

# A Little Miracle

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Some years ago, shortly after my daughter graduated from high school she came to my wife and I and announced that she was leaving our home and moving in with a friend of hers.

“What’s your fiend’s name?” I asked.

“Shelly,” was the reply.

We didn’t know this Shelly person; we had never met her or her parents. We didn’t know anything about them except they were not members of our faith. This had us concerned. For one thing we came to understand that a big reason for our daughters desire to move out was freedom. At that time in her life she was young, she was restless, she was feeling a little rebellious, and she was tired of living by our rules. But we also understood that she was impressionable.

We had never met the roommate. Was she a drinker? Did she do drugs? What kind of morals did she uphold? What kind of people did she hang out with? Did she even have a faith or believe in a God? We could only wonder what our daughter would be exposed to in her new surroundings and how those things would impact her. She was so young.

We talked to our daughter, expressed our concerns, and pleaded with her to think and pray about this move. We tried to make sure she was aware of not just the immediate, but the eternal consequences of her decision. She told us she had thought a lot about it, she said she prayed about it, and she had made up her mind. They were already looking at apartments.

In desperation I served up one final volley, in hopes that we could win a point. “What do Shelly’s parents think of this idea?” I asked.

“Shelly says they are totally cool with it” was the reply.

It went straight into the net. Our hearts were broken, but what could we do. She was of legal age, she was out of high school, she had a car, and she had a job. We could only stand idly by and watch as she started down a path that was to us perilously filled with potholes and pitfalls. We were anxious and afraid for our little girl.

Time passed and we had additional discussions, admittedly a few became a little heated. We talked, we prayed, we cried. We tried to use reason, logic, and even a little bribery, but in the end her mind was set. Then one day she announced that they had settled on a place. They would be putting down a deposit and signing the lease on her next payday.

Game over.

Shortly after her announcement, I had to go out of town for a brief business trip. I travelled a lot back then. By that point in my life I had been to a lot of places and had flown on a lot of planes. I would have considered myself a seasoned traveler. However, on the final leg of the return trip, a small 2 by 2 jet from Dallas to Colorado Springs, I did something that I had never done before. It wasn't a big thing, but it would ultimately prove in my mind to have big meaning.

I was at the end of a very long day, and I was tired. I staggered onto the plane and sat in a seat. A fellow passenger a few persons behind me kindly informed me that I was sitting in his seat. I looked at my ticket, I glanced at the seat numbers posted on the overhead bins, and I realized he was right. I was in the right row, but I should have been on the other side of the aisle. I was in the wrong seat.

Once our ticketed whereabouts were figured out, thankfully, the other passenger graciously opted to take my original seat. This was good, my bag was already safely tucked under the seat in front of me and I was already buckled. I really didn't want to move. Once all the confusion was cleared away and

everyone was settled in, I became aware that a lady was seated next to me; she was quietly staring out the window.

Soon, the plane lifted off and the wheels went up. I was finally on my way home. Though I was exhausted, I was still very concerned about my daughter. I tried to fall asleep but I had too much on my mind. Finally, to kill some time the thought came to me to strike up a conversation with the stranger beside me. The small talk commenced with the usual air travel related questions.

Do you like flying? Where are you coming from? Where you there on business or pleasure? How long were you there? Is Colorado Springs home?

As the conversation progressed the questions went from the mundane to the more personal.

Do you have family in Colorado? What does your husband do? Do you have any children? How many boys / girls?

We started talking about our children and it was about this point that the conversation became very interesting. My part of the discussion went something like this...

I also have a teenage daughter. How old is your daughter? They're the same age.

Don't you love dealing with teenagers? They already know everything, right?

Is your daughter still in school? Oh, recently graduated. Interesting!

What high school did she attend? That's where my daughter went. Maybe they know each other.

It was then that an impression came to me. I couldn't believe that it was possible, but I had to ask.

"If you don't mind me asking," I hesitated briefly, "what's your daughter's name?"

"Shelly," was the reply.

At a time of great personal stress and anxiety, with so many questions and so few answers I found myself sitting next to the mother of my daughter's soon to be roommate. She was one person who might be able to provide some answers.

The remainder of the flight was filled with light and energy. When we formally introduced ourselves she was as shocked and excited as I by our present circumstances. We talked more, but now the conversation had real purpose. I had a lot of questions. She had just as many.

The plane finally landed. Coincidentally, her husband had come to the airport to pick her up. My wife had come to the airport to pick me up. Interestingly, we were all there together. We spoke briefly in the concourse and then decided to go to a nearby restaurant to get better acquainted, and to continue our unlikely discussion.

In the hour or so that followed, we all learned much. Even though they were not members of our church, they were good people. They were people of faith with similar standards, morals, and ideals to our own. They loved and cared for their daughter as much as we did ours. They shared many of our same questions and harbored many of our same concerns.

Most important of all, ultimately we learned that contrary to what had been told to us, they really were against the move, not cool at all. Similarly they learned that we were not really okay with the situation either. It was unanimous; it had "bad idea" written all over it.

That one single piece of information alone gave us all something that we all decidedly sought, common ground, a united front.

We asked the waitress to take some pictures of the four of us sharing a miracle. We all agreed it was a miracle. It was a seemingly impossible experience we all needed at a time when we felt we so desperately needed it.

The next morning my wife and I went into my daughter's bedroom. We showed her a picture and we told her a story. We then reminded her that she was a very special daughter of a Heavenly Father who knows her, who watches over her, and who very much loves her. The events of the previous evening were offered up as proof.

God changed the game! The lease was never signed.

That event didn't mark the end of our daughter's trials, or the end of her parent's heartache. But, we truly feel it changed the course of a river. Our daughter eventually made her way to Utah. She met a worthy holder of the Priesthood who took her to a temple of God. They were sealed together for all eternity. As of this writing, they still reside in Utah with two beautiful children as a forever family. In the years since the event, we have all been blessed.

Who is to say what might have been? I can only say had I not been where I was, had I not had a temporary bout of dyslexia and sat in someone else's seat, had I not decided to strike up a conversation with a total stranger, we might well have found out what might have been.

While this event occurred many years ago, the recollection recently filled my thoughts, I suppose as a refresher to me. We are all impressionable. We can all be restless, and perhaps we can all be even a little rebellious. Regardless of our individual circumstances in life we can all use a little reminder. Our Father does know us, He does watch over us, and, in spite of our sometimes worst efforts, He very much loves us. Sometimes, He even gives us a little miracle.