooler to follow Jesus.

Beth: That's what I've been trying to tell you.

Scooter: Plus, I still need A LOT of practice to be a decent guitarist. Want to come listen to my talent show selection?

Beth: Sure! You'll always be famous to me!

Scooter: Thanks, Beth!

[Both exit.]

FAMOUS ONE

[Beth enters reading a book.]

Scooter: [rushes on stage] CONGRATULATIONS!!!

Beth: Uh, thanks! But what are you talking about?

Scooter: Your mom told me you got an A+ on your math test. Give me five! [puts hand in air for high five]

Beth: Well, I didn't really ...

Scooter: [does a little victory dance] Got an A +! Got an A+! It's your birthday! It's your birthday!

Beth: Actually, it's not my birthday.

Scooter: Show a little enthusiasm, Beth. YOU'RE awesome!

Beth: [smiling] Scooter, it's YOU who helped me figure out my math and study for my test. I don't deserve any praise.

Scooter: What do you mean?

Beth: Well, I didn't really do anything special. You know who DOES deserve praise?

Scooter: The guy who invented pizza? Kidding!

Beth: No, Jesus.

Scooter: Well, of course he does! He is God's Son.

Beth: And he created the world!

Scooter: And he did all these awesome miracles when he was on earth.

Beth: And Jesus always did what was right.

Scooter: We could go on and on!

Beth: We sure could. Now THAT is a person who deserves praise.

Scooter: You got me there. He is wonderful.

Beth: And there are SO MANY reasons to worship him and put him first.

Scooter: So true. I still think it's cool that you got an A+ on your test. Maybe you can praise God for giving you the brains—and the friend—to help you do your best.

Beth: Now THAT I can do. Thanks for the reminder, Scooter! Jesus even deserves praise for the little things in life.

Scooter: I give your analysis an A+! Let's go celebrate with some ice cream.

Beth: Deal!

[Both exit.]

CHECKLIST

[Scooter enters with a list, possibly on a clipboard, and a pen.]

Scooter: [checks item off list] Paid Mom a compliment. CHECK!

Beth: [enters] Hi, Scooter! Ready to work on that science project?

Scooter: Just a minute, Beth. I'm taking care of some things.

Beth: OK ...

Scooter: [checks more items off list] Raked Mrs. Wilson's yard. CHECK! Offered my little sister the last Pop-Tart. CHECK! Read my Bible! CHECK, CHECK!

Beth: What's with the list, Scooter?

Scooter: I'm checking off all the good things I did today.

Beth: Hmm. It's great to do good things, but ...

Scooter: [checks a few others] Fed the cat. CHECK! Turned in my homework. CHECK! Things are looking pretty good!

Beth: Why exactly did you make this list?

Scooter: It's like this: God loves me a lot, right?

Beth: Totally!

Scooter: So I want to make sure I'm doing everything I can so that I deserve his love.

Beth: Scooter, none of us DESERVES God's love. He gives it to us freely because of what his Son Jesus did on the cross.

Scooter: You mean it doesn't matter how many good things you do?

Beth: Nope. He loves you just the same.

Scooter: What about bad things?

Beth: The bad things we do don't make God love us any less either.

Scooter: Phew! That's a relief! The checklist of bad things would be A LOT longer.

Beth: Part of being a follower of Jesus is accepting his love for us and knowing that we can't earn it.

Scooter: I guess I don't need this checklist anymore.

Beth: What's the next thing on the list?

Scooter: Work with Beth to finish science project.

Beth: You should probably do that one.

Scooter: You're right. Maybe we can use this list to keep track of our statistics.

Beth: Check!

[Both laugh and exit.]

NEW LIFE

[Beth and Scooter enter. Beth is working a crossword puzzle.]

Beth: What is a four-letter word for existence?

Scooter: Um ... hmm ... it's on the tip of my tongue!

Beth: [filling in puzzle] Got it! LIFE.

Scooter: I've been thinking about that recently.

Beth: Life?

Scooter: Yeah. So here's the deal. I asked Jesus to be my Savior when I was 8, right?

Beth: Yes. You told me about that. You were scared of the dark, and so your mom came to pray with you ...

Scooter: OK, we don't need to rehash the details.

Beth: It's not abnormal for children to be scared of the dark, Scooter. It's nothing to be ashamed of.

Scooter: Anyway, I asked Jesus to come into my life, but some days it seems like nothing has changed.

Beth: What do you mean?

Scooter: Sometimes I'm back to my old ways—

Beth: Being scared of the dark?

