

# ***You've Got to be Kind: Volume 2***

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## Chapter 1: 1-20

### **“Good People of Reddit, What Did You Do Today to Make the World Oh-So Slightly Better?”**

1) Alwin wrote, “I work in a bar, and a dude walked in who looked and felt off. He just stood there, not really saying anything much, just huffing and puffing. We get some crazies in sometimes, but this felt different. It felt like this man needed something, wanted something but not in a bad way. So instead of ushering him out, as I normally would with people who have no business in my bar, I asked him what he needed / wanted / what I could help him with. Pretty soon I figured out he was a diabetic and his blood sugar was low, but he didn’t have money to buy a Coke from me. I asked him to sit down and drink his Coke on the house and leave whenever he felt better. Dude was back on his feet in a few minutes. Apart from being diabetic, he was also mentally challenged, so communication was a little difficult but we got there.”

SatansBigSister commented, “My father is diabetic, and when his blood sugar gets too low he has an attack and slurs his speech and sounds like he’s having a stroke, or gets violent and swears like a sailor on leave. Maybe he seemed mentally challenged because of the low blood sugar? Either way, thank you from someone who worries a loved one will have a hypo [attack of hypoglycemia, aka low blood sugar] with no one there to help.”

2) thisisntanyoneukno wrote, “I was at McDonald’s having coffee and a really old guy comes up and asks me to help him set up his computer because he wants to use the Wi-Fi. I thought he meant a laptop. Nope, he meant a desktop computer. I helped him by carrying in his tower, monitor, keyboard, and mouse from his car. I set it up for him at a table with a plug and got it working for him.”

3) DMNudesforCompliment wrote, “A customer came to the bar and asked for a glass of water (with lemon) and nothing else. I asked if he wanted a menu to look over while he enjoyed his water (with lemon) and he said ‘no thanks’ since he couldn’t afford to buy any food or drink. I decided to give him a free bowl of soup since it costs the restaurant literally 12 cents to make a single bowl. At first he tried turning it down, but I told him it was fine and to just take it. I went back and grabbed my own bowl of soup and had soup with the dude. I’m almost positive he was either homeless or had some kind of mental handicap. He seemed very grateful for the soup and said he would pay me back one day but I doubt it. I make myself onion soup all the time at work, so giving it out for free to a random stranger is no loss on my end or the restaurant’s end, especially considering that it comes free with basically every meal that isn’t just an appetizer.”

foolshelper commented:

“First off, good on you. I have a similar story for one of my old regulars. He used to come in with his girlfriend about three times a week, get good food, and tip fat.

“Over the last six months, he’s always alone and has ordered only small things like kids chicken or salads and sh[\*]t. Tipping like \$2 at most.

“As a bartender you obviously want to be friendly and somewhat ‘in their life,’ but you learn how to mind your p’s and q’s [manners].

“I finally asked and I learned within the same week he found she was cheating on him and [he] was also laid off from his job. The man has no family and no one who gives a f[\*\*]k.

“Now when he comes in, he gets a decent meal on payday when he can afford it.

“The rest of the time he comes in, he gets a water, I go and make him a salad, and then I go and make him an ice cream sundae. Three days a week. \$0 tab and \$0 tip. F[\*\*]k it.

“He’s a good dude dealt sh[\*]tty cards trying to make the best for himself.

“At the end of the day, the good conversation is worth more than the money.

4) UnconditionalMay wrote this:

“I had the WORST day at work (at a job I despise). Worked hours on a project only to be told that I had to do it all over again and couldn’t go home until it was done. Only ended up staying an extra hour behind so not too bad, but I live an hour and a half’s commute away from home so I’d be getting home around 9pm.

“I finally leave work and get to the tube station, and I see a bench with three HUGE unattended suitcases. This station is on a line close to an airport so not too unusual but unattended bags on the tube? Uh, that’s a no no. I look around and spot a woman with a six- or seven-year-old kid at the other end of the long platform and see her trying to haul three more suitcases of different sizes down to the bench. This woman is travelling with SIX suitcases.

“The tube arrives and I reeeally just want to go home, but I’ve seen her now so I can’t just leave it. I go up to her and offer to help and bless her, she’s so grateful. Her kid is just kind of dancing around being cute, and she’s trying to shift the bags while shouting at him in her native language.

