

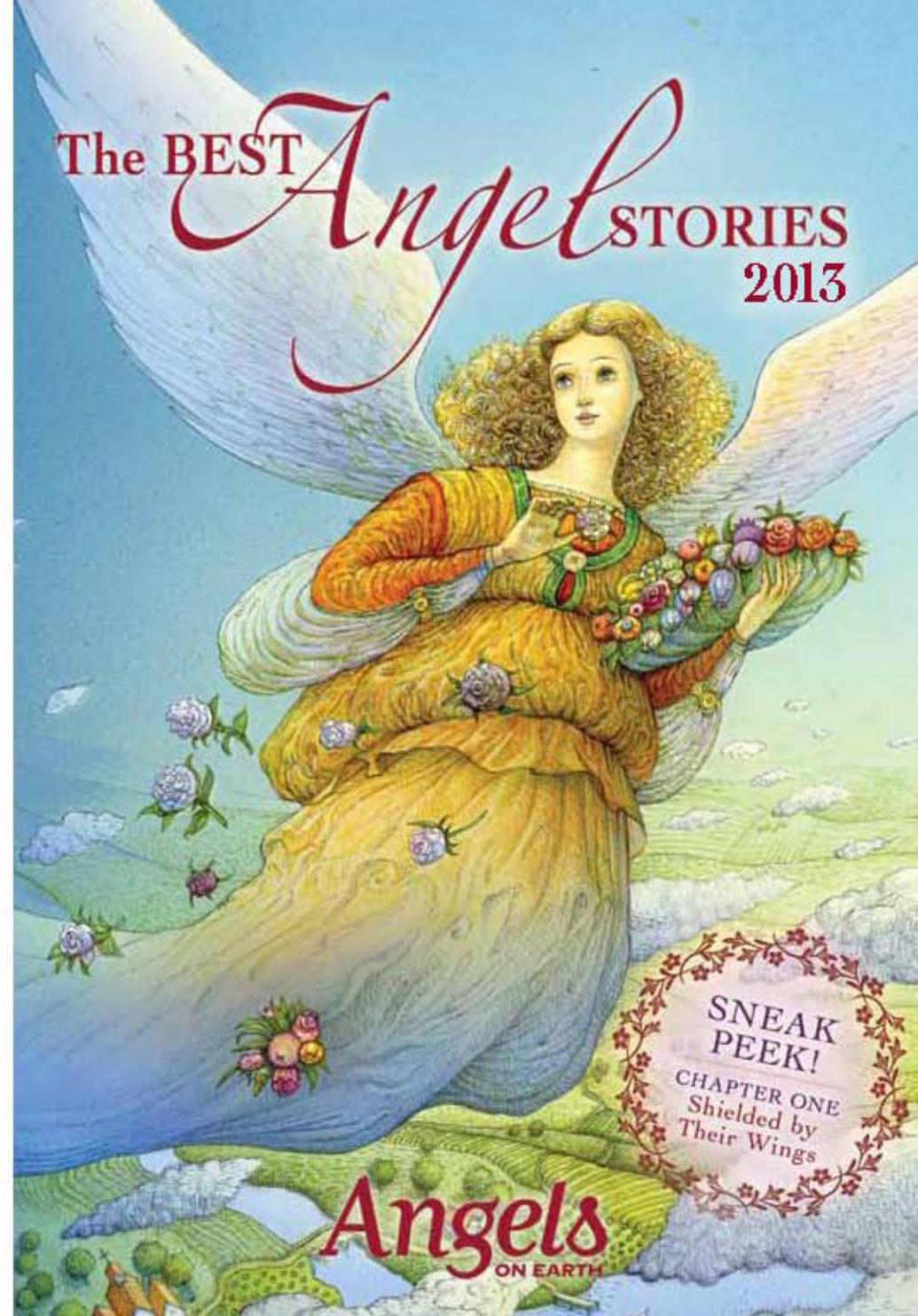
Shielded by Their Wings

Chris got in the car. "Am I crazy, Mom?" she asked.

"No." Her mother was firm. "This is definitely the place."

Then how...? Suddenly Chris understood, and like the shepherds at that first Christmas, she was filled with awe. Her angels had worn blue jeans instead of white robes. But they had delivered the same timeless message to her and to anyone willing to listen:

*Fear not. The Savior is here,
and He cares about you. Alleluia!*



CHAPTER 1

Shielded by Their Wings



The Best Angels Stories 2015



Our Evening Walk

by Donna Griffith

MOM AND I ALWAYS relied on one another. I worked at a fast food restaurant, but before and after my shifts she served me the best home-cooked breakfast and dinner a girl could want. Plus she gave expert foot rubs, which came in handy. But most of all I looked forward to our evening walks.

One evening we walked down the road to the first major intersection. “Look both ways before you cross,” Mom said.

