



CHOICES

BROKEN
PROMISE

ELEANOR

ROBINS

Chapter 1

Josh's Promise

Josh stood in his driveway. He was washing his car. His dad was helping him.

Josh sprayed some water on the car. He put the hose down. Then he picked up a cloth. Josh started to wipe the car with it. He asked his dad, "Do you know what next week is, Dad?"

His dad laughed. Then his dad said, "Yes, Josh. I know. It will be six months since you got your driver's license."

Josh said, "It has been a long six months. I can hardly wait for next week to get here. Then Kate can ride with me."

Kate was his girlfriend. They had been dating for four months.

Right now only a member of Josh's family could ride with him. Kate couldn't ride with him. And they had to ride with someone else when they dated. So they had to double date.

His dad said, "Next week one of your friends can ride with you. But only one friend. Don't forget that, Josh. You can't have more than one friend ride with you."

"I know, Dad," Josh said.

All of Josh's friends were under 21. And only one friend under 21 could ride with him at a time. That was the law.

"Don't forget that, Josh," his dad said.

"I won't," Josh said.

"Don't let more than one friend ride with you at a time. Or you will take a big chance. The police might stop you. Then you will be in big trouble," his dad said.

"I know," Josh said.

Then his dad said, “You know you can’t double date. And you know your friend, Phil, will want to double date with you.”

Phil was Josh’s best friend. And Phil did want to double date with him. Phil had already talked to Josh about it. But Josh had told him that they couldn’t double date.

“Yes, Dad. I know. I told Phil we can’t double date,” Josh said. Josh and his dad didn’t talk for a few minutes.

Then his dad said, “I want you to promise me something, Josh.”

“What?” Josh asked. But he was sure he knew what his dad wanted him to promise.

“Promise me that you will only have one friend in your car at a time,” his dad said.

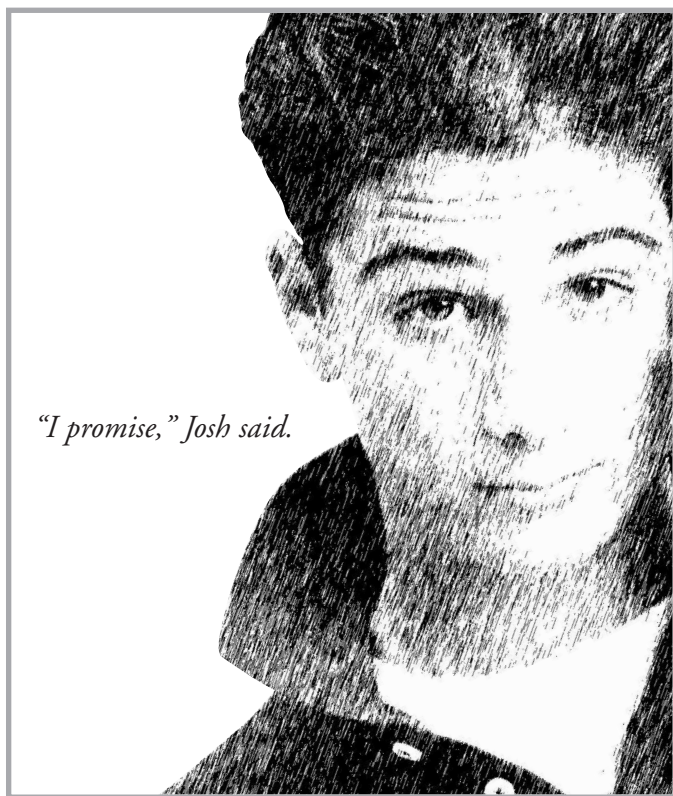
“I promise,” Josh said. And Josh meant it.

His dad said, “Don’t break your promise to me, Josh. Or you know what will happen.”

“I will take your car away from you. You know I will do it. And it will be a long time before you drive your car again,” his dad said.

“Yes, Dad. I know,” Josh said.

