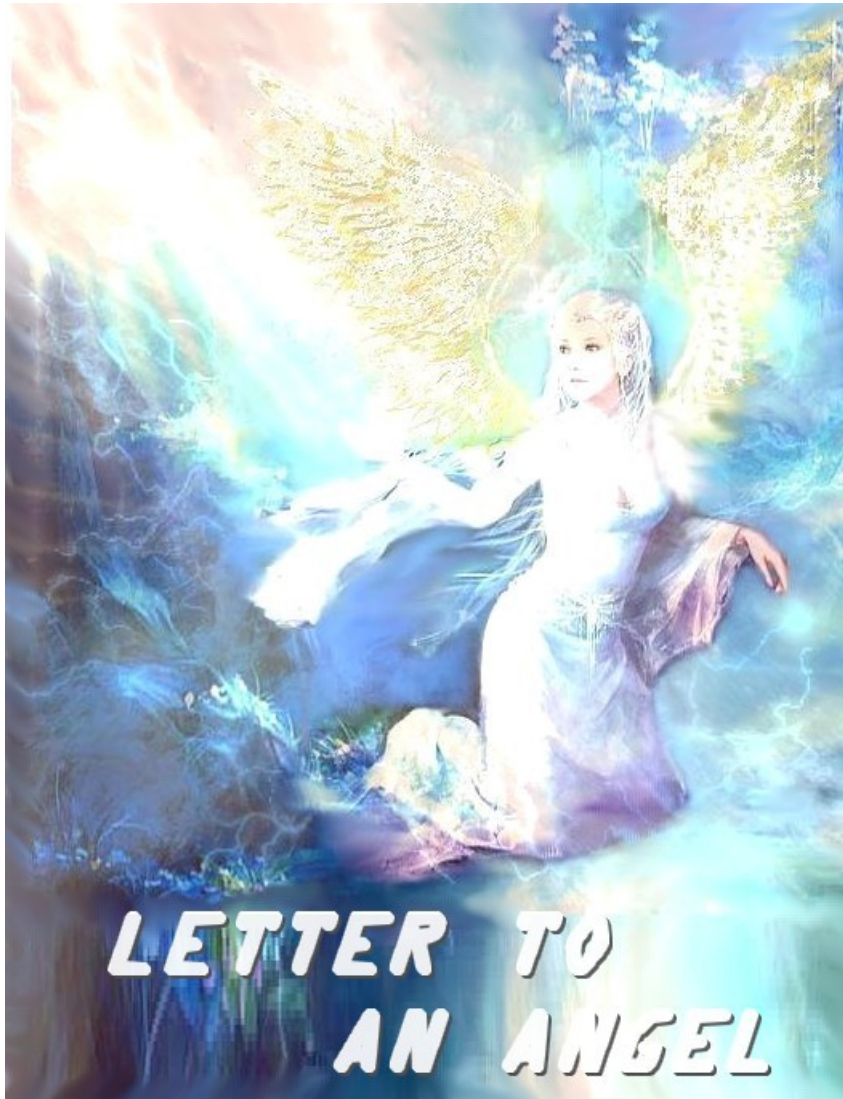


LETTER TO AN ANGEL

by Chrys Romeo



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An Angel of Light

You are not a body: you are a soul.

You are a soul who has a body.

It's important to understand that before you define yourself.

I thought this was going to be about me, but it's not: it's going to be about you instead.

I don't want to mention myself here. I want to mention you.

I believe angels exist. And they're real.

I don't necessarily mean angels as a religious concept, but a more universal and valuable one: for what is an angel? - a superior being with such positive radiance that it outshines and changes reality, making everything brighter, better... and all this without a specific interest other than the good itself.

They are a higher level of beings. Of course, they're human just like everyone else, at a first glance... but the deeper truth is that they are a lot more than expected. Most of the time, they're anonymous and their deeds don't get too much attention from the world. They go on doing selfless acts of kindness and spreading that light of hope around them without claiming glory or appreciation, because their most important purpose and focus is on what they do. Their faces would pass unnoticed in a crowd, but their inner light still shows in their eyes. They are serene and determined, they walk among others as if underneath their feet there are soft clouds, not pavement. Ascending to that level of living takes a lot of positive energy, strong principles, willingness to do good without expecting something in return... and more than anything, a caring heart. Angels are able to feel... and to make others feel as well. They have the power to extend the light of their soul around them, to everything they touch.

Angels are not after material gain. They might need what everyone

needs, but they don't make it their priority. They are special because they go that extra mile to achieve something better: the unmeasurable good that changes the world. It might not be a visible change in the entire world, most of the time it's a definite change in a certain area of the world... or in someone's world anyway.

They don't always wear white or golden clothes: they appear in usual outfits of many colors. Most of the time they aren't very glamorous. They drive their cars, they walk their dogs, they clean their rooms, they make their own sandwiches or coffee. And they do so much more for others: they help, they heal, they comfort, they improve, they instruct, they redeem, they save, they inspire – and they always care. Whatever they do, they do care... a little more than expected, a lot more than recognized.

