



*Claire's Story*

*“How can I tell you that I love, I love you,  
But I can't think of the right words to say...  
I long to tell you that I'm always thinking of you,  
I'm always thinking of you, but my words just blow  
away, just blow away...  
It always ends up to one thing, honey,  
And I can't think of the right words to say...”*

*Cat Stevens*

New angels are very rare in heaven. I don't know why that is: it just is. Somehow, it always seems to work out that there are just one or two new angels at a time in heaven. Now, that's not too bad really because the older angels dote over the little ones. In fact, baby angels might even be said to be spoiled, if such a thing can happen, from all the attention they receive.

Heaven doesn't change much: it doesn't have to, really. For years and years new angels came, lived with the older angels, and grew into old angels themselves. Everyone seemed pretty happy - there wasn't much to be unhappy about. There were chores to do, and songs to sing, clouds to tend, children on earth to watch over; all in all, heaven was a pretty good place.

Time passed slowly in heaven, and angels have many things to do. It hadn't occurred to any of the older angels that a baby hadn't visited them in a long while. But the oldest of the angels noticed that something was missing, some new joy, a spark of life. A baby hadn't been with them for a long while.

Now, I don't know how these things happen, but one day the older angels got to talking. They wondered what was wrong. It had been too long since a young one visited them. Yes, it had been too long: was something the matter?

We all know that heaven is perfect; how could something be wrong? That's where Claire comes in;

*you see, Claire was a baby angel. It seems that she was found by a group of angels the same day that the older angels wondered if something was wrong.*

*Baby angels are always found. They usually turn up by a cloud, or next to a fountain, or in another angel's bed. I can't figure it out, that's just the way it is.*



*But, we were talking about Claire. She was beautiful, even for an angel. She had blond, curly hair; rosy red cheeks and a little dimple at the corners of her mouth when she smiled. Claire always smiled. Oh, and her wings - they were like gossamer - shimmering and sparkling like the glint of sunlight on a pool of water. Yes, Claire was beautiful and all the older angels loved her at once.*

The older angels took turns watching Claire and teaching her things that she would need to know. She learned how to sing her hymns, and it was very pleasant to hear her singing in her high-pitched little voice. She went with the older angels when they went to watch over the boys and girls on earth. She learned how to tend the clouds, and clean the stars so they shined ever so brightly. But best of all, she liked to listen to the older angels talk about God. She often asked them to tell her the "God stories," as she called them, and would sit and listen to them for hours at a time.

Some of the older angels had actually seen God, and a few had talked to Him. Claire wondered what God was like. Oh, she knew from the songs that He was good and kind, but she wondered what God was really like. Would He be handsome, she wondered, and would He like young angels? Would He like to fall through the clouds and bump from one to the next, laughing for the fun of it? Would His laugh be warm and joyful, and would He like to sing? Could you hug God, and would He hug back; was God afraid at night, when only the stars illuminated the night? But how can you ask these things of God, when you're only a baby angel? Did God have time for baby angels; it seemed that running the whole universe was a very big job, after all.

Claire liked being on earth watching over the little children. On earth, children seemed to be the same age as Claire. It was nice to be near someone her own age; not that heaven wasn't nice, but everyone was so

*much older than she was. There were older people on earth, too: they were called mothers and fathers. Claire liked the mothers and fathers because they took care of the babies and children. But it seemed that each one of the children had only one mother and only one father.*

*Now, Claire began to wonder. How come children on earth had only one mother and father, but Claire had so many? Claire told this to the other angels - she thought it was unfair. How come the children on earth had only one mother and father, but Claire had so many?*

*“Why Claire, we’re not your mother or father. We are just other angels. Angels have no mother or father, at least, not like children on earth do,” said the other angels.*

*And what seemed unfair to the poor earth children just a few moments before, now turned into something far worse for Claire. For it was Claire who had no mother or father; it was Claire who was all alone.*



Now, angels are not supposed to be sad. How can you sing beautiful songs if your heart is breaking? How can you mend the silver lining of a cloud when your eyes are filled with tears? How can you fly about on gossamer wings when you are weighted down by cares? How can a little angel be so alone in a heaven filled with other angels? I cannot say, for I cannot read into hearts. But if I could, I would tell you that Claire's heart was broken.

Claire was sitting on a cloud. It used to be her favorite cloud - the cloud she would come to when she practiced her favorite songs, or played with her friends the butterflies, or laughed at fun the little children on earth were having - but now it was just a cloud. She was sitting on the cloud and trying bravely to sing a song, but all she could do was cry.

"Why are you crying, little one?" said a man who appeared next to her on the cloud.

"Pardon me, sir?" asked Claire.

"Why are you crying, little one. This is heaven; no one cries in heaven," said the man as he smiled at her, and brushed aside a strand of golden hair that got in her eyes.