Scooter: No! Well, sometimes. But I mean having a bad attitude or being mean to my sister or being jealous of guys who have cooler stuff than I do.

Beth: We all have days where sin gets the best of us, but the thing is: it's IMPOSSIBLE for you to be the same once Jesus is in your life.

Scooter: What is that?

Beth: Because when you accept him, God gives you new life! He gives you a new heart and the ability to think about things the way he does.

Scooter: That's cool.

Beth: The best part is, he just keeps changing us and making us more like him. So even when you don't feel like it, you have new life ... ETERNAL life, because Jesus died on the cross and rose again!

Scooter: So something HAS changed. I became a new person when I invited Jesus into my life.

Beth: That's right! And if you ever doubt it, just tell God you believe and ask Him to help you.

Scooter: Thanks, Beth! You make it sound so simple.

Beth: [holds up crossword] Well, it's not a puzzle, Scooter. [looks at puzzle] What is a six-letter word for "pal."

Scooter: I've got it! FRIEND! Like you!

Beth: I try.

[Both exit.]

ANGEL ON MY SHOULDER

[Beth and Scooter enter wearing backpacks, like they're walking home from school.]

Beth: So when Gretchen's paper was just right there in plain view, I had to DECIDE not to cheat. I asked Mrs. Lawrence to move me to a different desk.

Scooter: That's really smart, Beth. I was tempted to cheat once too. Except I did. When I saw the answer, I thought, "Well, I knew that! I was just checking."

Beth: And how did that work out for you?

Scooter: Terrible! I felt so guilty about it that I finally told my mom. She went with me to tell Mr. Keller. It was one of the hardest things I've ever done.

Beth: But I'll bet you felt a lot better after you did it.

Scooter: I did! And I wondered why I didn't just do the right thing in the first place.

Beth: Yeah.

Scooter: I saw this cartoon the other day where this kid was trying to decide whether he should pull a prank on his friend. An angel popped up above one shoulder and a devil popped up above the other.

Beth: Oh, I've seen that before! The angel was telling him he should be nice to his friend and the devil told him to do the prank because it would be SO funny.

Scooter: Yeah. Sometimes I feel like that kid when I'm tempted to do the wrong thing ... like there are two voices having a battle.

Beth: The thing is, those cartoons make it seem like the angel is the weak one, but the good voice inside us is strong. It's the Holy Spirit.

Scooter: That voice telling us to do the right thing is the Holy Spirit?

Beth: Yeah! That's part of his job. After we believe in Jesus, the Holy Spirit comes inside us and helps us live for God. He helps us know when there's something we should do and helps us say no to sin.

Scooter: So the voice telling me to do the right thing isn't like a wimpy angel on my shoulder?

Beth: No way! The Holy Spirit is super-powerful because he is God.

Scooter: Whoa! So next time I'm tempted, I'm going to tell that wimpy voice telling me to make the wrong choice to BE QUIET.

Beth: That's a good idea. Sometimes the Holy Spirit's voice is soft, but it's definitely worth listening to.

Scooter: I feel a lot better knowing he's inside me, helping me to do what's right. Kind of like a superpower.

Beth: Yeah, usually cartoons aren't the best place to figure out what's true about God. By the way, you still watch cartoons?

Scooter: Oh yeah. Cartoons are AWESOME ... to watch with my little sister.

Beth: I see.

[Both laugh and exit.]

PRISON BREAK

[Scooter and Beth enter from opposite sides of the stage.]

Beth: Hey, Scooter! How was your trip to California?

Scooter: Cool! We got to see the Golden Gate Bridge. And I got to ride on a real trolley. And we went to [spooky voice] Alcatraz!

Beth: The famous prison?

Scooter: Yep. It's not a prison anymore, but you can take a tour. It was spooky!

Beth: Didn't some of the worst criminals go there?

Scooter: Yes. And some people believe that some of them escaped! But they would have had to swim half a mile through freezing cold water, so the chances that they're out there ...

Beth: Not very good.

Scooter: Especially since the last reported jailbreak was 60 years ago.

Beth: You know the Bible talks about an amazing prison break.

Scooter: It does?!

Beth: Yeah, after Paul became a follower of Jesus, he started talking about him to EVERYONE. Some people didn't like that, so they put him in prison.

Scooter: That's not fair!

Beth: It wasn't. But you know what Paul did? He sang! He and his partner Silas sang praise to God, so the people in jail would know about him.

Scooter: That's incredible. I don't think I'd feel like singing if I were in jail.

Beth: Not only that, but in the middle of the night God caused a big earthquake and Paul's chains fell off and the doors of the prison opened.

