It was going to be his first Christmas Eve. While children all over the city were nestled all snug in their beds with visions of sugar-plums dancing in their heads he was all alone in his crib. The only sound in the room was the small sound of babies as they inhaled and exhaled.

The sun had gone to bed behind the skyscrapers. High above the rooftops the sky was filling up with stars that seemed to twinkle brighter than they had ever before.

Under the direction of Mother Miriam, the good sisters who ran the Foundling Home had hung up a wreath in the nursery and attached a small stocking to each of the cribs. But despite these small touches the room did not have a festive holiday look. It was clean but very sterile.

With not a single creature stirring… not even a mouse, he had fallen asleep at around eight o’clock. Usually he slept through the night, but on his first Christmas Eve something happened.

It was a little after eleven when he opened his eyes and turned to see a woman dressed in a white gossamer gown with gold stitching sitting in a rocking chair next to his crib. He returned her wonderful smile with a smile that brought a special glow to the room. It was magical.

She got up from the rocking chair and carefully took him out of the crib and held him close to her. She stood by the window and whispered in his ear. He seemed to understand every word she said. He had never been happier.

She held him in her arms for close to an hour humming to him before telling him she had to go. She knew there would be no presents for him under a tree, but she did have a gift for him. She held him close to her heart and gave him a kiss. It was his first kiss. She whispered in his ear one more time before placing him back in his crib.

And then she was gone. He followed her with his eyes out the window as she shot back up into the sky and took her place in the firmament. She winked back at him. He smiled and fell back to sleep.

Two months later he was placed in the arms of a woman who was going to become his mother.

As he grew up, Christmas Eve took on a special meaning for him. Despite the gifts under the tree on subsequent Christmas mornings, Christmas Eve became his favorite day of the year.

As a young child he would steal away from the rest of the family on Christmas Eve and go into the living room and turn on the Christmas tree lights. He would turn off all the other lights after placing the classic Bing Crosby Christmas album on the phonograph. He would sit on the couch and close his eyes.

And then it would happen. He would feel a kiss, just like the first kiss. He was filled with a joy that could not be measured. When he opened his eyes the angel on the tree twinkled back. He would then go to the living room window and look up in the sky for that special star.

That Christmas Eve tradition continued. It took on special meaning the Christmas he was away studying in Europe. It was the second Christmas in his life that he would be alone.

There was a radio in the room he was staying in. He turned it on and believe it or not he heard Bing Crosby singing “I’ll Be Home for Christmas.”

It was Christmas Eve. He closed his eyes, and then he felt the Christmas kiss. Once again he was filled with the same joy he had known his whole life.

And while he didn’t lead a spectacular life and never made much money, he did keep his special Christmas tradition alive.

Once he started having children of his own, he made it a point that on Christmas Eve he would slip silently into his children’s rooms and while they were sleeping and dreaming, he would give them a kiss.

“This is from my Christmas angel,” he would say.

Then he would whisper in their ear the same thing his Christmas angel had whispered in his ear on his first Christmas Eve.

And what, you might wonder, did his Christmas angel whisper to him?

That’s a secret. But I’m sure you can figure it out.