



Hugged by an Angel Healing a Birth Mother

M.W. Story 27

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four grown daughters
and grandma of eight
darlings.*

It is the day before Christmas, and I have presents scattered all over the bed waiting to be wrapped. I know I should finish wrapping them but it is only lunchtime. I can wrap them after lunch, I rationalize. While showering this morning, memories of a Christmas past came pouring back like the water spraying from the shower head, inspiring me to write another story. It is an old story. I've written it down in bits and pieces over the years and shared it with a few, but maybe it is time to share my angel story with more than a few.

This story begins 25 years ago with me attending a Christian silent retreat. Our retreat director was leading a retreat on the Beatitudes. Father Dick was doing an amazing job talking about all the blessed people described in the Beatitudes. "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted" kept replaying in my head. Listening to Father, I realized how much I had been mourning and how low I had become. After one of his talks, I spoke with him and explained my sadness. Having given up a baby daughter for adoption 17 years prior, all the sadness had finally overwhelmed me. As we talked and I cried, he said, "Maybe it would help to write a letter to her even if you never are able to share it with her." So I wrote a letter, pouring out the feelings that lay hidden in my heart. After I wrote it, I kept feeling internally nudged to share it. This idea seemed crazy to me,

as I was on a silent retreat. I also kept telling myself that I am a rather shy private person, and I couldn't possibly get up and share this story in front of forty or so women. This thought of sharing my story was bold and quite persistent. "If you share your story, the thought said, maybe you will feel forgiven and be able to move on. You don't know any of these women so what a perfect place to share your story. Maybe sharing your story will help someone else who is struggling." I had a hard time arguing with my thoughts so I relented.

So I asked Father Dick if I could share my letter to my daughter. About three sentences into the letter, I broke. Crying harder than I ever had, I couldn't finish it. Another woman nearby, stood and finished my letter. Afterwards, everyone in the room hugged me. As one of the women hugged me, she whispered in my ear. "You will be with her someday, if not here on earth, you will be together in heaven." As we finished hugging, I pulled away from her embrace and looked into her face. I saw her golden, curly, chin length hair, and then gazed into her eyes with tears still in my eyes. In her eyes, I saw the bright blue sky with puffy white clouds but no pupils... She moved away and others continued to hug me. Afterwards, I sat down and looked around the room to find this woman to see her real eyes. I must have imagined her eyes, I thought. I looked and looked and continued to look for the rest of the retreat. I never saw her again.

People will believe what they want about angels and angel stories, but to me she was an angel. She told me what I so longed to hear....I would be with my daughter again someday, and I would go to heaven. The two things I needed most to hear, she whispered and healed my soul. She was definitely right about meeting the baby girl

I gave up for adoption. The year 2000 became the special year I heard from her, and our story truly began together.

Eighteen years have passed since my first letter from Colleen. Such a blessing to have her back in my life. Now she is also a part of my three other daughters lives...so thankful. She flew in this morning with her family, her husband and two adorable children, for Christmas. I am so excited to attend Christmas Eve church with her and her family and her parents tonight!

An angel gave me hope and I am eternally grateful!. I needed hope and forgiveness and was comforted as I mourned. Now I feel like my angel will be smiling down on us as we attend church and celebrate the Christmas holidays together. I believe as I age our stories need to be shared to remind each other of hope, and how a loving God blesses us, just as Jesus proclaimed in the beatitudes.