Scooter: Did he escape?

Beth: No. He and Silas stayed to talk to the jailer. And the jailer and his WHOLE FAMILY believed in Jesus!

Scooter: That is a CRAZY story. People always want to escape from prison; they don't just sit there when they can GO FREE!

Beth: But Paul and Silas were different. They cared more about people believing in Jesus than their own freedom.

Scooter: That makes me think.

Beth: What do you mean?

Scooter: I don't know if I'd do the same thing to help someone believe.

Beth: But maybe you would. When you're following Jesus, you never know what amazing things you might do!

Scooter: I'll remember that. Now do you want to hear more about [spooky voice] ALCATRAZ?

Beth: I think I'll pass. But you can tell me more about the trolley.

Scooter: [as he and Beth exit] Well, it went up these GINORMOUS hills. And it had a bell that rang every time we came to a ...

[Both exit.]

IMPORTANT JOB

[Scooter enters wearing a hard hat, work clothes, and carrying a hammer. Beth enters from opposite side.]

Scooter: Beth, we've got a job to do!

Beth: I know. I'm so excited to help fix up the Peabody's house.

Scooter: I am a man on a mission. I'm not stopping until that house is fixed. I've been practicing hammering nails all week!

Beth: Uh, Scooter ... we're not doing actual repairs. We're doing yard work and painting the kitchen.

Scooter: What?! [looking dejected] Then what am I going to do?

Beth: There's still plenty to do. You can pull weeds. Or paint the porch. Or help clean the junk out of the garage.

Scooter: I guess you're right.

Beth: Sometimes things don't go exactly as planned, but that doesn't mean you have to stop serving.

Scooter: I know. But I want to do a REALLY important job!

Beth: You have one. Serving God in any way—no matter how small—IS the most important job you can have.

Scooter: I guess I see what you mean ...

Beth: Remember Paul from the Bible?

Scooter: Yeah.

Beth: He had all kinds of adventures while he was serving God. One time he was shipwrecked on an island for three months. It may have felt like he was being kept away from the important job.

Scooter: But that was what God had planned?

Beth: Exactly!

Scooter: I'm still disappointed I don't get to use my hammer, though.

Beth: Well, you could always help me put together that birdhouse I've been wanting to build.

Scooter: That sounds awesome! I am just the guy for the job!

Beth: [smiling] I believe you are.

Scooter: Now, let's go help the Peabody's. What we have to do is pretty important.

[Both exit.]

PLACE TO BELONG

[Beth enters, sketching in a notebook. Scooter enters looking a bit down.]

Beth: Hey, Scooter! What's wrong?

Scooter: I didn't get invited to be part of the club.

Beth: What club?

Scooter: The top secret Kingdom Quest club. Danny Jackson started it two years ago, and all the best players get invited.

Beth: [sniffs] Personally, I don't like "top secret" clubs. Too many people get left out. Clubs should be for everyone.

Scooter: But this club is SO COOL! The guys sit together at lunch and share tips and secrets for playing Kingdom Quest ...

Beth: That online game?

Scooter: Yeah. Anyway, they talk about how to beat worlds and then after school they all go online and go to the same places so they can chat about their adventures. [looks down] I really thought I'd be chosen. I love Kingdom Quest!

Beth: I know you're disappointed, Scooter, but there's a real life Kingdom Quest, that's WAY more exciting than the game.

Scooter: What do you mean?

Beth: A few years after Jesus went back to heaven, one of his disciples, John, had a vision. In it, he saw Jesus coming back again ... as King, riding a white horse.

Scooter: That's pretty cool.

Beth: Not only that, but John saw what heaven looks like. What he saw was SO BEAUTIFUL and amazing that he could hardly describe it. He used things like gold and rubies to describe what he saw.

Scooter: So John saw God's kingdom?

Beth: Yeah! And it was the most incredible thing he'd ever seen. And it gets even better.

Scooter: It does?

Beth: Yeah. There's no "top secret" club. God's kingdom is for EVERYONE who believes. It doesn't matter if you're rich or poor, short or tall, kid or adult, cool or un-cool ...

Scooter: I get what you're saying.

Beth: Scooter, it's the PLACE we were created for! And we'll get to go there someday and live FOREVER with our King. You don't need Kingdom Quest, when you've got that.

Scooter: You're right. A real life place to belong is way better than an online kingdom. That's just inside the computer.

Beth: Plus, you're on a quest, Scooter. To introduce people to Jesus and follow the adventures he has for you!

Scooter: You're right, Beth. The best clubs are for EVERYONE.

[Both exit.]