

Smile a day  
The doctor away, as  
here's one for you Today  
Dr. Shy.

## A Heavenly Fantasy

Saint Peter whipped a duster from his back pocket. Wasn't that a speck on the Golden Gates? He rubbed industriously, twisting the cloth into little peaks to reach into the corners, then stood back to regard his handiwork with satisfaction. Yes, he was proud of being the Guardian of the Gates, and dangled his great keys impressively from his waistband. No one entered Heaven unless he admitted them, he reflected complacently. Then the vestige of a frown crossed his face. He had forgotten - only yesterday, Mother Mary had engaged him in conversation, just as he was about to close the Golden Gates, and had allowed a soul to slip through before he could stop it. She had done it before, too, and he'd no doubt she'd do it again. It didn't seem quite regular, but then, it was no use complaining to Jesus, He would just tell him to do whatever she said.

That reminded him - and this time he really frowned - a forward little Guardian Angel had sidled out this morning, when he had his back turned, and hadn't responded when he called to her. He hoped she would come back soon, or he would have to give an account of it.

'Speak of angels, and they appear', so ran the old saying. He had only thought of her, yet here she was knocking for admittance! He had intended being very severe with her, but when he saw the woebegone look on the sad little face, all the inherent kindness in his nature came to the fore. What a disconsolate figure! The wings were drooping, the halo crooked, and she scuffed past him, kicking a golden pebble along the heavenly pavement.

"What's the matter, little friend?" he called after her.

For a moment, it seemed as if she were going to ignore him once more, but after a moment's hesitation, she half turned, and said:

"Oh, nothing. The last soul I was charged with has reached Heaven. I am waiting for my next assignment, and have nothing special to do in the meantime."

Good Saint Peter looked searchingly at the discontented little angel, and said gently: "Don't you think you should see Mother Mary - she would have so many things for you to do."

But the moody little spirit, ~~in~~ not bothering to answer, went on her way. ~~xxxxxxx~~ From the distance, came strains of the Heavenly Harmonies, and the Great White Throne shed its radiance to all corners of Heaven. But nothing seemed to comfort this sad little angel.

Just then, a cherub flew up, and whispered a message in her ear. Mary wished to see her! Before she could ask where to find her, the cherub was gone. Well, never mind, Joseph's carpenter's shop was not far away, and Mary would be sure to be near. She hurried along, straightening her halo as she went, and giving a hitch to her wings. She mustn't let the Queen of Angels see her like that!

Suddenly, as she turned a corner precipitately, there was Mother Mary, with a sweet smile of welcome, leaning forward from her throne, which was on a low ~~the~~ dais. Pulled up short by the apparition, the little angel, filled with confusion, stood twisting a corner of one of her wings, and peeping shyly up at the lovely Lady dressed in blue. ~~She~~ Afterwards, she could never tell how it happened, but she found herself clasped in Mother Mary's arms, sobbing out her discontent. Between sniffles, and in response to gentle questioning, she told the source of her unhappiness:

She had always been given routine jobs - Guardian Angel to uninspiringly good people, blessed with the Faith from birth, leading moderately good lives, dying ordinarily good deaths. Other Guardian Angels had exciting assignments - great sinners, illustrious converts, even saints! She supposed she wasn't worthy enough, but it did hurt

to be given routine jobs all the time!

Mother Mary's smile was tender as she patted the little head. "Never mind, my child, you were doing God's will. That is all that counts. And now I will tell you why I have sent for you. My Son is sending you on the very type of mission you have longed for . . ." The musical accents of the Mother of God went on to tell her that in a certain house, in a certain town, in a certain country called Holland, there was a tiny baby, very dear to the heart of God, who badly needed a Guardian Angel. It was going to grow up to womanhood passing from agnosticism to various forms of protestantism, until, finally, in His own good time, it would be brought into the true fold. This then was the angel's task: To watch over that soul, to see that each new error into which it slipped would not be a final one, to awaken longings which only the One True Church could satisfy. In a word, to see that God's designs with regard to it were not frustrated.

A final smile and encouraging look, and the angel was dismissed. But was this the same angel? Saint Peter rubbed his old eyes as he caught sight of the perky tilt to the halo, the courageous set to the wings, and the happy expression that radiated ~~from~~ contentment, as the Guardian Angel flew gaily up to him, and demanded to be allowed to go down to earth.

The great gates swung slowly open, the angel flew off. For many a mortal year it would be away on the business of the King. Its travels would take it from Holland, to Ireland, to America, to Canada. It would know the joy of hovering over a baptismal font, and of rejoicing with the Guardian Angels of little ones, brought to the Faith by its own special ~~charter~~. And not only little ones, but the Mother of her protegee! And how many more before her assignment was ended. Oh, never again would she complain. Whatever her  
(over)

future missions, This one had taught her the value that God places on a soul. For He goes out into the highways and byways seeking them. Truly, He is the Light and the Way, she thought, and how happy she should be in sharing the Good Shepherd's work.

(finished with more haste than grace!)

Do you know Alice Heynell's

"Thou art The Way.

Hadst Thou been nothing but the goal,

I cannot say

"If Thou hadst ever met my soul"?