

Dear W.C.,

I am currently homeless and living out of my car. I have a dog and a cat living in my car with me. I have one daughter that lives out of state. She is struggling herself and I do not want to burden her with my situation. I am separated from my husband who was very verbally abusive to me for years. I finally had to leave with just my personal belongings and pets as I could not take his demeaning words and threats of violence any longer. I have found a job but do not start until next week. Once I am working I will be able to support myself but it will take me weeks to save up enough for a security deposit and first month's rent. I would rather be homeless than go back to living in constant fear. Can you please help me get back on my feet so I can have a fresh start?

Dear Readers,

I arranged a meeting with this woman in the parking lot of a local store. I found her living with her two pets in a small compact car. It was far from ideal living conditions for any of them. I had brought with a bag of cat and dog food and a bag of prepared food for her. I had asked what she needed before heading over and her words had been, "We are all hungry. We ran out of food." After watching her give both the pets a bowl of food and fresh water from a plastic jug, she then ravenously ate her own meal. I let them eat for a few minutes before asking her about her present state.

The woman looked to be in her late forties. There was no odor of cigarettes or alcohol. She did not have any prior arrest records for alcohol or drugs. She was just a woman that had withstood years of psychological abuse until she could take it no longer. There are people that think it is not that bad as long as you are not being physically abused, but they are wrong. The wear and tear on your well-being and self-confidence leaves many scars you cannot see. The beaten down look I saw as I watched this woman was one I have unfortunately seen many times.

I began by asking about the job she had secured. She said she had gotten a job through a person that knew of her situation. They were giving her a chance even though she did not have the skills or even the proper clothing for the job. She said she had promised them she would learn fast and work hard. I was glad to see the determination on her face. This meant her husband had not completely destroyed her self-confidence. I asked for her permission to speak with the employer and she shared with me their name and phone number. I spoke to the employer and she confirmed the woman's soon to begin employment with their company. They were aware of this woman's situation of long term abuse and the woman needing a chance in life. I asked the employer for her rate of pay and hours to be sure she could support herself in the future. When I graciously thanked the employer she said, "We really do need the help at our company. Bless The Time Is Now to Help for helping this woman put her life back together." I could hear her voice break as she said this. She continued, "We all need to do our part."

The woman shared with me all the details of her present financial situation. She had about \$10 left to her name that she was trying to save for gas to get to her new job that started in three days. That \$10 could not be used for food or any other necessity. Many people spend that on their daily coffee habit. The woman had nothing left as she had already pawned her wedding ring and few pieces of jewelry she had managed to sneak out of her home.

The woman began to tell me about the years of abuse from her husband. She said as soon as her daughter had turned 18 she had fled their home to live out of state. The daughter constantly told the mother she needed to leave but out of fear of homelessness the mother had stayed. She had secretly hoped the husband would leave first but he had not. He had enjoyed torturing her daily with threats to harm her or her pets if she did not follow his many rules. She shared with me some of the disturbing things he had done and I could see why she fled with only what she could carry.

After we spoke a bit longer I made arrangements for her to move into a motel for a few days until she could get into the apartment she had found. The apartment was affordable and allowed pets. The security deposit and first month's rent would have been impossible for her to save for. We called the landlord and I spoke with them to secure the apartment for her. They were presently working on the apartment so it would not be ready until the end of the week. At least she would be safely housed in the motel until that time.

I made sure the woman had gift cards for food, gas and clothing so she could purchase what she needed to look professional on her first day of work. She was so surprised by the help we provided. She said, "I have been to several organizations and they all told me I had to fill out applications and wait for assistance. You meet me in a parking lot and my whole life is changed. Am I dreaming?" I assured her this was not a dream; it was a reality thanks to the many caring and sharing people that support The Time Is Now to Help.

My dear friends, poverty is causing great pain among our fellow creations. Let us stand together and continue our good works of removing the pains of poverty. God Bless all of "You" for helping.

Health & Happiness, God Bless Everyone, W.C./Sal

Please Help: There are many coming to us in desperation. Our good fellow creations need our compassion. Together we make a big difference. Make checks payable to: The Time Is Now to Help, P.O. Box 1, Lake Geneva, WI 53147. The Time Is Now to Help is a federally recognized 501(c)3 charitable organization licensed in the states of Wisconsin and Illinois. You will receive a tax deductible, itemized thank you receipt showing how your donation provided assistance for the poverty stricken.

A Very Special Thank You: Fox Charities, Martin Group, John Stensland & Family, American Culinary Federation-Geneva Lake Chapter, Dick & Jean Honeyager, Paul Ziegler, Ziegler Charitable Foundation, Clarence W. & Marilyn G. Schawk Family Foundation, The Petco Foundation, Bill & Helen Johnson, Badger High School FFA, Thrivent Choice Dollars

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Memorials: Jody Cook in memory of her husband Craig. In memory of the great father he was, and still is in spirit to his children Craig, Jr. and Cara. He will forever be in our hearts and thoughts every day.

Robert & Mary Ann Zelenski in memory of Ken Heck.

Ronald & Sandra Bosi in memory of Lucille Schoppe.

Kathryn Roen in memory of her Mom Darlene Roen-Parks.

Furniture Donations: Please contact Love, Inc. for all your furniture, clothing and household item donations. Call 262-763-2743 or 262-763-6226 to schedule pick-up.

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