

CHRISTMAS ANGEL BY JLNICKY

I want to be daylight in your eyes.

I want to be sunlight only warmer.

I want to be daylight in your eyes.

I want to be love only stronger.

I want to be daylight...

I see it in your eyes.

No Angels

Ryan giggled with tickled delight as she watched the small furry robotic puppy yap at the window as people passed to and fro. Her vibrant green eyes, opened wide, were trying not to blink as she enjoyed the huge storefront window animated Christmas display. She gazed at the huge psychedelic lollipops that twirled slowly around, gleaming in lustrous sweetness. *Could she still eat the whole thing?* Smacking her lips in Pavlovian response she pictured another dentist bill in post and immediately turned her eyes elsewhere.

Small homey miniature Christmas cottages and little log cabins with flickering candles inside were placed strategically among the twinkling lights, moving animals, reindeer and Jolly St. Nick, as he waved his robotic moving arms and chuckled out 'Ho' repeatedly in a tinny recording from within the round red outfit. In the center of the display was a frozen surface with one-inch tall ice skaters, gliding as couples around the edge. A single ballerina figure twirled forever in the middle. Colored tinsel weaved in and out among the miniature architecture. She leaned her forehead against the window, retreating slightly as her warm breath clouded up her view on the outer cold glass surface.

She barely recognized the slight adjustment her body made as her shoulder started to ache from the strain of the bag she held. She shifted stance automatically to lessen the pain. Smiling sweetly she watched the miniature choo choo train as it exited the left tunnel to chug its way around the base of the soft cotton mountain that had been built in the display case, only to enter the right side of the tunnel and disappear. She could barely hear it but the high-pitched whistle tooted out a merry 'woot' as it neared the glass.

Oh to be a child again, she wished silently. She closed her eyes briefly to make the wishing seem more real. Briefly, a face from her childhood rushed in to light up her inner vision. She warmed at the feeling of love that face had provided for her throughout the last twenty years. The childhood memory of when they had met was not as precious, but still, the only one she clung to in today's hard times as she lived each day trying to recapture the same feeling of comfort and love that vision kept reminding her was out there. Her thoughts revolved around her past as she fell into the memory that kept her hopes alive to this day.

The day had been cold and windy. That single call had alerted her. She had turned to see who yelled when the ground had come alive with vibration. A single moment in time showed her what trust and sacrifice

could be. She had met a true guardian angel when she was but ten years of age although she had not realized it until much later.

That angel had blue eyes and raven-hair. A girl she had come to call 'a friend', for lack of knowing her name, had saved her life that day. Without hesitation she had swept her from the jaws of death to hold her and comfort her in the following aftermath of her body's shock from the peril. The entire episode of disaster had taken only moments as the avalanche that had rolled down the mountain she had been playing on had passed by them, screaming down to trap and kill eight other children below. The town folk had arrived an hour later to find Ryan and other survivors frantically digging into the snow to save anyone not accounted for.

At first she had fought the steel grip even as she was bodily picked up and tossed clear of the descending slide of snow, ice, and debris. She remembered the vision of a wild young girl diving after her to land under the overhang of the boulders they were near. Ryan had begun screaming as the noise rose to overwhelm her. The panicked fright had been soothed from her body as she was instantly wrapped in protective arms. The compassionate whispers of tenderness and care had been offered as she blindly listened to the not yet matured voice of the teenager trying to calm her. She had finally quit screaming and slowed her fears to a steady tremble feeling the cocoon of her savior still standing strong. If she had not survived...? If her savior had not been near...? If she hadn't...? A thousand thoughts spiraled through her mind making her grip the body of the young woman closer with each passing moment. The arms that held her had tightened in a comforting response. They had stayed together lying in the coldness feeding on each other's warmth.

She realized much later they had shared something unique and true. For many years to come she had pulled out that feeling of security and safety to purify her growing tainted thoughts of society. Her mind had captured that moment forever. Her soul had treasured all the love she had been given in that one moment of time and her heart had been imprinted with the true vision of what giving could be. Had she fully understood the full magnitude of her ability to celebrate the following two days of the Christmas holiday and eventually every Christmas holiday after that, she would have spent more time trying to find her blessed benefactor.