“Turns out she’d come from the airport, someone had taken her phone/she’d lost it on the plane. I offered her mine to call a cab, but she still needs to get the bags to street level so we go back and forth hauling them down the long arse platform to the lift and then from the lift to the barriers —

took about 20 minutes in total and luckily it's not a major station so it wasn't too vast. The whole time she kept thanking me and saying she never meets kind people so that was nice. Once we got to the barriers, the tube people took over and we hugged and said goodbye.

“TL;DR: had a sh[\*]t day and wanted to go home, but stopped to help a woman and her kid move a sh[\*]t load of bags on the underground.”<sup>1</sup>

### **“Who was the Truly Nicest Guy You’ve Ever Met, and What was He Like?”**

MrDrProfTimeLord wrote, “It’s really disheartening to hear about all the awful things Nice Guys do, so let’s talk about the actual nice, caring, decent guys out there who really do want to be helpful and kind.”

1) gallantlady wrote this:

“He bought me a blanket.

“I was in Target with my then-boyfriend, and we saw a man walk in ahead of us with a huge, awesome dread going down to his knees. The dread isn’t relevant, but it was cool. We were in the sale section when I found a felty-type blanket with satin edging. I was so excited and talked about the same kind of blanket I had as a little girl and how cozy and safe it made me feel.

“(Back story here ... my grandma had just passed away and I was in the midst of an abusive relationship, so feeling cozy and safe was something I really needed at the time.)

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<sup>1</sup> Source: u/SuperSilhouette, “Good people of Reddit, what did you do today to make the world oh-so slightly better?” AskReddit. 14 August 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y95ovykh>>.

“My boyfriend talked me out of it because it wasn’t in my budget, and I sadly agreed and walked away. The store was about to close so we had to make our purchases at the customer service counter, and I saw dread man directly ahead of us, buying the blanket I wanted. When he was finished, instead of walking away, he turned round and handed me the bag.

“He had overheard our conversation and he wanted me to have that blanket. I can’t remember exactly what he said, but I was so touched by his kindness. It gave me the feeling that things were gonna be okay. I’ll keep that blanket forever.

“I’ve never seen him again, but if you’re out there, dread man, thank you. You’re the real MVP [Most Valuable Player].”

2) dried\_lipstick wrote, “When we [my now-husband and I] first started dating, one of my students had their house broken into right around Christmas. This was a very low-income school, so the family couldn’t replace the stuff. I was telling my husband about it, and he asked me to get her Christmas list. One of the things she wanted was a Hello Kitty bike. Not only did he get her that bike, but he got her the cutest matching helmet, too. The little girl never knew the bike was from her teacher’s boyfriend. He just loves playing Santa whenever possible.”

3) Jbsbm wrote this:

“He adopted our friend’s kid the day we knew she was dying. He helped her through the process of wills and everything and made sure she didn’t have to worry about the after. She spent her last days being able to do her bucket list with her child, with money he provided. He set up a trust for her child with everything he had in his

savings, so that she could physically see that financially he was covered.

“He asked her to write a book of her wishes for her son so that he can carry them out and raise him in a way that she would like. He helped her write letters and birthday cards for her son and they celebrate her birthday, mother’s day, etc., so that she is always a part of his life.”

4) SinfullySinless wrote this:

“This bouncer at a bar. Any time a woman left a bar with a shady-looking man, he would stop them and have the woman tell the bouncer who the guy was and where she thought she was going. If the story didn’t add up, he would put her back inside the bar and try to find her friends.

“I know because that’s how he saved me.”

SinfullySinless added this:

“I’m a kidnapping victim when drunk. I’m very social and outgoing when I’m drunk, and for some reason it’s very easy to just convince me to ‘go check something out’ or some guys just grab me by the hand and lead me out.

“At this one bar the same bouncer must work every Saturday because it was always him who saved me. I’ve seen him stop other women before and save them, too.

“He would ask the guy where he was going. Usually the guy would say something like, ‘Oh, she’s drunk, just getting my friend home, sir,’ and then the bouncer would stop the woman and ask her what is the name of the man who is taking her away and where she thinks she is going. If she didn’t know the guy’s name or the story didn’t add up, he would grab the girl and give her to the inside bouncer and kick the guy out.



