

Here I AM

A story of Angels

By Annette Aben



I write about angels from what I know of them. While I have had many experiences with the angelic realm, I am still amazed and delighted when I experience a bona fide "angel moment". By that I mean a moment where I know that I know I have been aided by, spoken to or comforted by an angel.

Angels have spoken directly to me, providing guidance I was seeking. Angels have moved me out of harm's way when I was too frightened to move myself. Angels have wrapped me in their wings in times of great distress. I have called out to angels to relieve me of tremendous pain and have been calmed and soothed as I believe they took the pain from me. I have prayed to the angels to surround family members or friends I know to be in tremendous turmoil. When I heard their situations had been made right, I knew it was the angels who stepped in to help. So, do I believe in Angels? Absolutely!

As far back as I can remember, I have marvelled at the photos of winged, peaceful beings printed on the pages of books and in magazines. Their docile faces, their flowing robes and curious (to me) wings, conjured up fantasies of what they would feel like to touch, how they would sound if they spoke out loud and where they were for I never saw an angel walking around my neighborhood. When I would find myself in a church, there would often be strategically stationed statuary and I would once again find myself lost in thought of their existence. Christmas trees boasted Angels at their tippy tops and of course there were coarse tales of how those angels got there. No one could fool me, for I saw the boxes of them at the craft stores and I "knew" one could buy a "fake" angel and put it over a light for the sake of saying you had an angel on your tree.

Songs sung at special occasions were filled with lyric line praising the glory of God through the harps and sweet voices of these beings who lived only to serve. Since these were just about the only ways I had experienced angels while I was growing up, imagine my surprise to know they actually wanted to get to know me as much as I wanted to get to know them.

To say it was a dark and stormy night wasn't precisely accurate for it was winter and the ground and the sky were bright with snow. However it was night and it had been storming most of the time. It was December of 1993 and I had directed a children's play for the local theatre group. There were only two more performances, that evening's and the matinee the next day. Of course I was at the back of the house each and every time the cast of characters made their way to the footlights and brought to life the roles they had been assigned. Seated next to me was my assistant director, Mike, and right on cue, we would begin the applause, whoop with excitement at the proper places and generally make laughter ring at the appropriate moments. The actors would remark they knew they were doing okay when they heard us or they knew they were able to go on because they were seeking to please Mike and me. Regardless, we were as much part of their hearts as they were the show.

On Saturday, after we finished the mid afternoon cast party, I pulled Mike aside and mentioned I had to be somewhere that night; I was singing at an Advent celebration at a church in another county. Of course I had agreed to that honor prior to accepting the duties of directing the show and well before knowing how much it meant to the cast that Mike and I were there to cheer them on from the rear of the darkened theatre. We came up with a plan where I would be there for the curtain to rise, Mike's wife would be seated with us and when I slipped out during a scene change, she would take over cheerleading duties. I would be back just in time for curtain call and hopefully, no one would be the wiser.

As planned, we took our seats and when the time was right, I slipped out the door, got into my car and headed for the Advent evening. I kept thinking of how easily everything had gone, no one really paying attention to me leaving (why should they when there was this fabulous show to watch). The roads were not really clear but I was a good driver and knew I could make it, after all, I used to live up there and knew I-75 like the back of my hand. I had a relatively new car and it was in good shape, so no worries. That was, until the truck appeared.

Now... I am no stranger as to how to behave when there are trucks on the highway, I used to work with drivers years earlier. I had tremendous respect for their needs on the road and usually gave right of way, no questions asked. Well that night I could not see to my right nor my left for the lights of the 18 wheeler engulfed my GEO Metro. I could feel him bearing down on me, I could see the lights getting closer but as I could not see if it was safe for me to change lanes, I knew I had to stay where I

was. After all, he could see all around my vehicle, and it was his choice to change lanes or slow down.

The road was snow covered so I tapped my brakes to let him know I was riding on a slick surface however he did not retreat, in fact he came up so quickly I knew I was going to die. I grabbed the steering wheel, locked my arms at the elbows and in my heart said good-bye to my cast, family and friends. I apologized to my friend, Barb and her guests at the Advent celebration for not being able to make it and held on for what I knew would surely be my last breath.

As I drew that breath I felt my entire car being moved, moved I tell you, to my left, into the other lane. It happened so matter of fact, I was speechless. As my eyes glanced to my right, I was to see the car hauler fly past me in the lane I had occupied only seconds earlier.

The rushing sound of a freight train was all I heard and it seemed to take forever to pass me. Yet in a matter of seconds it was a bright spot of light ahead of me and my car was moved back into the middle lane.

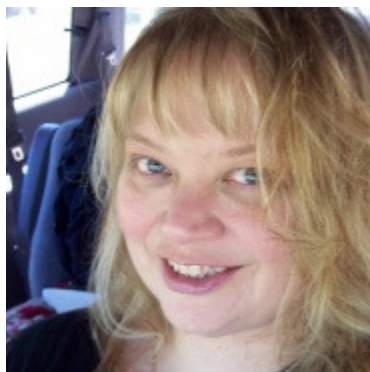
Lights were all visible around me by then and I was aware of how incredibly packed the expressway was, cars everywhere. My arms were still locked straight and stiff onto the steering wheel and I was crying for I wasn't really sure what had just happened. What I knew was that there was no way that could have happened and yet I knew it had.

When I arrived at the church, I was a dishevelled sight. Barb took me aside and asked what was wrong and with my eyes misting over again, I told her my story. Some of the women ran outside to check my car, another woman made me a cup of tea and yet another poured me a glass of wine. I was too shaken to sing right away so Barb went to speak to the woman in charge of the event to see if we could delay for a few minutes. When she returned, she had the woman in tow and asked if I would mind not only singing the opening song but being the keynote speaker for she knew the others would be touched by my story. After all, weren't we celebrating a time of miracles? Besides my song was "Here I Am Lord."

Well now, I said sure and the next thing I knew I was telling my story to the room full of misty eyes and soft cries of praise and thanks. By the time I sang the song, which I held until after the speech, I was so grateful to God for my life I believed that very song was my solemn promise to be of service however I could, where and whenever I could for I figured that was why I was spared. As the crowd of women rose in applause I was jolted back into the real world and I glanced nervously for a clock. Like Cinderella bolting for the pumpkin coach, I flew to Barb, hugged her and reminded her I had to rush back to Monroe for there were 35 people who expected to see my face when the house lights came up. She guided me to the door, hugged and kissed me for luck and said a prayer.

The ride home was smooth as silk, the road crews had been out and the pavement was dry. I could count the number of vehicles I saw on both hands. I cried and laughed for the joy in my heart, the love I felt had to be that of the Holy Spirit and how I believed that Angels moved my car.

I slid into my seat just as the lights came up for the curtain calls and I was back up as though I were spring loaded, whooping and whistling with all my might. Laughing at my apparent "instant energy", Mike and his wife joined me making the greatest fuss over our exhausted little family. When the house lights came up, Mike leaned over and asked me how it went. I turned to him with misty eyes and said, "Here I am!"



Annette Aben says, Life is good! I believe those words and live those words. Through creativity, I find peace and balance. Because I allow myself to vary the activities, writing, drawing, painting, jewelry crafting and photography, I am always enthusiastic about what I am doing.

My furry companion, Baby, is featured in many ways in my projects. I photograph her, draw her, write about her and am so grateful to have her energy in my life. Website: <http://innerchildartwork.com>