

Truckin' Angels **by Toni Petrinovich**

There we were riding high and dry through the Utah desert looking for an old ranch we had been pointed to for gold investigation. It was the perfect day with the sun high overhead and the car filled with shovels, a radar detector and good spirits all around.

We left the highway and hit the dirt road with the dust masking the many hunters coming up behind us. It was hunting season and there were travel trailers parked on every knob and in every wash and ravine. We had good orange vests with us so we were ready for anything.

It takes about one-half hour after you leave the main highway to begin to get wind of the ranch. It sits low and sheltered in a wash of its own and we knew we were nowhere near it yet as we passed camp after camp. Then suddenly all of the hunting trailers began to become part of the background and a high plateau surfaced before us. It was the sign we were waiting for telling us we were getting near.

Down through the slow moving creek, up the hill and around the bend – there! There is the first gate to pass through and it is unlocked. One of our friends got out of the car to unlock the gate and I went to locate a bush to use as the current “ladies room” when I heard Philip emit a seldom used list of expletives, “*%&*#&!?”

This was followed by, “We have blown both right tires.” *Now that IS a reason to swear.* Pulling up my pants, I came out around to the right side of the car only to see that both right tires were, literally, on the ground. We were riding on the rims and that is something you do not want to do. *Pause . . . feel . . . think . . . breathe.*

“*Is there cell phone signal here?*” I wondered taking my cell phone out of my purse since I rarely use my AAA membership and they will come anywhere. Dead as a doornail – no signal to be had. Looking back up the road, I decided to walk toward the top of the hill to see if there would be a signal on higher ground. Nope! Out of luck there, as well.

Meanwhile, Philip slowly backed the car away from the gate and to a spot that was as flat as we were going to get at that point. He pulled out the tire jack, the Slime

to fill the tires, the air compressor and his patience. The only spare we carried (one and only – not two) was one of those fake tires that can get you from point A to point B and then die. We would save that for last resort.

While all of this maneuvering was going on, I began to climb to the top of the hill again following the road to see if signal would come up on my cellphone - all to no avail. Yet, as I looked ahead, a truck appeared from a side road and began to turn around. They were waving at me in friendliness.

I quickly threw up my hand to “Stop” hoping they were not in a hurry. Stop they did and rolled down their window as I ran toward the truck thirty feet ahead.

“We have two flats down around the bend there. Do you think you could come talk with us while we figure this out in case we need a ride to town?” I queried.

“Sure. We’d be happy to take you into town if you need. We’re just out joy riding and heading back that way ourselves. Show us where the car is,” was the perfect, unexpected reply.

I walked back to the downed car with the truck right on my heels. “Philip, we have a couple of angels who are willing to assist us here. Want to come talk with this guy?” I was overjoyed.

The two men put their heads and tools together. Our angel also had Slime and an air compressor so between the two of them they filled both tires with the Slime and blew them up. Now we had four tires again even though two of them were quite lame.

Philip paid the angel for the Slime and they offered to follow us back to the highway in case things got worse. We limped along as the Slime hardened within the tires and stopped a couple of times to reapply the gel taking over an hour to arrive at the pavement.

At one point, I went over to the truck to talk to the other angel, the man’s wife. She was simply happy that they had happened upon us when they did so that we were not stranded alone. No complaints, no frustration, no stress.

Only angelic assistance. For this we are so grateful!