“Usually the bouncer would give the woman a stern warning before releasing you. But he’s super nice.

“But I’m no longer a kidnap victim as I’ve learned to control public drinking. (This was back when I was 21.) Also, I keep a healthy dose of paranoia when drinking. But I credit that bouncer a lot for keeping me safe when I was 21 and partying in college.”<sup>2</sup>

### **“What’s Your Public Restroom or Locker Room Horror Story?”**

Avbitten wrote, “Worst day of my period, I accidentally went into the men’s room instead of the women’s. I was essentially gushing blood out of my lady bits. After I sat down, I realized I was in the men’s bathroom, and was out of pads and tampons. I was across campus and would’ve certainly bled through my underwear and pants before I got back to my dorm room. I sent out a plea for help on Yik Yak [an anonymous messaging app for college students, but now shut down] and 15 minutes later some dude walks in and chucks a full box of tampons over the stall door. Never met him.”<sup>3</sup>

### **“What’s the Best Experience You Have had with Cops?”**

1) thecrocodile44 wrote this:

“During the aftermath of me reporting my sexual assault, the cop who initially took my statement and arrested the

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<sup>2</sup> Source: MrDrProfTimeLord, “Who was the truly nicest guy you’ve ever met, and what was he like?” AskWomen. July 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/yaqvquw>>.

<sup>3</sup> Source: u/budmaster99, “What’s your public restroom or locker room horror story?” AskReddit. 13 June 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/y7e8epmh>>.

guy gave me his cell phone number and told me to call anytime I needed someone to talk to. He stepped aside from the investigation so he could stay in contact and make sure I was okay without causing any issues with the case. At one point when he found out my workplace wasn't doing anything to comply with the no-contact order, he went down and had a 'nice chat' with the HR rep [Human Resources representative] to make sure things changed. He honestly was a lifesaver through it all.

“He had moved to Utah by the time the final judgment came down, which sent the guy to prison, but my best friend immediately sent him a message and he celebrated over the distance with us. He's an absolutely amazing man.

“Did I mention he also helped my best friend get her foot in the door with her career in the criminal justice system after seeing how she was handling/helping me through the ordeal? Yeah. He's pretty awesome.”

2) runnerrennur wrote, “When I was a new driver at 16, I turned too sharply in an intersection and ran over a school-crossing cone. I stopped on the side of the road to try and go pick it up. As I was about to get out of the car, a cop pulled up behind me and came to my window. I thought I was in trouble for running over the cone. He told me that I could leave and he would take care of the cone because he didn't want me in the dangerous situation of crossing traffic. (There wasn't much, but it was right by the high school where a lot of reckless young drivers were.) I thought it was nice of him.”

3) Omakase\_Otaku wrote this:

“When I was 15, I'm pretty sure I was being followed by a group of less-than-upstanding men. I was walking home from my friend's house because her car broke down and I couldn't afford a cab.

“They were on the same path as me for over 15 minutes, and they were being eerily quiet for a group of friends. When I sped up or slowed down, they did the same and I was coming up to the part of my walk home that would have taken me through a secluded large park rather than a public street.

“A cop pulled me over because I guess I looked scared or something and told me to get into the front seat. The men had stopped walking when I did as well. He gave me a ride home and looked upset the entire way, telling me how stupid it is for someone my age to be walking so far alone and lectured my parents about letting me walk home at 8pm alone in the city and asked them why I didn’t have a cell phone.

“I got a pay-as-you-go flip phone the next week.”

4) phoebae wrote, “I’m from a city called Adelaide in Australia. Melbourne is in the next state over, and the drive from Adelaide to Melbourne is eight hours. We were visiting because my cousin got engaged, and I had this huge framed photo of my cousin and her partner in the back seat of my car; the photo was our engagement gift to them. We parked at the train station in Melbourne after eight hours of driving, caught up with some friends to have dinner in the city, left and started driving an hour towards where we were staying at midnight. The highway was covered in fog, and while I was going 120km/h, my tyre delaminated and threw my car off to the middle of the highway. It would’ve been a really bad accident if it were the front tyre. My boyfriend tried to change the tyre, but it was stuck on from the heat of driving for so long. Then a cop on his way [home] from his shift pulled up behind us, tried to help us get it off, then offered to drive us home in the back of his paddy wagon. I said, ‘But the framed photo! I can’t leave it here with my car ... surely someone will

break into it,' so he helped me fit the huge frame in the back, and drove us an hour to my cousin's. Safe to say she bawled her eyes out at the gift and loved the story that came with it. He was a great guy."

