

BY ROSCO BARNES III

RIGHT PLACE, RIGHT TIME

ANDY KOONTZ was in the right place at the right time one Tuesday evening in Waynesboro, Pennsylvania.

Around 7 p.m., a tired Andy came out of the office of Dr. Burton Tucker at 237 East Main Street. A field supervisor for Koontz's Carpet Connection, the 26-year-old was working late and his wife, Tracie, had brought him dinner—a plate of taco salad.

She was in the family's van behind the wheel when Andy walked over. He accepted the dinner and stood outside to chat for a while. As Andy was leaning inside the window, a blue Chevy parked nearby started to move backward.

"Is that car moving?" he asked.

Tracie looked around and continued talking.

"That car is moving," said Andy.

"It's gonna hit me," said Tracie, a bit nervous.

For a moment, it looked like the car was being backed out of the parking lot. But Andy saw a little girl inside—and no driver.

As the car moved out of the parking space, it started to drift toward Main Street, which was busy with traffic.

"Tracie, take the plate," Andy said quietly.

"What?" she answered.

"Take the plate!"

"That car is gonna hit me—"

"Tracie, take the dinner!"

Andy shoved the plate at his wife and ran to the back of the van, where the car was moving down an incline toward traffic.

Without thinking, Andy rushed to the driver's side of the car. Two young girls were inside.

He grabbed the door handle and threw open the door. Quickly, he grasped the wheel. He pulled the emergency brake, but the car kept moving.

He tried to turn the steering wheel, but the car kept going with only the sidewalk between it and Main Street traffic.

With his heart racing and his feet nearly dragging, Andy got one leg into the car and slammed on the brakes.

The car stopped—only inches from the sidewalk.

Andy took a deep breath and turned to the girls, both under the age of 5.

"Are you all right?" he asked them.

"No," they said, both scared.

As Andy tried to console them, the girls' mother came outside and noticed her car was missing.

She looked down the incline and saw the car on the sidewalk.

"Oh no!" she yelled, and ran to her kids.

The mother thanked Andy over and over. "Thank God you were there!" she said.

"God is the only One to thank, 'cause I don't know how I did it," said Andy.

The incident shook up Andy so much that he said he couldn't eat his dinner for 20 minutes.

"He was just shaking," said Tracie.

"I was nervous," Andy admitted.

Looking back, the couple said God put them in the right place at the right time. Neither Andy nor Tracie had planned to be on Main Street that Tuesday night.

"He called me around 5:00 and said he had to work late," said Tracie. "He wanted me to bring him dinner."

The call didn't thrill Tracie. She didn't mind bringing him dinner, but she didn't want him to work late. "I wanted him to come home," she laughed.

Now, she said, she's glad she made the trip.

"God works in mysterious ways," she said.

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