

“When Angels Were Women”

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I have been blessed in my life to meet several women who acted and were angels to me due to the support and assistance they provided to me directly or through my family. I narrate below a few episodes that emphasizes my gratefulness to God and to them.

The Stranger, My Mom’s Midwife, My Angel

My late father had a shop and he increased the price of sugar by a cent because of the cost of transport. He was accused and summoned to attend the law court. So, he traveled 100 miles from his place of work, but when he arrived home he found his wife in labor. The baby was overdue. He went to call his brother to assist him to take his wife to Hospital. It was late at night. They constructed a home-made stretcher out of sacks, and they carried her for an eight miles’ journey by foot. They were accompanied by my two elder sisters. In those days, there was no vehicle in our village. It was a mud road and it was raining, and the road was slippery. They had carried a kerosene lamp to light their way but along the way, the glass broke and so and they were walking in darkness.

When they had traveled for about four miles they reached a nearby village where my father knew a man who had a lorry truck. He called on him and asked for assistance, and they all got a ride. However, on the way my mother said that she was about to deliver. The driver parked the vehicle on the road side and my sisters ran to a nearby house to seek help. They talked to the owner of the house and she accompanied them back to the parked lorry truck. The visiting woman played the role of a midwife and a new baby was delivered. That baby was me!

The good “Samaritan woman” took mom and her daughters to her house. The men went back home the following morning. Neighbors of our host came to learn about a new baby that was born and the women came to see the woman who had given birth at the road side. They brought various gifts like food, firewood, milk and water. We were all entertained by this good Samaritan and her neighbors. We stayed at her house for one week. She later came to our home with some women and they brought some more gifts. Our friends came to thank this woman and her friends for their kindness. She was a real Angel to me and my family.

This woman was married for ten years without a child. After one year she conceived and gave birth to a baby boy. God thanked her for entertaining a stranger. The angel guided her to perform God's will.

When I grew up, I was taken to her house and I was shown the place I was born.

My Nursing College House-Mother, My Angel

The other episode was when I joined School of Nursing. During my second year in college I was diagnosed with bleeding duodenal ulcer. It was so scaring to see myself vomit blood. I was put on medication and special diet. I was exempted from night duties. I had extreme worries of how I would help my parents plus my other siblings and this made my vagus nerve overactive and was secreting excessive acid. This burned my mucus membrane of the stomach and I eventually developed an ulcer. I am the tenth born with two more siblings after me. It was rather strange for me to be so much concerned and carry this burden over my shoulders. However, I finally succeeded in providing the support I had visualized after I graduated as a nurse. I helped my family financially and medically.

I truly thank God for sending me an angel who was our house-mother. She was in-charge of catering department and nursing dormitories. Throughout my training period she made sure I was getting the special prescribed by the Doctor. And she also gave me moral support till I graduated.

A Stranger, Kiosk Woman, My Angel

In 1982 there was an Airforce coup in our country. Incidentally, on the same night we were celebrating the birth of our son Eli. Some of the celebrants started to go to their homes during the late hours of the night. However, one woman came back terrified and she told us that the soldiers were on the streets shooting people, and even her car had a bullet hole. We were all shocked and our celebration mood turned into sadness. We listened to the radio news and all what we could hear was, "The government is in the hands of Airforce command; stay wherever you are; the Police should stay like civilians." The house was near the road and three soldiers came into the house at 4.30 a.m. each holding AK47. They demanded food and drinks. They ate hurriedly, mixing Vodka with Gin. At that time, I was hiding under the bed with my baby. We were so lucky they left without any incident.

My cousin who had attended the party was reported missing. I felt so sad because I had persuaded her not to go home since we were not very sure of the situation but she could not listen. She wanted to go home to find out if her parents were safe, since their estate was near the Airforce

