The Good Teen
(Short Story)

By Antony Simpson

Story Synopsis
The Good Teen is a modern-day telling of The Good Samaritan parable, with a hint of magic.

About The Author
Antony Simpson is an avid Reader, Writer and Book Reviewer from the UK. He has been writing on his personal blog for sometime.

He currently writes journalistic articles for online magazine The Gay UK and likes to write short stories in his spare time.

About This Story
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This short story is entirely a work of fiction from the author’s imagination. Any resemblance to actual persons, living or dead, events or localities is entirely coincidental.

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Alfred had saved up all year for this day. He stopped on the high street and looked at *The Gift Box* shop. It hadn’t changed since he’d last seen it. Painted a bright purple on the outside, with a giant silver material bow next to the sign above the door. The window display had a red, gold and silver theme. A vase in the centre contained red twigs. On each of the twigs hung decorations. At either sides of the vase were a range of gift boxes, ornaments, music boxes, tea light holders and candles. Alfred entered *The Gift Box*.

Inside he was hit by a scent of cinnamon and orange, which glided through the air from a large candle lit on the sales counter. The shop was small inside, but felt spacious. Display cabinets lined the walls, showcasing ornaments and other trinkets. Alfred saw the *Glass Moments* sign above a display cabinet on the back wall.

He stopped in front of the cabinet. On the top shelf, directly under a spotlight was the glass angel. Its halo was in frosted glass; but its spread wings, bowed head and prayed hands were all a translucent clear glass. It was graceful and exquisite. Alfred understood why, before Miriam had died, she had said that she wanted it.

“Can I help you?” The blonde Shop Owner asked.
“Yes, I’d like to buy that one.” Alfred said, as he pointed to the glass angel.
“It’s beautiful isn’t it? And it’s the last one.”
At the sales desk, Alfred paid and she handed him a gift bag. He exited the shop and headed back to the bus station.

Alfred stepped off the bus. His breath misted in front of him and he noticed how dark it had become. The bus drove away and he saw three hooded figures on the opposite side of the road. Two of the figures were looking down at their hands, their faces lit up by their phones. The third looked at Alfred and shouted, “Hey granddad! What you looking at?”
The other two figures looked up. Alfred turned in the direction of his home and started walking, with his head down. Alfred heard them attempting to
cross the busy main road. He didn’t look back, but he felt them following him. He picked up his pace. His hand gripped gift bag tighter.

Michael sat behind the wheel of his red Toyota as he drove to St. John’s church. He was dressed in a black shirt with matching pants and a white dog collar. His unstyled, mid-length wavy hair extenuated his round ‘baby’ face.

He was already running late. At this time, he should be preparing for the service. The Bishop had asked him to cover this other parish, after the recent death of their Priest. He sighed and looked at the clock on the dashboard. Then a movement caught the corner of his eye.

He glanced to his left to see an old man in a blue overcoat. The man was carrying some sort of gift bag. He was being followed by a group of teenagers. They wore hoodies and appeared to be shouting abuse at him. Michael looked back to the road, sensing that he was approaching traffic lights. He stopped at the red light.

The old man made a turn down a side street with the teenagers in pursuit. Michael’s noticed that his palms had become clammy on the steering wheel. I should stop, he thought to himself.

The traffic light turned green. Michael looked at the clock. He took a deep breath and pressed his foot on the accelerator. He glanced at the side street through his rear-view mirror and drove off into the night.

The shopping precinct was just off the main road, down a side street. The precinct was a concrete square, which was sparsely lit. Flowerbeds that had once grown beautiful tulips, daffodils and gentians were now mostly covered in litter. There were four entrances to the shopping precinct, one at each
corner of the square. The edges of the square were lined with shops that had flats above them. Only the Southern Fried Chicken takeaway was open. The rest of the shops had been boarded up and were hidden under layers of spray painted graffiti.

Mohammed was busy taking chicken out of the fryer and putting it into the warmer when he heard shouting. He finished up and stepped outside. He saw an old man that hobbled towards the square’s exit, which was next to his shop. Hooded teenagers followed the old man. They caught up to him as he stepped into a pool of light, given off by a nearby streetlight.

“Hold up there Granddad.” The red hoodie said, as he put his hand on the old mans shoulder. The hooded teenagers circled him, like sharks circling their prey.

Mohammed recognised the teenager in the red hoodie. He was called Johnny. Johnny turned noticing Mohammed’s gaze. He gave Mohammed a hard stir. Mohammed looked away.

“How’s that family of yours?” He said, with a lopsided smile.

Mohammed thought about his family. His wife. His two young children. All asleep in the flat above the shop. He glanced at the takeaway door.

“That’s right. Back inside. Nothing to see here.”

Mohammed turned, ignoring the cry for help from the old man. He went back inside to the kitchen. He turned on the radio, turned up the volume and got back to work.

