

# Miracle

By Jessica Haffer

*My sound, peaceful sleep had ended very abruptly. I blinked my tired eyes open, trying to obtain focus on whatever woke me. My gaze became fixated on my fluttering, floral curtain and ajar window. I staunchly sat upright and kicked my unconscious legs to the edge of my sleeping fortress. I took what seemed like a very strenuous walk to the breezy area, which lay before me. I glanced around my very disorganized apartment, realizing how much I had taken my home for <sup>granted</sup>grante. I then recalled how fortunate I was to be dwelling in such a nice place...and suddenly just feeling grateful to be alive and blessed with everything within my possession.*

*The news came early, around foggy, seven o'clock. I had slouched down to eat my "magic" Lucky Charms and watch the news on CNN. The sky outside my kitchen window was very dim, ignited only by a slight shaft of sunlight. The sun delicately danced across the cheap tile, which coated the floor of my vacant kitchen. Loneliness was built up inside of me. For all my friends had now started families while I labored away at this Ivy League school. Though knowing everything would be worth it in the long run, I had sometimes wished I had settled down too. The telephone began its replicating chime suddenly. I reached over for the cordless receiver that shook slightly at each ring.*

*"Hello." I said as I pressed the phone sensitively to my right ear.*

*"Jenessa, hey, how are you!?" A lively voice replied. My mood slightly adjusted at the sound of the happiness filled voice.*

*"I'm.....I'm great.... how are you Beth?" I was trying to sound happy so I wouldn't spoil her natural bliss. I listened closely as the distressed cry of a baby filled the background on her side of the receiver.*

*"Oh, well I'm alright thank you. I thought I might call to check up on you. I know it's been a few days, its just oh this baby is such a handful if ya know...." She paused and stopped herself before finishing her statement, thinking it might have offended me in some manner.*

*"No, thank goodness not yet, with school and everything, it would all be so hectic raising a family too." I paused, proud that I hadn't taken her unsaid comment to heart.*

*"By the way, how is school going for you?" She said, trying to make conversation about me in some way.*

*"I'm doing really well I think, just been frantically busy, that's all." I replied while reaching for the small remote control and changing the television to my designated channel.*

*"How is Mike and the baby?" I asked, while focusing in on the troubled news reporter. I listened closely as I tried to absorb this almost foreign information about a meteor.*

*"Oh, well Mike has been busy at work, he got that new internship, did I tell ya, and the baby, oh well she's just a little angel... when she's not crying at least." She let out a slight chuckle as I presume she'd expected the same from me. I was too absorbed in the news report to be listening. My mind had wondered on possibilities of this "meteor". An image flashed before me. I was standing on a desolate sidewalk, but strangely I was not alone. For, it had only seemed deserted because of the ominous atmosphere. The air was dusty and a very dark semitransparent color. The air was filled with screams and cries of children and their families. I turned around to discover that houses that were once constructed firmly on their foundation, lay toppled over in pieces. My mind was perplexed with the thought of this image.*

*The telephone plunged to the pastel colored floor as I slowly followed it. On the other end of the receiver my name was being chanted with a worried voice.*

*“Jenessa!!Are you there??Jenessa??!!” Her voice was filled with horror as a recurring tone penetrated through the phone line.*

*I slowly awakened from my blackout to witness the worried face of Beth. Her crystal blue eyes were coated lightly in tears and she repeated my name. My ears couldn't comprehend the sound of her words, I could only read her lips. Then, I was fully conscious and terribly befuddled by my sudden incident. I looked around studying the features of this familiar place. I had been relocated to Beth's residence.*

*“Jenessa, are you alright? When the phone line went dead I raced over as fast as I could. You just fainted, but I take it, it was from the news. We need to get out of here!” Her tone changed into a worried and frantic voice that I didn't recognize.*

*“Is it the meteor?” I asked in question?*

*“Yeah, and its headed for earth at rapid speeds. We need to drive south as soon as we can. Are you able to stand?” She questioned in a concerned voice.*

*“Uh, ya I think I'm ok.” I mumbled back as confidently as I could.*

*“Ok, can u get the baby while I phone Mike?”*

*“Yes, is she in her crib?” It was obtuse of me to ask. I could just follow the ricocheting screams. I guess Beth thought of my question as dim-witted too, because she didn't bother to answer. She raced over to the phone and began to call her husband. I hurried to the playroom where a troubled child sat drenched in her own tears. Sympathy filled me as I picked her up to comfort her sobs. I snatched up a blanket and some sort of deformed looking stuffed animal as I sprinted for the entryway of the house. Beyond the porch was*

Beth pulling up <sup>their</sup> ~~they're~~ contemporary Park Avenue and loading in the car seat. I dashed out, while setting a quick glimpse up at the fuming sky. Carefully, yet quickly I loaded the settled child into her plastic chair and buckled her in securely. After getting into the car frantically, Beth zoomed out of the driveway and headed for an abandoned road.

"The highway will be way to busy" she panted with conviction. "Mike will meet us in Tallahassee... if we make it that far... which of course we will." She tried to sound sure of herself, yet I could sense the trepidation in her dialect. I looked into the backseat of the automobile to behold a serene child dreaming away in her fantasyland.

The air was mistrustful and eerie with its darkness in the vicinity of our presence. I glanced at Beth to see her panicky eyes engrossed on the road. Her hands were clutched firmly on the steering wheel, trying to avoid the condensation residue left behind. I reached for the radio tuner. As I recklessly turned the knob, all of the stations were fuzzy and nearly impossible to comprehend.

"How long did they say it would be before the meteor is in clear sight?" I asked anxiously.

"They said twelve hours but were uncertain in their predicament." She glanced into the rear view mirror to examine her sleeping daughter.

I reclined back in the chair, the fresh smell of leather still filtering the car. I closed my eyes even though I knew it would be impossible for me to fall into slumber. I recited the Lord's Prayer almost out loud as I thought about the end of the universe. No, myself nor the rest of the world needs my negativity at this time. The meteor was supposed to hit in the midwest but would obviously cause damage to its surroundings. So, the newscasters had said that the safest place would be as southern Florida as you could get. Well, I

*knew that we wouldn't make it all the way to Tallahassee but, the closer the better.*

*I hadn't realized how long I had been contemplating. Shrieking sirens filled the atmosphere and send a shrill shiver down my spine.*

*"The warning sirens." Beth said seeming almost mystified by her own statement. "It's....it's here." She swiftly swerved the car over into the ditch. "Come on into the backseat!" she cried.*

*We toppled over each other as we leaped for cover. Then, the car seemed to move magnetically backwards, but only slightly tugging us along. We seemed to congregate around the small child and grasp onto one another. The horizon seemed to grow darker as we were hit with such dynamism that the car leaped up less than an inch from the ground. My heart jumped into my throat as I quivered with fear. After the forceful impact, the sky gradually became lighter again and filled with life. We were motionless for merely a minute. But Beth was the first to stare up at this new world. She pried her door open forcefully as she unhurriedly stuck her legs out. I would've ventured out too, but my legs were still recovering from the rude awakening.*

*"It's going to be ok." She said to her screaming child. I didn't feel like trying to force open the door on my side so I slipped out and stood beside Beth. My outlook on everything had changed. The world around me was a whole new place. The towering trees that once seemed taller than skyscrapers lay toppled over on top of one another. Branches and wood chips lay scattered all over the pavement beside the ditch. Beth seemed almost as astonished as I yet more confident in everything. She grabbed me for a tight hug. I reached for her and drew her near as I smelled the scent of fresh towels on her clothing and hair. Her presence made me unafraid. I felt if I could make it through something like this, I could take on the world.*