Instead she had spent the next two days of her quickly ending childhood trying to enjoy the Christmas holiday spirit of Santa and his presents as she attempted to smile and live. She knew she had been scared by her own fragility but human kindness from a stranger and the total sacrifice that had been shared had lessened her fears. Her ten-year-old mind had divided the sum and found the equation to be mathematically equal in its

percentage. If life was frail total sacrifice spent to save her was equally telling. She knew she had been changed but her life had been spared and she needed to remember that. The only tragedy she had not really comprehended was the loss of her savior during the crush of adults that had ascended the site. Much later she had cried not knowing whom she had forgotten to thank.

As she looked at the display all over again from top back down to bottom her smile dimmed slightly with regrets she couldn't avoid. She stepped back from the group of pedestrians beginning to gather around the display window as the evening airs descended. She looked down at the full bag of mail she still had to deliver before she could call it a day and sighed at the tired ache her body had come to permanently know over the last few months. Still without medical or dental she plugged away at the part time positions where ever she could get them and filled in during the holidays to make extra money. Her parents having past away five years ago had left her little and she had been on her own ever since. The snow-covered sidewalk and warming Christmas lights strung between shops and over lampposts usually seemed to lighten her burden. If not for feeling so tired all the time she loved to enjoy the Christmas spirit of the towns small shopping store district this time of year.

Standing in the middle of the sidewalk she was pushed backward by the passing customers as they shared their hustle and bustle holiday spirit hurrying by with frown and stress apparent. Without knowing, she stood on the edge of the sidewalk and was teetering on the curb to the street. Her eyes still reflected inner thoughts rather than reality as she lost focus around her.

A shout of 'look out' was heard as she simultaneously stepped backward onto the street. She hadn't noticed the oncoming transit bus flying up from the busy street corner either. The squeals of a twenty-ton bus trying to stop its forward progress barely registered as just like before someone grabbed her and tossed her into a soft snow bank off to the side of the building.

She didn't struggle this time. The hero for this day ignored the screaming bus and yanked her from its imminent path. She ended up wiping the snow from her eyes just in time to see someone approach her where she lay sprawled in the snow bank. She blinked as her green eyes moved up the long legs standing over her. They passed upward over the slender waist line to dance merrily at the decidedly Christmas candy cane colored sweater of red and white thick stripes to slide over the red scarf tied around a slender neckline and finally to meet the gorgeous dark blue, full of concern, eyes focused on her.

"Are you alright?" Her husky voice asked as she squatted down to the snowdrift level to assess the damage. She brushed off some snow from Ryan's pant leg and quickly gave her a once over to make sure no bones had been broken. Leaning forward her black hair that had been pulled back in a ponytail managed to wrap around her neck and fall over her shoulder.

Still sitting in the snow bank she felt the panicked fright being soothed from her body all over again. The tone was more mature but the voice was the same. She could recall that voice from her past even if she had been blind folded. She gasped in recognition.

“It’s y..yo..you!” She stuttered badly as the cold suddenly chilled her throughout. Her eyes had opened wide and she trembled from shock and surprise.

A worried frown crossed the classical features looking down at her. An arched eyebrow was the only response to her exclamation. Ryan felt the wetness of the snow seep into the seat of her pants. She tried to untangle her limbs from their sprawled position and stand up. A hand was thrust into her vision as aide.

“Come with me and we’ll get you all warmed up again.” The darker woman said calmly as she quickly gathered up the mail lying over the snow bank and stood upright holding the mail bag over her shoulder and eventually the sodden form of Ryan within her guiding grasp.

Ryan followed the tall woman back past the group of pedestrian gawker’s standing in front of the small store window. She was then guided in through the front door of the same shop she had been admiring. The tinkling sales bell over the door rang fancifully.

