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Grace Is a Gift

Acts of kindness can go a long way and even potentially last a lifetime. These were the kinds of thoughts that repeated in my mind as the feeling in my fingertips was going numb. All that I felt at the moment was the constant beating in my head which felt somewhat similar to a migraine, and a sheer burning sensation emanating from the tips of my knuckles. My vision went black as my body was forced onto the searing pavement which was being heated under the glaring summer sun. My arms flailed in a desperate attempt to guard against the barrage of fists striking down at my vulnerable frame. Shortly after, a distasteful metal-like odor flowing freely down my nostrils began to force me to inhale through my mouth in a despairing effort to catch my breath. But even with all of the discomfort I was enduring, I couldn't help reflect on a similar occurrence that took place during the earliest days of my childhood.

At the time, I had to have been around the fragile age of four or five since this was one of my earliest memories. I used to cry and scream all of the time whenever my parents would drop me off at a local daycare. "Mommy, mommy!" was all I would ever say during my first days attending. Yup, I was that kind of kid who would often cry for his parents. Eventually, a group of older boys decided they had enough of my constant wailing as they thought it was time to confront my issue with threats along with insults pertaining to my everyday whining. I sat huddled up against a wall, hugging my knees with tears streaming down my rosy cheeks. Luckily

for me, a girl around the same age as the boys gave me a gift I wouldn't have been aware of until I matured later. She stood tall against the boys as she got in between the commotion, her shadow casting itself over me, making it difficult for me to see past the glare of that old morning sun. Although I had never met her before, she fended off the bullies almost looking as iconic as a superhero to me. I bet she would never guess that her sudden act of bravery was going to be stuck with me for a while.

Years later, as I was walking toward home from my middle school, and I strolled by a large intimidating crowd. I couldn't help approach the oppressing group which wore similar uniforms as I did as they were on my route home. Once I got close enough, I noticed they were surrounding a fellow schoolmate. My school was just one big home for delinquents who loved to solve problems with violence. With an uneasy feeling in my gut, I decided to speak up for the lone girl, hoping to recreate that moment someone stood up for me in my time of need. My words, however, were immediately returned with physicality as the crowd rushed toward me with their arms swinging like baseball bats. My body easily fell to the ground with some of the students following through with the swing of their legs, the tips of their shoes striking at my cowering position. Thank god, the savage beating didn't last long.

I'm not sure I was thinking of that moment in daycare when that distasteful metal-like odor flowing freely down my nostrils began to force me to inhale through my mouth in a despairing effort to catch my breath. As I took some time to regain my senses, all I could hear were the numerous footsteps dispersing in several directions. My first sight was the nearby convenience store employees chasing or phoning the authorities. The only person staying behind with me was the girl everybody wanted to pick on. Thankfully, she looked mostly unharmed. She

started voicing her concern for my well-being while I stood up in a daze, trying to play off the tears and blood. Of course, she saw through my sad attempt of acting like a tough guy. The girl seemed nice, being properly dressed within the school's dress code unlike many of the other gang affiliated students. I didn't really make an effort to question her situation as I thought no one was deserving of such a violent memory. Besides, I quickly forgot about it once she began pulling something out from one of the smaller pockets of her backpack.

"Here, take it," she said with a small smile, placing a small solid rectangular object which shimmered in the bright rays of the sunlight. I'll never forget the cool refreshing feeling the object gave my sweaty palms. "It used to belong to my brother, but you can have it now," she insisted due to my hesitant reaction. I can still remember the summer sunshine reflecting off the twenty-three karat surface of a stainless gold medallion. The face was marked with engravings that displayed the iconic creature Pikachu on the front and a short description of information like length and height was smelted on the back. I gladly accepted it to serve as a reminder of the lesson I learned through those years, and stored it away as my physical embodiment of grace.

This gift served to me as a reminder of the kindness of grace. Random acts of grace can impact someone's point of view, decisions, and the actions they take in the future. For me, I know that occurrence that took place during my childhood has persisted to spread out this influence. My only hope is that the gifts I give can last a lifetime like the one I received.