



"The Rest Of The Story"

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These days it's hard to open a newspaper without reading a comment on how policeman are doing their job, or how they should be doing their job. It seems like these days, everybody is an expert in the field of law enforcement, and no matter what the circumstances are, someone out there knows a better way of handling the situation, regardless of what that situation may be. Yet, every day, our men and women in blue, working the streets, do acts of kindness and heroism that never make the news and go unnoticed. Your caring and compassion for those in need knows no bounds. Please let me share with you one of those special moments.

As your Police Chaplains, we have a special routine that we have been following for many years now, during the Holiday season. We try to visit many of the districts and Units, especially on Christmas and New Years' eve. This year, I got a call from a friend of mine, on Christmas eve. This is what he said: "I know our police are going through some trying times, so what can I do to let them know that we appreciate all that they do?" I responded with my motto, "See a policeman, Hug a policeman. In your travels, should you meet up with any policeman, let him know that you appreciate his hard work". He responded "deal, I will". This friend called me again at 9 pm that night and asked where I was at the moment. I told him that I was doing a roll call on the West side. I asked him, "Did you hug a policeman yet?" He said "Not yet, but I'm working on it".

We both laughed and hung up the phone. I continued to make my rounds on the streets, stopping on some hot calls, trading stories and laughs with the troops on the streets. At 11:30 P.M. my phone rang again. It was my friend, and it seemed like he couldn't control his emotions. He yelled into the phone "I did it, I hugged a policeman! not really a hug, but I made him smile". I asked "What did you do?" My friend answered as follows. "I was standing in line at Walgreens, behind a policeman who had a cart full of toys. As he approached the cashier, the cashier said "oh, doing some last minute shopping?", I heard the policeman tell the cashier that he is buying some toys for a needy family, going through hard times that had nothing, that could some Holiday spirit. So, my friend continued, when it

came to pay I distracted his attention from the cashier, and swiped my credit card and paid for the cart full of toys. The policeman looked at me and asked "what was that all about?" to which my friend responded "That's what Rabbi Wolf told me to do... ask him". I asked my friend, "Did you get a name of the policeman" and he responded I was so excited that I was able to make the policeman smile that I forgot to look at the name tag".

I thanked him for his kindness and generosity and I thought to myself, I'll never find out who was that "Angel in Blue" who helped a needy family.

Two days after Christmas I received a message at my office, "Rabbi this is P.O. T F can you please give me a call?" (I asked permission from the PO to use his initials.) I returned the call to the PO, and he said "Please let me tell you a story that involves you. It was Christmas Eve, we get a call to do a well-being check, domestic related. We responded to the residence, and found a woman, (a mom of three young children), crying, distraught, a bit shaken, who just finished a shouting match with her ex-husband, who threatened her, then left the scene. We calmed her down a bit, and tried to give her some words of encouragement. We looked around the house and noticed a Christmas tree with nothing underneath. We asked the woman, "no gifts?" She explained that she is a single Mom, who just got laid off from her job and had no money for gifts for the kids. I thought to myself about my own situation, "Things are tight at home, there is no extra pocket money, but I am truly blessed to have a family, a home to go to and gifts for my children. I am so blessed, that I feel the need to do something for this woman who is brokenhearted. I don't have money, so "I'll charge it." It's Christmas Eve most stores are closed, but then I remembered that there was an open Walgreen's in the district. We drove to Walgreen's and I loaded up a cart with different types of toys. My partner, who knew my situation, asked me how will I pay for a cart full of toys, to which I responded, "I will charge it".

As I got to the counter, the cashier looked at me and said" Oh, you forgot to buy your kids' gifts, so you're doing some last minute shopping"? So I explained to her that I was doing some shopping to help out a broken heart. She smiled, and said

that's what we call the Holiday spirit. As I reached into my pocket to get my wallet, the man behind me tells me to look at a sign at the back of the store. As I look away he swiped his credit card, paying for all the toys. I asked him what that was all about and he told me "I'm on a mission, discuss it with Your Chaplain, Rabbi Wolf".

As Paul Harvey would say "and now you know, the Rest of The Story". I was so touched by the story that I asked PO T.F. if he had time for a quick meeting with my friend, so that both sides could hear what happened that made this sequence of events take place. We all met, shared a handshake, (a piece of candy), and admired how the many ways we make our Lord proud.

These stories never make the news but as you're Chaplains we see these stories happen in your ranks on a daily basis. PO T.F., Thanks for your big, generous heart, welcome to the ranks of "The Hidden Angels Among Us" You do us proud, you do your Maker proud.

It reminded of the following short parable. "Talking with G-d":

A holy man was having a conversation with the Lord one day and said, "Lord, I would like to know what Heaven and Hell are like."

The Lord led the holy man to two doors. He opened one of the doors and the holy man looked in. In the middle of the room was a large round table. In the middle of the table was a large pot of stew which smelled delicious and made the holy man's mouth water.

The people sitting around the table were thin and sickly. They appeared To be famished. They were holding spoons with very long handles that were strapped to Their arms and each found it possible to reach into the pot of stew and take a spoonful, but because the handle was longer than their arms, they could not get the spoons back into their mouths. The holy man shuddered at the sight of their misery and suffering. The Lord said, "You have seen Hell." They went to the next

room and opened the door. It was exactly the same as the first one, there was the large round table with the large pot of stew which made the holy man's mouth water. The people were equipped with the same long-handled spoons, but here the people were well nourished and plump, laughing and talking. The holy man said, "I don't understand." It is simple," said the Lord, "it requires but one skill. You see, they have learned to feed each other. While the greedy think only of themselves.

A friend is someone who reaches for your hand, and touches your heart."....End of parable. I have heard it said "true friends must always hold hands", but in reality, true friends don't need to hold hands because they know the hand of a friend will always be there. On behalf of All your Chaplains, Thanks for the holy and noble work that you do, you have mastered one of life's most precious skills, "the skill of using long handled spoons". We are honored and privileged to be there for you as an ear to listen and a shoulder to lean on. (By the way, any good jokes? send a copy my way. Thanks).

May G-d bless you and keep you safe, today and always. AMEN!

Compliments of your Police Chaplain,

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