5) BurgerPlushie wrote this:

"There was a car following me while I was walking home as a child, so I called the police. They came right away.

"One time when I was very young and home alone, there was a lot of knocking at the front door and yelling by strangers. Somehow, they knew I was home alone and were yelling at me to open the door. I felt frightened. I called my parents, but they were at an event and there was no answer. So I called the cops. The cops came, and it was immediately resolved.

"One time, I was with an ex and these weird car people were holding us hostage or something. Anyways, I remember feeling anxious, scared, and even crying. I called the cops, and many of them came to help us.

"Anyways, those were my experiences. I think police are great :) I am alive today because of them."<sup>4</sup>

### **“What is the Creepiest Thing that has Ever Happened to You in Your Life?”**

1) Shanny91 wrote this:

"I was 16 and got off at the wrong bus stop. A man who had been staring at me, muttering and snapping his fingers got off at the last minute with his massive suitcase. I got a bad feeling and took off running towards a bar at the end of the street and the scariest moment of my life is hearing

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<sup>4</sup> Source: ButterClaw, "What's the best experience you have had with cops?" AskWomen. 25 May 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y8pzm5wt>>.

those suitcase wheels speeding up behind me, and his feet hitting the pavement.

“Luckily for me, the bouncer at the bar was helpful and told creepy guy to turn around and walk the other way. Creepy guy tries to convince him that we knew each other and were just having an argument. Bouncer doesn’t care and asks a couple of his friends to follow this guy and make sure he doesn’t turn around and come back towards me.

“That unknown bouncer is on my list of heroes.”

2) underthetootsierolls wrote this:

“One time I was on the bus in my early 20’s and this creeper sat right next to me on a nearly empty bus, which you know always sets off alarms! THEN he tried to put his hand on my leg. I slapped his hand and loudly said, ‘What the f[\*\*]k are you doing?’ I got up to move, but my stop was also coming up. There was a bar right at the stop, which was a street over from my apartment building. I got off the bus and the guy followed me, and I just ducked under the awning of the entrance to the bar and stood next to the bouncer as I said, ‘I’m just going to stand here for a bit.’ He said, ‘Cool,’ then saw the guy. He puffed up and took a step away from the door towards bus creeper. The guy from the bus immediately turned around and hightailed it out of there. I felt comfortable after that, and I was going to walk the block over to my building, which had a doorman, but the bouncer insisted on he and I going inside to get the bar manager to walk me over to my building. I felt a little silly because the creepy guy was clearly gone and would have had to walk back past the bouncer to get to me, but the bouncer & the manager insisted. Maybe they were doing it to just cover their [\*]sses legally, but I still thought it was really nice. Instead of feeling like the world is full of scary people after that experience, I was reminded

there are good people out there willing to help dropkick the weirdos back to whatever dark hole they belong in.

“Shoutout to all the scowling bouncers hangin’ out in front of city bars! :)”

Shanny91 commented, “Absolutely! One of my jobs since then included working with many of those scowly bouncers! And while I know a lot of them could legitimately break someone’s face, they would also go hours out of their way if a female (or anyone really) asked for help!”

DisloyalMouse commented:

“A similar thing happened to me when I was 14/15. I was on the bus home, having gone into town after school. I was literally in my school uniform. This creepy guy kept staring at me on the bus and licking his lips. When I got up to leave, he followed me off the bus. I started walking down the street and I could hear him call after me, ‘Hey, baby, where you goin’?’ I started walking faster and I could hear him still following me. ‘Baby girl, what’s wrong? I just want to talk.’ At that point I start running and I can hear him running after me, shouting, ‘BITCH! Why you gotta be like this?’