"Oh, it nothing, sir; I'm just sad. I'm trying to sing, and clean the clouds, and watch the children on earth, like I used to. I'll try harder," said Claire as she wiped a stray tear from her eye.

*“Don’t be sad, Claire; heaven is not a place for sadness.”*

*“Okay; I won’t be sad. You know, I’ve never seen you before, and I thought I knew everyone in heaven.”*

*“Heaven is a big place, Claire.”*

*“Are you an angel?” asked Claire.*

*“No Claire, I’m not an angel.”*

*“Are you a man then? I’ve never seen a man in heaven before, but I suppose that’s possible,” said Claire as she concentrated on the man’s face.”*

*“No, I’m not a man either, Claire.”*

*“Oh, I see. Hey, you know my name, but I don’t know your name.”*

*“I have many names, Claire, but you can call me Yahweh; it is my favorite name.”*

*“That’s a funny name; why is it your favorite?” asked Claire.*

*“Because it is the name I call myself.”*

*“Oh, then I guess it’s a pretty good name,” said Claire, as she sniffled.*

*“Now tell me Claire, why you are crying?” asked Yahweh.*

*“Oh, it’s not important.”*

*“It’s very important to me, Claire,” said Yahweh.*

*“Well, I forgot,” said Claire.*

*“Come closer Claire, and sit by me.”*

*And Claire rose and sat next to Yahweh.*

*“You are quite pretty, Claire. Have the other angels watched over you and taught you well?” said Yahweh, as he smiled at Claire.*

*“Oh yes, they’re very kind and I love them very much. It’s just that I wish... oh, never mind; forget it.”*

*“What should I forget?” asked Yahweh.*

*“Well, I wish I had a mother and father,” said Claire as she burst into tears.*

*Yahweh took Claire into his arms, and held her close to himself. “I am the way, the truth, and the life, little Claire. I am who am, who made this heaven, earth and stars. And I am also the One who made you, Claire. I am your Father, Claire: you are not alone.”*

*“You are my Father?”*

*“Yes, I am.”*

*“And you made me?”*

*“Yes, I made you, and I Love you, Claire.”*

*“How come I have never seen you?” asked Claire.*

*And Yahweh, knowing that Claire meant her question not as a reproach, but to understand, said “You have seen me in the clouds, in the butterflies, in the children on earth, in the stars at night, in the other angels. For I made them as well, and they take on my life as I give it to them. You have seen me every day of your life, Claire, but did not know where or how to look.”*

*“But why did you come now?” asked Claire.*

*“Because you needed me. I came to talk to you, and hold you, and tell you that I love you.”*

*“Will you always be there when I need you?”*

*“Yes Claire, I will always be here. I am your Father, and that is what I am for,” said Yahweh. And as He smiled at Claire, it was like the sun bursting from behind a cloud, or a million stars pouring their light from the sky; and Claire had to look away just for the briefest of seconds. And then His face was visible, and Claire could look at Him directly.*

*“Thank you for coming, Father. You must be very busy though, with all that you have to do. I will understand if you have to go soon.”*

*But Yahweh stayed with Claire for a long time. Claire sang for Him, and showed Him where the butterflies came, and they looked together at the children playing on earth. And when it was time for Yahweh to go, Claire was very happy.*

*“Call me when you are in need, little one, and I will be there. You are special to me, my child. Remember to help the older angels, and care well for your butterflies. I love you, Claire.”*

*“I love you too, Father.”*

*Claire passed many days and years in heaven. She would talk to Yahweh from time to time. And she remembered the sound of his laughter as they played with the butterflies. She remembered how beautiful His voice was when He sang to her, and she remembered the fun they had as they fell through the clouds, and bumped from one to another, finally landing on one special cloud and sitting together without talking as they watched the sunset. And she remembered that He was not afraid of the darkness that fell after sunset, for He made the darkness and the light, and it was good.*

*Claire remembered these things when she was a small angel, for she was grown now. And each angel when they are full-grown must have a task that they*

perform. I don't know why that is - it just is. Each of the angels picks their task, or their task picks them; it is hard to say. And each of them does something that expresses their true nature, and no matter what the task, each angel is happy to do it. And in each task that they do they are joyful, and in their joy they give thanks to God.

But Claire's task was different than most, because even if Claire didn't have to perform a task, she would have. It just seemed that Claire was supposed to do this; it was what she was made to do. You see, Claire chose to be a guardian angel. Her work was down on earth. For she loved the earth and its children - for her Father made them, just as He made her.



*Now, even among guardian angels, there are different sorts. Claire was a special guardian angel, for she would watch over those children who didn't have a mother or father. And she would guard them, and watch over them and ask her Father to help them, as He helped her. And Claire would whisper to them in the night that they were not alone, that God loved them, and that He would be with them when they needed Him.*

*And sometimes a child would have a dream of a beautiful angel, walking through a garden with a man whose name was "I am." And just before the child would wake, the angel would turn to them and tell them that they were loved.*

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