Guardian Angels



I visited the Holocaust Museum
At the same time my close friends
Were in Washington, D.C.
I had not known of their plans;
If I had, I would have warned them...
The exhibits would be too difficult
For their young children.

As I passed through the narrow aisles
People bumped into me with every step.
The architect had intended it.
My friends were unaware
Of that intent.

As I passed through the narrow aisles
I was shaken.
Pictures of unspeakable horror
Shoes that had once belonged to the living
Suitcases carried by unsuspecting people
A cattle car that had carried families to their deaths
Surrounded me
Surrounded my friends.

The experience was difficult for me;
It was overwhelming my friends.

Family members had perished in the Holocaust
Exhibits brought the horror home...
The children were crying
It was hard for them to breathe.

The children had to leave quickly
But how?
A stranger tapped my friend's shoulder.
"You are thinking of leaving
But do not know the way?"
She had not said a word to anyone;
She had only thought about leaving.

Stunned, she accepted the stranger's help.

He guided the family out so they did not pass by
Pictures of skeletons
Photographs of dead villagers
Rail tracks from Treblinka
Artifacts from daily life
Stolen, then discarded
Elements of close family life
Destroyed by intruders.

The stranger led them out of the museum
Using a way they would not have found
On their own.

Arriving on the street
My friends turned to thank the stranger,
But he was gone.
They never saw him again.

My friends are convinced the stranger
Was an angel
Sent to protect them.

I think they are right.

We talked about it.
Do guardian angels really exist?
Where do they come from?
How do they get here?
How do they know
Who needs help?

The literal answers didn't seem to matter
At the time;
A guardian angel had led that family from
The darkness of emotional turmoil to
The light of day.

I began to wonder...
Why had angels not helped
When many had cried
Before?
Where were guardian angels
Over there
Back then?

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See Alignments to State and Common Core standards for this story online at:
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