Sometimes they have no name and they get lost in the tumult of the crowd before one can even say thank you. Sometimes we don't even know they are there, doing something for us that we're not even aware of. Yet

they exist.

If you ever doubt you are an angel, ask me. I'll tell you that you are. I know it. I've seen it: the light in your eyes that switches on the light of reality into another perspective; the heavenly unearthly kindness that is so rare and so immeasurably uplifting to encounter; a smile that can brighten into spring the darkest coldest day of gray cloudy winter... and the power to change reality into a better universe.

I can't begin to describe you: there's too much to say and words are not enough here.

A painting would not suffice to convey the totality of your presence, what it means and how it affects the vision around you. Your soul is so much more than can be shown or imagined: it can only be felt, understood, admired and loved.

The beauty of your soul makes your body a moving reflection of your inner intensity of sublime radiance, sometimes looking like the sparkling

tremor of the sun on water: a clear expression of brightness.

I want to talk about you in a way that a painter creates the most impressive sight, reaching out beyond reality, coloring a vision of the invisible. I want to praise you in a way that a poet surpasses the meaning of words and reaches to the mind of the reader with something inconceivable. I wish I could describe you even though you're indescribable, just like a wonderful phenomenon of a miracle – because that's what you are, something that one can see clearly with the eyes of the heart.

If nobody praised you for everything you do, I will honor you right here. If nobody ever applauded you, I will do it right now. If nobody told you that you are an angel with a golden soul, I'm the one who can say it to you a thousand times until you believe it. Although angels don't need praise, applause or recognition for what they are, they still need to see the effects of their presence on earth. And maybe they need to feel appreciated to keep their light intensely bright.

I hope you don't forget that you are an angel. I hope you don't ever give up being an angel just because sometimes it might seem easier to not care so much, to not do so much and not be sure it's worth it. I know your true nature will keep on shining, no matter what... but even angels get tired sometimes. Even angels have doubts. Even they can give up or fall from the light of their own soul into earthly oblivion. I hope you remember my words whenever you encounter that moment: it's better being an angel even if it's harder. It's so rare and valuable.

What is more spectacular than finding an angel in the most unfamiliar place, in the most desolate of times, in the most unexpected situation? Because the contrasting view between a cold environment and a warm angel can make one feel so alive and hopeful. It can light up everything. I'm sure there were angels in times of war, on the front line, walking through mud and explosives to pick up wounded soldiers. I'm sure there were angels who brought water to slaves in immemorial ages, in dark times of history.

I'm very sure there were angels who showed the way to lost travelers, and angels who rescued and offered shelter to abandoned children or animals during storms. Wherever they were, whatever they did, they gave life a chance.

It was an angel who made me feel I was not alone anymore in a time when I had been.

Of course feeling so much love in an instant was inevitable and irreversible. Can you imagine meeting someone for a short while and not being able to ever forget them? The impact of the encounter with an angel can be so impressive it lasts a lifetime... and the paradox is, one can meet an angel maybe just once in a lifetime. Sometimes the eternity of the light you receive is so intense, once in a lifetime becomes like forever in a day.

I might not meet you again, but the memory and the awareness of your existence still stay with me every day. The afterglow of your eyes looking at me, the warmth of your smile brightening my mind cannot be

erased. I almost believe an angel can read thoughts and feelings like words on a page.

Do you know? The moment I realized I was close to an angel, your features started to become one with the light. The moment I could see your soul I started to lose the sight of your face in my mind. I was so afraid I would not remember what you look like, I started to search for you. I didn't even know your name. I had only a scribbled note... yet I was so determined to find you, it took me three days of relentless search to finally recognize your smile in a picture. I couldn't let you disappear from my life, even if I knew our encounter might be short and unrepeatable.

Angels hide in the most unexpected people and appear at the most unimagined times and places. If you were to think about the people around you, the ones closest to you, the persons you know... which ones would you decide are actually angels? People are people, but sometimes people are also angels... and that is for sure. Now I know.

Do you believe in fate? In coincidence? In things “meant to be” ? In a mysterious supernatural arrangement of the universe? What do you believe in, when you think about moments that seem out of the ordinary? Are they inspiring like in the movies? It’s been proven, life is more surprising than the movies... Do you think it was meant to be that the moment you step out of the doorway you come across someone who had just gotten off the bus to find you - right at the last second when it was possible to meet? Do you know the last time I saw you we had arrived at the exact same moment, but you were in your car, parking it while I was in the moving tramway? Had I gotten off a station before I would have seen your eyes and smile once more. Instead, I only saw the little white automobile and your hands on the wheel: an angel looking for parking space in a cold gray world.