“At that point I almost ran into this bouncer from a bar near my parents’ house, who had stepped onto the street to see what the noise was about. I half yelled at him that I didn’t know who the f[\*\*]k this guy was and that I was only a kid. Luckily the bouncer believed me and ushered me into the outside seating area of the bar and told the creepy guy to GTFO [GET THE F[\*\*]K OUT] before he called the cops. He then got someone else to watch the door as he took me home. I felt like an idiot having to be walked home, but he was still such a hero.

“Praise for tough, scary-looking bouncers.”

LokisLocksmith commented, “I used to wait for my bus at 11.30 at night (shift work) outside the local strip joint because nobody was coming near me with the 6’9” bouncer right behind me.”

3) rubicon11 wrote this:

“I was at the park practicing tennis (I was trying to find a hobby after college) and volleying the ball against a giant plywood board. I was doing my own thing, minding my own business when I felt someone watching me. Some middle-aged dude got into the practice court without my noticing! This was before my ‘give no f[\*\*]ks’ life philosophy, so I smiled politely and tried to ignore him.

“Apparently that caused him to launch into a bunch of questions about how long I’ve been playing and he noticed me from the top of the hill, etc. At that point I stopped playing and was trying to get back to my bag and water bottle by the gate, but he was blocking my way. I felt trapped and knew this was not good. Out of the corner of my eye, I saw two guys walking to another court and made eye contact with one of the guys and tried to give him a ‘look this way.’ He saw me stalling and the creeper getting closer, so he yelled out, ‘Holy sh[\*]t, is that Becca? Becca, are you back for the summer?’ Creeper slunk away, and I bolted for the gate. The guys were nice and asked if I wanted to play tennis with them, but I was shaken so they walked me back to my car. I never caught their names but thank god they were there.”<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Source: u/droid71, “What is the creepiest thing that has ever happened to you in your life?” AskWomen. 19 May 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/y9jp9gef>>.

## **“What’s Something You’ve Said/Done that You Didn’t Expect to Have Such a Big Impact?”**

1) In asking this question, bemundolack wrote this:

“I e-mailed a teacher to say thank you, and he posted it on Facebook saying, ‘I really needed this.’

“This guy is my Drawing 2 professor, and he takes his job very seriously. My skill level in drawing has completely changed since the beginning of the semester. The very first day in class, he says, ‘Good morning,’ and everyone gets quiet because he looks like he’s about to start lecturing, and then he says, ‘I love drawing. You don’t understand. I LOVE drawing.’ That really carried through in his class, and everyone who took it has really improved. So I wrote him a thank-you e-mail after he sent me a summer reading list.

“So today, I was wasting time on Facebook, and remembered that he strictly refused to add any of us. Naturally, that made me want to stalk his page. He had posted my e-mail with the words ‘E-mail I got from a student, I really needed this.’ In the comments, his friends and family were all telling him how proud they are of him and stuff like that.

“Edit: I’m in college.

“Edit2: ‘The hardest thing for a student to learn is that a teacher is human. The hardest thing for a teacher to learn is not to try and tell them.’ — Mrs. Lintott, the History Boys”

2) herks wrote this:

“I have a very close family friend who is about 84 years old now. He’s always telling me stories of his time in the Navy, and what it was like growing up in the 1930s. He would always point out places and talk about what they used to be,



and all the different places he worked as a kid. Back then the kids would get odd jobs that paid 10-20 cents doing random stuff on the farms around town. One time he told me that his favorite job on the farm was when he got to help make the ice cream. He went on for about an hour talking about it.

“I didn’t think much of it at the time, but a couple months go by, and I’m at the mall doing my Christmas shopping, when I happened upon one of those \$30 do-it-yourself ice cream makers. So I think back to that story, and figure what the hell, and pick it up for him. Never bought him a Christmas present before, but it seemed like a good idea.

“So, I give it to him for Christmas, and tell him it reminded me of that story about making ice cream on the farm, and figured he could whip up some of his favorites. He instantly started crying and thanking me, saying it was the best gift he’s ever received. I figure it must have really brought him back to his childhood. I just figured he could make ice cream again; I had no idea it would mean so much to him.”