The inside of the store was no less astounding than the display window. Christmas cheer and good will were symbolized everywhere. The merry style shined from the detailed displays as the sparkling, twinkling lights and hundreds of various ornaments on various shaped trees stood over multitudes of colorful gift wrapped boxes. Along with a huge pile of teddy bears, an old fashion candy counter, a life size nativity scene taking up the entire back wall there were hundreds of snow globes and snow figurines set throughout the store. The soft Christmas tune of “Let It Snow” floated in the air, while Ryan tried not to trip, as she was lead further into the holiday menagerie.

The taller woman brought them both back to a curtained area at the back of the store. Whisking aside the curtain she lead Ryan through a small hallway into an apartment in the back. She gently pushed her into a comfortable recliner and reached over to snag the thick heavy blanket resting at one end of a nearby couch. Ryan sat shivering as the cold from her snow play leeches into her body. She was eventually handed a steaming cup of hot chocolate and managed to sip it carefully as she soaked in the warmth from two additional blankets draped across her.

“Are you feeling better?” That rich tenor spoke to Ryan after the shivers stopped. Ryan sipped the hot chocolate and grinned a shy little smile. Her verdant eyes looked at her savior shining with wonder. Sapphire eyes regarded her curiously. A short glance at her blonde hair and green eyes had a question rising in their depths.

“Have we met?” The dark haired woman asked, even as she reached out and tucked a dangling stray wet lock of hair behind Ryan’s cute ear. Ryan nodded slowly as she carefully sat the mug of hot chocolate on the table beside the chair. She turned back to

look at the woman and graced her with a smile that came from the depth of her soul. The radiant glow of her features had the taller woman swiftly drawing in a breath.

“I’ve been meaning to thank you and now I can. Thanks for saving my life!” Ryan managed to say with only a slight tremble of emotion. The sincerity and passion with which she made the heartfelt declaration had the taller woman hesitating to blow off her actions as obscure. Instead she tilted her head down and a slight blush deepened the sun-tanned features to a darker tint. Ryan reached out and lifted the woman’s chin with her delicate touch. She wasn’t finished. “Not for just today’s gift although I guess I should thank you for that too! But for the time you saved me years ago, on the mountain, during the avalanche.”

Blue eyes widened in surprise and confusion. She squinted in thought and then gasped with amazement.

“That was you?” Her voice spoke uncertainly but Ryan could see the recognition light up her eyes. She had acknowledged their connection before she fully understood. That snowy mountainside meeting between them, that day, had affected her just as deeply! Ryan felt her heart melt slightly at the affirmation of deeply buried emotions being reflected in her ‘friends’ eyes.

A trembling hand was raised to wipe the single tear that fell from the corner of Ryan’s eye.

“Thank you so much!” Ryan managed to whisper, her voice husky with restrained emotion. She reached upward from the blankets and captured the larger hand holding it to her cheek in reverence. Time fell away as her savior gave a gentle smile while they sat again bonding from their separation of twenty years. Ryan had let her gaydar tell her the message of her friend’s obvious butch ways. Overlooking the possibility that tall, dark and beautiful may not be gay, Ryan fell into the depths of her blue eyes willing her to see the love that had been lying in wait for just such a moment as this.

“What is your name, my double savior?” Ryan teased slightly as they slowly separated, both still feeling a pull to be close.

The taller woman rolled her eyes at their ridiculous etiquette malfunction and grinned at those mesmerizing sea green eyes.

“My name is Angela. You are...?” Ryan giggled slightly and ducked her head in shyness.

“Ryan.” She stated already absorbing the perfect name her savior owned. She was surely an Angel.

“Merry Christmas, Ryan!” Angela whispered as she tucked another stray lock of hair behind the blonde’s ear. Ryan blushed and nodded.

“Merry Christmas to you too, my Angel!” She finished her declaration by leaning forward and kissing the taller woman on the cheek. Her soft sigh of contentment at the floral scent the woman wore had Ryan slowly backing away from the close encounter. She looked up into surprised but blushing features and grinned her irrepressible devious smile that had her nose scrunching up in irresistible cuteness. Her smile was met by a bold, rich laughter that warmed her deeply.

“I think I’m in trouble here!” Angela smiled warmly and chuckled at the quick nod of agreement Ryan gave her.