barracks. I got so many calls because word had gone around that she was missing. Her relatives were getting anxious because there was possibility that she could have been killed. I became very worried because she was the only one missing out of those who had attended my Party. All the others from the party had arrived to their destinations with minimal hardships. I asked for transportation at State House because I was working there by then. I was given a vehicle with armed soldiers. As we reached the City, I saw a lot of blood on the streets, and many were shops broken into. People were walking holding their Identity cards with their teeth, and their hands raised up high. It was an awkward scenery. Some men were wearing women's clothes and wigs because men were more targeted. Some of the rebel soldiers were also wearing women clothes to disguise themselves. On encountering all these I became very scared and I requested the soldiers who were guarding me to take me back, but they said "the motto of soldiers is to move forward". As we approached a busy road junction, gun shoots erupted from the roof tops aiming at the Army tracks patrolling the city. Our vehicle stopped at the road side and all the soldiers disappeared. I also went out to take cover, and I ran to the nearby kiosk attached to the tall building where the rebels were hiding attacking the armed soldiers on the roads and inside the city. Inside the kiosk, there was a man and a woman who were not happy to see me. I was so scared and was moving from one corner to another because of the excessive gun shots. The woman threatened to kill me and commanded me to lay on the floor. As I lay facing towards the road, I immediately saw boots of the soldiers moving in a slow motion with their backs leaning towards the kiosk. I was so grateful to this woman because if the soldiers had heard any commotion inside the kiosk, they would have sprayed us with bullets thinking that we were the rebels.

Shortly afterwards as the gun fire ceased, I heard someone asking, "Where is the nurse?" I jumped out and we hurriedly went back. When we arrived at my house in State House, I asked them, "How come you all jumped out and none of you told me what to do?" One of them told me that whenever a soldier hears gun shots, the first thing to do is to take cover. I felt sad because I could have been shot while running because I did know whenever you hear the gun shot, you are supposed to lie down. When I entered my house, I became so emotional and when I held my baby the tears were welling from my eyes. I was thinking that I might have never seen my baby and my husband again. During my near-death encounter, I was praying to God to spare my life for them and for my parents too. When my husband saw me, he was so thrilled. He was a Police Officer and he could not have imagined how I dared to go to town in such a big mess. He was anxiously waiting for me after he arrived home from town where they were chasing the rebels. I felt so sorry for putting him into such a big shock. I explained to my husband that so many people called me by phone concerning my cousin. Consequently,

I made a wrong decision to go to look for her, even though she had defied our advice not to travel because we were not sure of the security situation. Luckily she took refuge at a nearby Estate and arrived to her parents safely on the following day.

I have no doubt in my mind that the kiosk woman who was menacingly harsh to me also acted like my guardian Angel. I praised God the coup was thwarted without much blood shed.

The Neurologist and Her Mom, My Angels

When I came here in Philadelphia to visit my niece, I got my first job as a Caregiver in a Jewish family of two parents and their single daughter, a Neurologist by profession. I was to take care of her mother who was 93 years old. They were so kind to me and truly considered me like one of them. I told the daughter about my background, my family, and how I worked in my country in a position equivalent to a Nurse practitioner here in United States. I told her that I came here after retirement. She became so impressed at my humility and my love towards her mother. Her father was also 93 years, a very bright retired Lawyer whom I learned a lot from his wisdom. Since the daughter had resigned to take care of her aging parents, we were always together whether it was for shopping or attending medical appointments. Sometimes the people at the clinic were astonished to see the elderly lady accompanying me for my Doctor's visit. One day she and her Mom took me for tooth root canal and I was so grateful because no matter how long it took, they were Okay. I was truly loved by this wonderful family.

Whenever Dr. (as I always addressed her), went to King of Prussia the girls at the store would jokingly ask her, "Where are the other two?" It is only to the Church where we did not go together because they were Jews. She admired my devotion to prayers and once she wrote a small note to me that I have made her to come closer to God. As Mom's final days on earth were approaching she told me she will leave all her jewels to me. I really cried because to me she was like my real Mom. She died three days later at the age of 100 years. Both her daughter and I were holding her hands. Dr. and I are like sisters up to date. Dr. is indeed my angel. May God give Mom eternal rest.

My Current Employer, My Angel.

I got my current job immediately after the death of the Doctor's Mom. A lady and her husband brought the dogs of our neighbor. Since the neighbors were not home, the husband came to ask if the Dr. could help. Luckily she had the keys to the house and she took the dogs there.

Later the lady came to tell the Dr. to ask me if I knew someone who would take care of her mother. The Dr. told her that her Mom had already died and she would ask me if I was interested to take another job as a Caregiver. My reply was yes. I immediately started taking care of this new Mom. This Mom is an angel to me for she loves me as much as I love her. She is a Christian and we always say our morning and night prayers together.

One day when I had executive guests from my country I also invited my current Mom and her family to come to meet my guests. We had a very nice time at my sister's house and as we were socializing her daughter mentioned to my guests that their Mom is alive today because of the best care I take for their mother. This was a very good complement and I thank God for it.

To date, I am still working for Mom and her love for me and that of her entire family makes me comfortable. I pray to God to give her a healthy and peaceful life.