[Name deleted] commented, “It’s one of the best things in the world to get a gift that shows so obviously that the person who gave it to you listens to you and knows you. My cousin gave me a beard hat (you know ... one of those knitted hats with a knitted beard attached) and a signed copy of my favorite book ever last Christmas and I had to choke back tears because I knew it’d make him feel awkward if I cried. I don’t give a sh[\*]t about the actual hat or book. It just makes me feel amazing that he actually knew that I like odd knitted things and knew exactly what my favorite book was and took time out of his life to hunt down the perfect gift. He [the man you have the ice cream maker to] was probably crying because it was touching that you remembered something that was important to him and

thought of him. I don't think he was just overcome with nostalgia. Give yourself some credit. XD [Laughing with My Eyes Closed].”

3) Sparkiano wrote, “My grandfather was a doctor in family medicine for years. He made house calls until the day he retired, well into his seventies. For his 90th birthday, we put out ads in the local newspaper asking for former patients to write with their memories, collecting hundreds of cards from former patients (and a few from nut jobs). On his birthday, he opened up a mailbox we had bought and decorated for the occasion. Reading the first few cards, his eyes welled up with tears, and he managed to squeak out, ‘I thought they had forgotten.’ He parceled out those cards, reading a few every day, and shortly after he finished reading them he passed away. I can't think of a better way to go than to end your life reliving the legacy of care and compassion that he embodied all his life.”

4) IGottaFindBubba wrote this:

“When I was in high school, I came home and I told my mom that the lunch she made me tasted great. She hugged me really hard and told me she was having a sh[\*]tty day and that me appreciating the small things she does for me really makes her feel better.

“I was kind of shocked. I just thought the sandwich tasted good.”

ramp\_tram commented:

“We, as children, never really ‘got’ the effort that our parents put into things as small as remembering how you like your sandwich cut, that you prefer your chips to be inside your tuna sandwich, that you like the dinosaur chicken nuggets, or that you like two slices of cheese in your grilled cheese. They put so much care into taking care

of us that just a ‘thank you’ out of nowhere is worth a lot more than a Hallmark card on Mother’s or Father’s Day.

“Edit: The sh[\*]tty thing is that I can’t figure out a way to tell my own mother how much I appreciate everything she gave up for me and my brother.”

Isoxcline commented, “I’m a grown woman now, but when I go home to visit my parents, my mom will still come into my room early in the morning before I wake up, quietly pick up my dirty clothes, and go put them into the wash. When I wake up and see my clothes clean and folded on my dresser, it just sends a wave of love and appreciation crashing over me. Why didn’t I realize these things before I moved away?”

5) rickforking wrote this:

“My mom and I aren’t very close, mostly because she is an alcoholic, and has been most of my life. I live 2,000 miles from her now, but we still talk every couple weeks, and on special occasions.

“Last year around the beginning of the year, her basement flooded, and caused quite a bit of damage. Her insurance covered most of it, but it needed to be repainted, and she couldn’t afford it.

“My birthday rolled around in February, and she called and asked me what I wanted. I told her I was ok, but she kept insisting. Finally, I told her, ‘How about for my birthday, you buy yourself the paint for your basement, and I’ll get a friend of mine to come help you do it?’ She started crying, and saying how great I was, and apologizing for a lot of the stuff she did to me over the years.

“She hasn’t had a single drink since that day. Such a small thing to me, but results were amazing.”<sup>6</sup>

### “What’s Your Most Wholesome Secret?”

1) Freaschky wrote, “Every year for my mum’s birthday when we go on a night out, I give people money to buy two shots. One for them, one for my mum. I just ask them to go over and wish her a happy birthday and give her the shot. It’s great watching her talk about it to everyone who will listen, how so many people knew it was her birthday and she got all these free drinks, how special she felt. It’s worth the money just to see her face light up and get that sparkle back in her eyes.”

2) spconnol wrote, “When I was a kid, I used to always twist the quarter machines on the way into stores just in case. Got lucky a couple of times and a few free toys. Now that I’m grown, if I’m leaving a store that has those quarter machines I like to drop change into them if I have it and leave them half twisted.”

3) Reibinpo wrote this:

“Not about me, but it’s a secret that nobody knows except me. My dad walked out on me when I was 14, but he kept in touch with my older brother. He bought my older brother a car, a \$3,000 DSLR [digital single-lens reflex] camera (when they were a new thing), took him on trips, etc. He hasn’t said a word to me since I was 14, though. It’s f[\*\*]ked up.