Josh didn't have any doubts about it.



Chapter 2

Phil Wants a Ride

It was the next Monday. Josh was at home. His teachers had a meeting. So Josh had a day off from school. His dad had a day off, too.

Josh said, "I thought this day would never come. I have had my driver's license for six months. Now Kate can ride with me. I can hardly wait to take her for a ride."

His dad said, "Don't forget, Josh. Only one friend can ride with you at a time."

"I know. I won't forget," Josh said.

"Just don't forget you made a promise to me, Josh" his dad said.

"I won't forget, Dad," Josh said. He knew he had made a promise. And he would keep it.

"Is it OK for me to go over to see Kate now? I'd like to take her for a ride." Josh said.

His dad said, “Yes, Josh. But don’t stay out too long. You promised you would help me with some yard work.”

“I know I did, Dad. I won’t be gone long,” Josh said. Josh hurried outside, and got in his car.

Then he sent Kate a text message on his cell phone: *Kate, are you home? Do you know what today is?* Kate called him back right away.

Josh said, “Hi, Kate. It’s me.” He asked her again, “Do you know what today is?”

But he knew Kate already knew.

Kate said, “You know that I do. You have had your driver’s license for six months today. Now I can ride with you. And we won’t have to ride with someone else when we date.”

Josh said, “Yeah. And I won’t have to worry about finding someone to drive us places.”

It had been hard to find someone to drive them places. Most of his friends were his age. And they couldn’t let a friend drive them.

Phil wrote: *OK. Call me.*

Josh said: *I will.*

Phil wrote: *I will be glad when I can drive Susan.*

Susan was Phil's girlfriend.

Josh texted: *Not too much longer.*

Phil answered: *Yeah. I know. Two months is too long.*

Josh wrote: *I have to go. Can't text and drive. Call you later.*

Phil texted: *OK.*

Josh started his car. He could hardly wait to get to Kate's house. Josh would take her for a ride.

Chapter 3

Kate is First to Ride

It was ten minutes later. Josh stopped his car next to the curb in front of Kate's house.

Kate stood in the front yard. She ran over to Josh's car. She quickly opened the door on her side of the car. Then she got in.

She had a big smile on her face. She said, "This is great, Josh. Now I can ride with you."

"Yeah. I know," Josh said. Josh had a big smile on his face, too.

"Am I the first person to ride with you today? Or did you take Phil for a drive first?" Kate asked.

"You are the first person, Kate. Phil called after I talked to you. But I told him he would have to wait until later," Josh said.

"Thanks for taking me for a ride first, Josh" Kate said.

“You knew I would,” Josh said.

“I knew you had better take me for a ride first,” Kate said. Then she laughed.

Josh laughed, too. Then he said, “Fasten your seat belt, Kate.”

“OK,” Kate said. She quickly buckled her belt. Then Josh pulled away from the curb. And he started to drive down the street.

“Where do you want to go?” he asked.

“I don’t care. We can go somewhere. Or we can just drive around. Whatever you want to do,” Kate said.

“Let’s just drive around. That way more people might see us,” Josh said.

“I am all for that. I like to be seen with you,” Kate said.

That made Josh smile. They drove around for a few minutes. Then Kate said, “I can hardly wait until Friday night.”

“Why?” Josh asked.

Kate said, “You know why. Our school dance is Friday night.”

“I forgot about the dance,” Josh said.

“How could you forget about it?” Kate asked.

She sounded surprised that Josh had forgotten.

“All I could think about was that my six months were almost up. And I couldn’t think about anything else,” Josh said.

“Then I guess it is OK you forgot about the dance,” Kate said.

Josh wanted to tease Kate. So he said, “You do want to go to the dance with me? Don’t you, Kate?” But he knew Kate did.

“You know I do. And you had better want to go with me,” Kate said.

Josh smiled at Kate. Kate smiled back. Josh knew he needed to keep his eyes on the road. So he turned and looked at the road.