

Angela's Word

When Angela was very young
Age two or three or so,
Her mother and her father
Taught her never to say NO.
They taught her that she must agree
With everything they said,
And if she didn't, she was spanked
And sent upstairs to bed.

So Angela grew up to be
A most agreeable child;
She was never angry
And she was never wild;
She always cared, she always shared,
She never picked a fight;
And no matter what her parents said,
She thought that they were right.

Angela the Angel did very well in school,
And, as you might imagine, she followed every rule;
Her teachers said she was so well-bred,
So quiet and so good,
But how Angela felt inside
They never understood.

Angela had lots of friends
Who liked her for her smile;
They knew she was the kind of gal
Who'd go the extra mile;
And even when she had a cold
And really needed rest,
If someone asked her if she'd help
She always answered Yes.

When Angela was thirty-three, she was a lawyer's wife.
She had a home and family, and a nice suburban life.
She had a little girl of four
And a little boy of nine,
And if someone asked her how she felt
She always answered "Fine."

But one cold night near Christmastime
When her family was in bed,
She lay awake as awful thoughts went spinning through her head;
She didn't know why, and she didn't know how,
But she wanted her life to end;
So she begged Whoever put her here
To take her back again.

And then she heard, from deep inside,
A voice that was soft and low;
It only said a single word
And the word it said was...NO.

From that moment on, Angela knew
Exactly what she had to do.
Her life depended on that word,
So this is what her loved ones heard:

NO, I just don't want to;
NO, I don't agree;
NO, that's your to handle;
NO, that's wrong for me;
NO, I wanted something else;
NO, that hurt a lot!
NO, I'm tired, and NO, I'm busy,
And NO, I'd rather not!

Well, her family found it shocking,
Her friends reacted with surprise;
But Angela was different, you could see it in her eyes;
For they've held no meek submission
Since that night three years ago
When Angela the Angel
Got permission to say NO.

Today Angela's a person first, then a mother and a wife.
She knows where she begins and ends,
She has a separate life.
She has talents and ambitions,
She has feelings, needs and goals.
She has money in the bank, and
An opinion at the polls.

And to her boy and girl she says,
 "It's nice when we agree;
But if you can't say NO, you'll never grow
 To be all you're meant to be.
Because I know I'm sometimes wrong,
 And because I love you so,
 You'll always be my angels
 Even when you tell me NO."

By Barbara Bassett
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