It was one of those moments. Those movie-like moments arranged in the mysterious universe, a coincidental setting of events that stay in one’s

mind as a fragment of destiny. As only angels seem to appear in miraculous circumstances: it's a part of the power that surrounds them.

For what is this notion of the right time and the right place anyway, other than what is necessary to be, to happen? You might be necessary for a certain place in time. Your presence is essential to it.

If you're ever wondering why you're in a desolate place that doesn't have your shiny radiance, if you ever feel stranded in a hostile environment, remember that angels are sent in dark places to light them up and bring them a hope of life.

Your presence could save a life somewhere. It could make a difference when nothing else would. It could improve the direction of things in a way you aren't even aware of.

You're an angel of light and you have that power.

The Time Rider

What makes someone unforgettable? What is the spark that makes someone recognizable anywhere, anytime?

Investigating through files and photographs to find an image of your eyes I came across one picture that stopped time instantly. There it was, the angel smile. However, the photograph belonged to another century. And yet, I was more than certain it was you in that picture on the computer screen. The unmistakably warm feeling of knowing it was you started to erase the contours of the room around me. The meadow and the sunbeams became vivid and undulating upon the walls.

I don't know how you had arrived in that timeless photo from another century, but I was also instantly present in that meadow. The summer sun was burning the dry grass of the yellow steppe from where I saw your

silhouette riding a fast untamed horse in a race against seconds, a revolutionary amazon whose words whistled above the hills with sharp precision:

“They’re torching the trees! Come on, let’s stop them!”

The girl with hair like the steppe yellow grass had hawk feathers knitted at the end of the locks and the horse was also wearing matching feathers, both almost flying over the hills in a rush, followed by a bunch of savage riders yelling battle shouts. I ran to the top of the hill, to look in the distance: there seemed to be some small trees and a group of round tents made of flax cloth that were already on fire. The riders led by the amazon angel chased away the thieves who jumped on a steam train. I could distinguish the moving iron wheels of the primitive train that dashed across the dry steppe, followed by the feather-flying rider.

“Wait!” I shouted realizing it was no longer a painting in motion that I was witnessing from outside – I was already part of the scenery,

watching as you were fading in the distance.

I ran after the train, making a shortcut in a valley. I grabbed the metal bar of the last wagon. The train was rather speeding like an ancient tractor, so it wasn't hard to get hold of. I climbed the coal train. Wherever it was going, I had to join the race, as long as you were there.

The white horse was galloping alone parallel with the steam train. I got inside the wagon.

The moment I stepped inside, the temperature changed. It was freezing cold. Through the open window snow flakes were flying asunder, falling and forming a soft carpet on the floor. I looked outside: the steam train was rushing through snowy rocky mountains. Its speed had increased. It no longer looked like a wooden train: it had metal sliding doors, heavy like those of freight trains during world wars.

“Oh, you're walking. Please go back to bed” , I heard a voice say.

I turned around. You had opened the door of the wagon and were

standing there, looking at me with that wise thoughtful and mysterious see-through-all sideway glance. I stared at the green outfit and the red cross medical cap you were wearing. Then I realized I was only covered in a blanket.

For a moment, I just stood there speechless.

You turned and closed the door.

I looked around at the wooden stretcher that was probably the bed, so I sat on it, wrapping the blanket around me. The snow flakes kept on flying through the window as the train was swaying on the rails, cutting through heaps of snow. I could see the steep high rocks of the mountains rushing by, empty and silent.

I waited for you to return.

You came back: a calm angel followed by a nurse.

I hadn't noticed the bandages on my leg. I watched you as you unfolded them with swift moves.

“Iodine” you told the nurse.

I looked at the wound: a war effect most probably. The bullet had torn the muscles in depth. You cleaned the wound undisturbed. I watched your hands move with ease: so delicate yet so firm and precise. There was a certain finesse and charm in the warmth of your soft fingers with tough movements.

“Everything looks good” , you said casually, as if to yourself.

I wondered if you were saying it for me.

“Give me a smaller gauze” you said to the nurse again.

There was something reassuring about your presence, so in charge and yet so calm, drifting above the situation as if nothing unusual was happening. I knew in that instant that the light of life was already filling the wagon, just from your silent eyes: it was the power of an angel making everything seem alright even in the most terrible of situations.

“He’s the only one who doesn’t scream when I change the

bandages” , you said to the nurse in a language I could hardly understand.

And then you looked at me and smiled, as you finished.

I smiled back.

“Thank you” , I said partly for taking care of me, partly because you saw and appreciated something about me that nobody had noticed before.

It was as if you believed in me more than others. You made me believe in myself at that moment, even if I didn't remember what I might have done in the war or how I had arrived there. That light in your eyes was the sign of an angel again.

At that moment the train jolted and stopped with a deafening whistle.

The nurse looked worried.

“What's the conductor doing?”

You remained calm. You seemed to know more even if you said less.

You left without explaining.

The nurse was set towards the door but immediately stopped when

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