
THAT ADOPTED GIRL



“Have compassion for all beings,
rich and poor alike;
each has their suffering.” - Buddha

SET FREE AND WORTHY

This is Richard. My friend Baby D and I were downtown when we saw Richard aimlessly walking down the street, sipping his beer. Baby D and I looked at each other, both thinking that we couldn't let this guy get away. I ran across the street and said, “will you take a picture with me?” Surprised he laughed and said, “me?” as if he couldn't believe we would want anything to do with him. *As if he thought he wasn't worthy.*

**80% of the prison population
once was in foster care**

“Yes you!” I put the WORTHY hat on his head, told him about That Adopted Girl and the ‘I am worthy’ message and then we sat on the curb and we talked about life.

Richard just moved to Las Vegas a month ago to live with his sister. He said he used to be an artist, kind of like me. I guess he was seeing writing as my art. “I was a tattoo artist,” he said. “Why don't you do it anymore?” I asked. He bowed his head, stared at the street and his voice lowered as he mumbled, “I stopped when I went to prison for eleven years.” “No shame in that homie!” joked Baby D. Richard laughed, authentically joyful. I sat thinking about how ashamed he seemed when telling us that he had been to prison. How hard it must be to live with shame that heavy. How badass Baby D was for making him feel accepted.

As he laughed and I got lost in thought.... Baby D took this picture.

What did Richard do to get locked up for 11 years? I don't know. I don't think it matters. He served his time and as far as I am concerned he is **WORTHY of redemption**. He is worthy of being accepted back in to society. He is worthy of not having to struggle in silence.

People come from different walks of life. When we cross paths we must at least acknowledge one another, different as we may be. It is not up to us to pass judgment. *It is up to us to spread love and human kindness.*

XOXO

LOVE always and forever,
That Adopted Girl
Juliana Whitney

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