


C H O I C E S

double- cross

E. Robins

 SADDLEBACK
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chapter

1

Braden was at home. He was out of school for the summer. And it was the first morning he didn't have to go to school.

He went into the kitchen. It was almost time for breakfast.

His mom said, "Breakfast isn't ready yet, Braden."

"Do I have time to read the paper before we eat?" Braden asked.

"You can read it for a few minutes. But not for long," his mom said.

Braden wanted to read the car ads. So he hurried into the den. He knew the paper would be in there.

His dad was in the den. He was reading the paper.

“Can I read some of the paper, Dad?” Braden asked.

“Sure, Braden. Which part do you want?” his dad asked.

“The used car ads,” Braden said. His dad gave him that part of the paper. Braden said, “Thanks, Dad.”

Braden started to read the ads about used cars for sale. His dad read the other part of the paper. The two read for a few minutes.

Then his dad put the other part of the paper on a table. And he went into the kitchen.

Braden read five or six more ads. Then he found just the car he wanted.

And it was the right price for him. He could hardly wait to tell his dad and mom about the car.

His mom called to him from the kitchen. She said, “Breakfast is ready, Braden.”

“Okay, Mom. Thanks,” Braden said. Braden put the paper down on the table. And he went into the kitchen. His mom and dad were at the kitchen table.

Braden quickly sat down at the table. He put some food on his plate. Then he started to eat his breakfast. He ate for a few minutes.

Then he said, “I saw an ad in the paper. A car dealer has a used car for sale. And it sounds just like what I want. And it’s the right price for me.”

His mom said, “What kind of car is it, Braden? And how much does it cost?”

Braden told his mom.

His dad said, “It doesn’t matter what kind of car it is. Or how much it costs. Braden doesn’t have any money to buy a car.”

“You could loan me the money, Dad. And I could pay you back,” Braden said. “With what, Braden? You don’t have any money,” his dad said.

“I can get a job. And I can make some money. Will you loan me the money for the car? And let me pay you back later?” Braden asked.

“I’ll be glad to help you get a car, Braden. But I won’t make it easy for you. First, you’ll have to earn some money. So you’d better get busy and find a job,” his dad said.

“But where?” Braden asked.

“I don’t know, Braden. You’ll have to look for one. And you should start doing that today. Or the summer will be gone

before you know it. And you still won't have a job," his dad said.

"What about the car I read about in the ad?" Braden asked.

"What about it?" his dad said.

"Can I call about it?" Braden asked.

His dad said, "You can call about it, Braden. But it would be a waste of your time. You can't buy it."

Braden thought his dad would say that. But Braden still had to ask him.

"Make some money this summer, Braden. And then look for a car," his dad said.

Braden knew what he had to do. He had to look for a job. And he had to do it quickly. Before some other teens got all of the summer jobs.

chapter

2

It was the same morning. Breakfast was over. And Braden's dad was ready to go to work.

His dad told his mom good-bye. Then his dad looked over at Braden. He said, "A lot of kids might be looking for summer jobs. So you'd better get busy and look for a job today, Braden. Or all of the summer jobs might be gone."

"Okay, Dad. I'll look for one today," Braden said.

But where should he look first?

His dad had to go to work. So Braden didn't have time to ask him. Braden's dad left to go to work.

Braden looked over at his mom. He said, "That used car is just what I want, Mom. Can you get Dad to loan me the money for the car?"

His mom didn't say anything. She just looked at Braden.

Braden said, "I'll try very hard to get a job. Then I can make some money. And I can pay Dad back. Will you get Dad to help me?"

His mom didn't look pleased with Braden. She said, "You heard what your dad said, Braden. You have to get a job first. And you have to make some money. Then talk to your dad about helping you get a car."

"But, Mom," Braden said.

“You heard what I said, Braden. You have to get a job first. So do that. And forget about buying a car right now,” his mom said.

His mom wouldn't try to talk his dad into helping him. Braden was sure about that. So he could stop trying to get her to do that. It would be a waste of his time. And his mom might get mad at him too.

Braden said, “I've never tried to get a job before. So what should I do first, Mom?”

“Look at the help wanted ads in the paper first. Maybe you can find a job in there,” his mom said.

“Good idea, Mom,” Braden said.

Why didn't he think of that?

His mom said, “And you can walk downtown. Look in the store windows. Sometimes stores have help wanted signs