

Dear W.C.,

My brother and I are in desperate need of your help. We moved away from our mother as soon as I turned 18. My brother is two years older than I. We were both living with our mother. She is an alcoholic and had different men coming to our house nearly every night. We tried to get our Mom to quit drinking and straighten out her life but she would not change. My brother wanted to leave as soon as he turned eighteen but was afraid to leave me behind. There were many times he had to protect me from the drunken men my mother would bring home. He always made sure I, and even our Mom was safe. He went right from graduating high school to working full-time so he could at least make sure we had the lights on and food. My brother and I are now living in an apartment we rented a few months ago. The reason we need your help is we were not able to pay all the rent last month. Our car broke down and my brother needs it for work. They would not give us our car back unless we paid the bill in full. We had to use all we had saved for our rent and all our other expenses to pay for the car repair. We thought we were doing so well on our own but we never planned on something like this happening.

Dear Readers,

My unplanned visit was made to a garage apartment conversion. I walked up the flight of wooden stairs to the second floor entrance. I knocked several times but it was not answered. I did not hear any activity inside so I assumed they were not home. As I walked down the stairs I saw an older car pull into one of the parking areas. A young man and woman both got out of the car and were walking towards me. I introduced myself, asking if they were the brother and sister that had written to The Time Is Now to Help. When they confirmed this, and looked at my identification they were happy to invite me inside.

We spent a few minutes looking at the car and the brother pointed out the repairs that were completed. There was more work that needed to be done but it was at least running. I confirmed the high mileage that I suspected as well. I made notes about the car to share with our mechanic.

The apartment was small and sparsely furnished. The sister said she had gotten most the items from Love, Inc. as their mother would not let them have anything when they moved out. She had even kept most of the girls clothing. They did not have beds and were sleeping on old couches. The refrigerator and cabinets were nearly empty. They had a few dishes and glasses, all mismatched items. The kitchen area had a small table with two folding chairs. They offered me one of the chairs so we could sit and go over their situation.

We sat to talk and I asked about their family life. Their father had disappeared when they were both very young. Their few recollections of their father were fearful and abusive. The mother had neglected them from then on due to her drinking. I noticed how they both were so close, even so similar looking, that they sometimes finished each other's sentences. When I commented on this the sister smiled saying, "We raised each other. We know how each other think." The brother told me how he had been responsible for getting his sister up and to school in the mornings from the time she was in kindergarten. The mother would threaten

them with punishment if they woke her in the morning or did not get the school bus all on their own. The brother recalled babysitting his sister from a very young age while his mother went out drinking at night. He remembered sleeping in his sisters room and pushing the dresser in front of the door to keep the “bad men” out. The sister began to cry when he said this saying, “I don’t know what would have happened to me if my brother wasn’t there to protect me. One time when he came home from school I was trying to push one of the men out of my room. He had to hit the man in the back with his school books to stop him. All our mother did was yell at us for hitting her boyfriend.” They shared many other incidents where the brother was there to protect the sister from the mother’s numerous boyfriends.

When I heard all this I decided I needed to visit the mother the next day. When I knocked on the door numerous times the door was finally opened by a woman that was obviously intoxicated. She was unkempt. I told her who I was and asked her about her children. She interrupted me with the comment, “I do not want my kids back. Good riddance to them. I don’t have to be responsible anymore because they are over eighteen.” She infused this tirade with much profanity and proceeded to slam the door in my face.

I decided my next visit would be with the employer of the young man. He was very complimentary of the young man’s drive and work ethic. The employer could not say enough good things about this young man. The one comment he made to me still sticks in my mind. The employer told me, “At least he does not come to work anymore with black eyes and bruises from fighting with his mothers boyfriends.”

I planned a second visit with the brother and sister the very next day.

I asked to go over their bills and budget. They were very organized and I guessed that came from a lifetime of caring for themselves and having to grow up much too fast. They had their full budget written out in detail. I could see they just got by each month with no room for emergency repairs. They did not have any funds in their budget for entertainment or clothing or education, like most people their age. They were paying rent, utilities, food and gas for the car. I really liked this brother and sister. I could see they had suffered a lot due to the terrible, abusive parents they had been given, but somehow they had managed to raise themselves to be good, responsible, hard working young adults. I knew they needed our help to ease their budget and help get them back on track.

After we reviewed the budget I asked the brother and sister about their plans for the future. The brother shared that he was receiving on the job training and would be receiving a promotion when he finished his training. The sister was planning on attending college next year and had applied for scholarships and grants to help with her dreams for the future.

We paid their overdue rent and one month into the future. We also brought their utilities up to date. We provided them with food gift cards to supplement their occasional visits to the food pantry when their funds got low. We also provided gas gift cards to help the brother with his commute to work. The sister had been taking the bus to and from school and to her job after school. The brother would pick her up at night from her job as he did not want her walking or riding her bike alone after dark.

Two months later I visited the brother and sister and I am happy to report they are doing much better. The brother had received his promotion that would help provide the additional funding needed for all their expenses. "We" have provided hope for the future where there had previously been fear and despair. This is all possible thanks to "You". Both the brother and sister were able to achieve their goals with "Our" help.

We are busy using the funds from the Fox Charities Summer 2014 \$25,000 Matching Grant to provide poverty assistance to those in need in our communities. We will soon share where every penny of your donations were used to bring poverty relief and assistance to those most in need in our community. Thank you to Fox Charities and all of "You" for Caring and Sharing.

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, Clarence & Marilyn Schawk Family Foundation, I.Am.Giving Foundation, Geneva Wells Motel, Martin Group, John Stensland & Family, Lake Geneva Area Realty, ITW Foundation, Petco Foundation, Therese Kuban, Thomas Getzen, Royal Neighbors of America, DC Mitigation, Jeanette Logterman, Jane Evans Krenz, Thomas Hickinbotham, Gerald & Joyce Byers, Mary Hauser, Barbara & Howard Wonser, Joan Marabito Rietz, Ellen Flanagan, Brian & Michelle Rinderle, Randall & Margaret Smith, Steve & Lori Jayhan, Michael Glass, John & Stratis Bahaveolos, Sr., Charles Carlson, Donald & Jean Smith, W.C. Family Resource Center/Food Pantry volunteers, and all the God loving volunteers of all our caring pantries, ALL of you who support The Time Is Now to Help donation boxes, and the businesses that allow our donation boxes. Anyone who would like a Time Is Now donation box in your business, please call (262) 249-7000.

Memorials: Sal & Corinne Dimiceli, Sr. in loving memory of their good friend Clarence Schawk. Beth & Jody Rendall in memory of Nya. Henry & Virginia Hertl in memory of Betty Quigley. Charles & Patricia Phinisee in memory of their best friend Roger Hill. The following donations were given in loving memory of Richard L. Peck: Daryl Peck, Cynthia & Steven Hibbard, Roger & Hilda Weis, Stanley & Sally Torstenson, Thomas & Julie Bence, Charles & Jeanette Lovely, George Howland, Cheryl Kessler, Dirk Daniels, David & Debra Geils and Auersteel.

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.

Please visit: www.timeisnowtohelp.org