“Always the mother hen,” I said. *Always trying to take care of me. Just like I’m always trying to take care of her. Lord, I wish we had someone to take care of both of us.*

There weren’t any cars coming, so we stepped into the crosswalk. Halfway across the street I heard screeching wheels. A late-model sedan was barreling right for us! There was no time to run. “Jesus,” I mumbled, braced for impact.

That’s when I felt them: two strong hands on my upper arms. The car was so close I could make out specks of dirt on the shiny front grille. But the second before the collision I was lifted up into the air. I felt a rush of wind as the car

passed me. Somehow I had been lifted out of harm's way just in time.

The next thing I knew I was sitting on the sidewalk across the street, the cool concrete under my palms. *Mom!* I expected to see her lying injured in the road. But she wasn't there. Mom sat a few feet away from me. "Are you all right?" she asked.

"Yes," I said. "How are you?"

Mom sat up straight, and took a big stretch. "I feel fine, thanks to that man," she said.

"What man?" I asked.

"The man who picked me up and carried me over here just as the front of that car brushed passed me. How on earth did you get out of the way in time?"

"The man who helped you must have had a friend."

We looked around in either direction for our saviors, but there was no one in sight. I was unsure about exactly what had happened, but I'd never felt so cared for, so safe and secure, either. Maybe there was someone else Mom and I could rely on.

Times are easier now. Mom and I still take our evening walk. And our angels walk with us.



Angels in Blue Jeans

by Joan Wester Anderson



THE PRE-CHRISTMAS SNOWSTORM had blanketed a wide patch of rural eastern Pennsylvania, and Chris Clark Davidson probably should have waited until the roads were plowed before she, her mother and her two small sons attempted a drive. But Chris's grandmother lived alone over a hundred miles away, and couldn't get out to buy groceries. "We'll be fine," Chris reassured her mother. "We'll take that shortcut that we use all summer."

They found the shortcut, and turned onto it. Chris had forgotten how narrow the road was, especially with drifts piled high, and wind blowing snow across the fields. Usually chatting on previous drives, neither woman had noticed how deserted the area was. When another vehicle roared around a curve, Chris swerved, and skidded into a snow bank. The other car kept going.

The wheels spun uselessly as she tried to pull out. "Mommy, are we stuck?" toddler Phillip asked, from under his blanket in the back seat.

"Looks that way, honey," Chris admitted. They had only seen

that one car since they'd turned onto the shortcut. How long would it be before someone came along? How long before the freezing temperature invaded the car's interior? And why, oh why, had she worn SANDALS and pantyhose instead of warm boots?

Chris got out, her feet plunging into a high drift, and looked around. *Lord, please send us some help*, she prayed. Then she saw it—a silo and barn roof peeking up from the hills, about a quarter-mile away. “Mom,” Chris leaned in the car, “I’ll walk down to that barn and see if anyone’s there. Keep the kids warm.”

The journey was incredibly cold, and by the time Chris pushed open the barn door, her feet were icy. A welcome blast of heat greeted her, along with the mooing of heifers in their stalls. It was a working dairy, clean and well organized, with a shiny window fan circulating the air.

Even better, Chris heard young male voices behind a stall. Maneuvering around fresh manure, she followed the sound and came upon two farmhands in overalls and flannel shirts, kidding and teasing each other. They stopped and smiled when they saw her, and quickly she explained the situation.

“Stay here!” one said, tramping past the cows and out the door. A few moments later, Chris heard a horn honking in front of the barn. There he was, driving a blue pickup truck. “Get in!” he shouted.

Chris hesitated. She didn't know these men. And yet there was something so merry about them that she couldn't feel afraid. She and the other farmhand scrambled into the pickup, and bounced down the road. There was the car, her toddlers bundled up and

Mom waving. The driver roared across the field, spun in a wide circle and screeched into position in front of it. “Way to go!” his buddy yelled.

Chris gripped the seat. “Do you always drive like this?” she asked, only half joking.

The driver shrugged. “Well, it ain't our truck.”

Within minutes, the men had freed Chris's car, and she opened her purse to reward them. But both backed away. “It was our pleasure, Ma'am. Just drive safely.”

Not like you, Chris grinned as she pulled away. *But they had been wonderful guys*.

Chris didn't realize just how wonderful until two weeks later when she and her mother decided to make a return visit to her grandmother. Since the snow was almost melted now, the shortcut was safer. Soon the silo and barn roof came into view.

“Let's stop and let the guys know we made it to Grandma's that day,” Chris suggested. But when they pulled up in front of the barn where Chris had climbed into the blue truck, she could hardly believe her eyes.

For the barn was vacant, shabby, with paint peeling and door hinges hanging loose. Bewildered, Chris wiped away a heavy film of dirt and cobwebs on the milk house window and peered inside. Where were the heifers, the floors littered with fresh manure? Even the fan was rusty. “You couldn't have seen any farmhands or cattle there,” the woman at the next house told Chris when she went to inquire. “No one's worked that property for years.”