“Can you do me one little favor, Angela?” Ryan asked, hesitating slightly. Angela nodded before the favor was asked. Ryan blushed.

“Would you give me a hug? I could really use one from you!”

Angela frowned and a worried look passed over her features. She immediately leaned over into the chair and wrapped her long arms around the smaller figure there. Ryan felt the warmth and closeness of her savior once again envelop her and she started to cry at the feeling of security and love. Angela tightened her hug and before either knew it she was sitting beneath Ryan holding her in the cradle of her lap.

“Don’t cry sweetheart. Everything is OK. Don’t cry. Hush!” Whispers were surrounded her as Ryan sobbed out the misery of her hard life. She clung to her Angel with a fragility that adults seldom showed around others. Only someone with whom she shared a bond of life and love with could she breakdown so completely in front of. Angel held her close and soothed her softly. Ryan fell asleep in her arms.

Hours later in the dark of the evening, Ryan awoke to find she was tucked into the thick winter covers of a queen size bed. A night lamp was glowing and showed her the alarm clock reading 10 pm and the glass of water thoughtfully left for her to drink. As she sipped its contents she read the note left in a bold scrawl.

Dear Ryan,

I contacted your office and they sent a mail carrier out to pick up your route. I explained about the accident and that you were recovering. Your supervisor told you to contact him tomorrow. I am in the front of the apartment running the store but will close tonight around ten. Please rest and we will eat when I get done locking up. Sweet dreams,

Angela, your Angel

Ryan lay back down and sighed heavily. She stared at the ceiling thinking of all the things she had wanted to ask Angela and how much she had wished for the opportunity to

thank her all these years. Now that she had all Ryan could think about was how gorgeous and wonderful her savior actually was.

Ryan grabbed a pillow from the other side of the bed and smothered her-self with a squeal. Angela was so beautiful.

“Ryan? Is something wrong?” Ryan jerked the pillow off her face and looked at the dark haired beauty in shock.

“No...um...I was just...” Ryan shook her head, lost as to what to say.

Angela smiled at the petite creature tucked into her bed. She tried not to imagine more but her blue eyes darkened with an inner passion as she imagined that blonde hair and small figure lying across the covers naked. She closed her eyes quickly and turned to remove her jewelry. Ryan had caught the aroused glance given from Angela and had dealt with a surge of heat rushing over her own body. She watched the woman perform her nightly ritual and thought of nothing but taking off more than just the jewelry she wore.

They both were breathing deeply as their gazes clashed.

“Let’s get something to eat and then we can catch up.” Angela stated, as she moved closer to the bedside and held out her hand to help Ryan up from the bed. Ryan grabbed the hand and held it even after standing. Angela looked down at the bold blonde and squeezed their joined hands letting her know it was more than good. Ryan smiled and motioned for Angela to lean closer. Angela leaned down and a kiss was gently pressed to her lips. She stood in amazed shock as she felt the warmth and desire grow in her body. She deepened the kiss by opening her mouth as Ryan’s tongue pressed inward.

The stood kissing each other in such familiarity that neither felt the urge to separate. The kiss was glorious to both. The moment grew and they finally broke apart to breathe into each other with desire. Angela knew she was in deep trouble as they stood staring at each other, overcome with longing. Ryan heard her stomach growl even as they both moved forward to kiss again. Slightly embarrassed they both chuckled.

“Let’s go eat, baby. Then we can discuss this insatiable desire of yours that we can’t stop exploring.”

Ryan nodded and blushed. Angela pulled her out of the bedroom and into the kitchen where they spent the next three hours getting acquainted over left over lasagna and coffee.

Epilogue:

Angela and Ryan became partners for the rest of their lives. Ryan quit working her long list of losing part time jobs and helped Angela at her year round holiday store. They

spread cheer and happiness to all they met. Three years into their relationship they held a ring ceremony where Angela gave Ryan a golden sphere wedding band that had ‘From your Angel’ engraved on the inside.

They both decided the Goddess of Fate had taken a hand in their destiny and had given them more than a chance to meet their soul mate. In fact she had given them two chances, thank the goddess, and the second time destiny had arrived!

The End