Alfred looked at the teenagers that surrounded him. To his left a large girl stood. Her hoodie was brown and matched the colour of her eyes. To his right was a boy in a green hoodie, who was looking at his phone. The light from his phone hit his pale face and reflected back. Directly in front of Alfred was a tall
red hooded boy. He had short black hair that poked out from underneath his hoodie. Alfred pulled his hands closer to his body.

Charlotte, the brown hooded girl, leaned forward and grabbed the string gift bag handles. She pulled back. But Alfred’s grip was tight. “Get off!” Alfred shouted. He grabbed her wrist. Johnny moved forward and shoved Alfred. He fell back and let go of the bag. He landed on his bottom. His eyes widened. “Hands off the girl Granddad.”

“Give that back!” Alfred demanded, as he pushed himself up off the floor. A fist came towards him. He found himself back on the floor. He felt a trickling sensation near his eye. Confused, he put his hand up and touched something wet. He looked at the maroon-coloured blood on his hand. Charlotte opened the bag and took out the angel. “Please...” Alfred begged. “Owe, what do we have here?” She said, as she swapped the angel from one hand to another, feeling its weight. “Here. Let me have a look.” Johnny said. Charlotte turned in his direction and held it out to him. As she let go, he moved his hands away. The angel dropped to the floor, smashing into thousands of pieces. Alfred’s whole face trembled and his eyes welled. “Lets get on with this.” Jack, the green-hooded teenager, said to the others. “Granddad! Hey! Hand over your money and anything else you’ve got.” Alfred didn’t seem to hear him. Johnny grabbed the scruff of Alfred’s coat and brought his face close to his own. “Oi! What’s going on here?” Shouted a voice. At the far side of the square, another hooded teenager stood. They all turned to look at him. “None of your business Luke! Be a good boy and run along home.” Johnny replied.

In the distance, the sound of sirens appeared and began to get louder. “Quick. Run!” Charlotte shouted, with a face of panic.
Johnny ran, being followed by Jack and Charlotte.
Luke ran over to Alfred. Alfred cowered, raising his hand to protect his face.
“Are you alright?”
The sound of the sirens grew quieter. Luke bent to his knees. He pulled out his phone, tapped it with his thumb and held it to his ear.
“I’m going to call you an ambulance. You’re going to be OK.”
Alfred focused on the floor. Half a wing was attached to the angel’s splintered head. Around this were numerous scattered tiny pieces and some slightly bigger shards.

A few minutes later, the ambulance arrived. Alfred was put into the back of the ambulance and Luke went with him. The paramedics closed the back doors and got into the front seat.

The pieces and shards of the glass angel became illuminated. They flew together at an incredible speed. Once every piece was in its original place, the light faded and so did the angel. Gone. Out of existence.

The blue lights of the ambulance flashed as it drove off.

In the Emergency Department, Luke and Alfred where put into a cubicle. Alfred lay on the trolley and Luke sat on a chair. Luke had put his hood down, revealing his brown spikey hair and piercing blue eyes. Both had been mostly silent.

“Won’t your parents be worried about where you are?” Alfred asked.
Luke looked up, “Oh, there’s just my mum. She’ll be at home, in bed. She has to look after my younger sisters.”
“Ah.” Alfred said.
The curtain opened and a male Nurse stood in a navy-coloured uniform. The Nurse glanced at the paperwork in his hand.
“Right, Mr Ashcroft, are you ready to go?”
Luke stood and walked over to the Nurse. He gestured to him and they stepped outside of the cubicle.

“He will be alright, won’t he? You’ll look after him?” Luke asked.

“We’ll observe him on the Medical Unit overnight, then probably send him home tomorrow.”

“Cool. Well I’m going to get going.”

“Will you be OK getting home on your own at this time of night?”

“Yeah, I’ll be fine.” Luke said, as he walked off.

Luke arrived home. He collapsed into his bed and was immediately asleep.

Sometime later, a light shone, waking him. Groggy-eyed he focused on the light that reflected off his TV, PlayStation and the white plastic finish of his desk. The light faded as he got out of bed and stumbled over towards it. On his desk was a glass angel that glistened. He picked it up. It was immaculate. He made a small smile.

Alfred hadn’t had a great night’s sleep. Not only was he not in his own bed, but throughout the night Nurses had come in to check on him. A head popped round the curtain.

“Ah, come in.” He said.

The teen stepped in with his rutsack.

“I wanted to thank you. What’s your name?” Alfred asked.


“Well thank you Luke.”

“I think I have something that belongs to you.” Luke said. With both of his hands he pulled the glass angel out of his rutsack. Alfred heart began to pound, “How...” his voice cracked.

“I don’t know.” Luke said, handing it over to him. Luke headed towards the curtain’s edge.

“Thank you again. I can’t tell you how much this means to me.” Alfred said, nodding his head at the angel.

Luke nodded his head in return, gave a small smile and walked out.

Through blearily eyes Alfred inspected the angel.

Then Alfred’s eyes widened, as he realised that Luke was his Good Samaritan.