“Anyway, when I turned 16 my grandfather went out and bought me a car. He’d have me over a couple weekends

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<sup>6</sup> Source: bemundolack, “What’s something you’ve said/done that you didn’t expect to have such a big impact?” AskReddit. 2012 <<https://tinyurl.com/y9f5vf2u>>.

every month to help him around the house, help work on the boats with him, etc. At the time I thought he just needed help. I thought my problems with my dad were my fault for misbehaving for something, and that nobody in my family knew about them except my mom and me. The older I get, the more I realize my mom must have gone to him over the way my father was treating me, and he stepped in to help raise me. He was the best man I ever knew.”

4) Helmsguard wrote, “A friend of mine has problems with paying his bills. His parents don’t support him that much and he can’t get a good student loan because of stupid regulations. He often [buys] containers [of] food at a local supermarket and then invites me to dinner and to hang out. He is about to get his bachelor degree, and has to be in lab almost all day, thus he cannot work more than a few hours a week. I sometimes leave behind 5 to 20€ [Euros] randomly lying around in his room to support him. He wouldn’t take the money if I gave it to him directly.”

5) uneasyrider wrote this:

“Several years ago my wife totally surprised me for my birthday with a fully planned trip for me and my brother to visit a friend of ours who moved to Colorado. She booked the flights and rental car, and she worked with the other two to make sure I had a full weekend planned. She was so proud of herself.

“Except it wasn’t a secret. Three weeks before the date Delta Airlines called my phone to inform me of a change to one of my flights. When they said Denver, I started putting the pieces together. As the day drew closer, I went along with everything she told me to do. The day of my birthday she woke me up real early to go shower and while I did she packed my bag and loaded it in the truck of my brother, who was outside waiting on me.

“She wrote me a long letter explaining where she was sending me, but [I read it? she sent it?] only after I had left. It was really, really sweet, and she put a lot of effort into the whole thing. I acted as surprised and shocked as I possibly could.

“I’ll take this secret to my grave, at least from her. She talks about it sometimes, and still to this day claims she has done the best surprise gift. I agree 100%.”<sup>7</sup>

### **“What’s a Good Deed You have Done that Most Likely No One Noticed?”**

1) MyBirdPerforms wrote this:

“I’m a lunch lady. I used to sneak money into some of the younger kids’ accounts so they could buy the snacks we sometimes put out for sale when they’re nearing expiration.

“I did it because there were a few really sweet kids who never had any money in their accounts. The way it’s set up, they put the item on their tray and when they enter their pin, if it shows they have a zero or negative balance, I have to take it off their tray and tell them I’m sorry they can’t have it.

“And I really was and still am sorry. It started with a couple of kids who lost both of their parents within the same year. Everybody was just too sad and broke from funerals to keep up on the payments. There were a few who were on free lunch and always reeked of cigarette smoke. [...] In all honesty, there were also a couple of hateful little bastards who I imagined must be that jaded and cynical FOR A REASON by the ripe old age of six. I figured they could stand to have one thing go their way every once in awhile for a change.

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<sup>7</sup> Source: Hendrik Lamar, “What’s your most wholesome secret?”  
Reddit. 4 April 2017 <<https://tinyurl.com/lbar68s>>.

“It’s a non-issue now because payments are now mostly made online, and the ones that aren’t are closely scrutinized. I miss being able to make a kid’s day so easily just by making it so they got to count themselves among the haves for a minute. I still remember what it’s like to be six years old and be the kid who knew not to even ask because ‘We can’t afford that right now, Baby. Mommy’s sorry. Maybe next paycheck.’”

Haemokinetic commented, “I rarely ever post or comment on anything on Reddit. But I have to say, as one of those very same kinds of kids back when I was younger, I had a lady do the very same thing for me; it made my day back when I was that young. So, in case they didn’t or can’t say it, etc., thank you.”

2) Csquared211 wrote, “A local family’s son had his bike stolen at school. My husband and I knew they weren’t home one afternoon. We put a \$100 bill in an envelope with a note that said it was for his new bike and a nice lock to keep it safe and popped it in their mailbox, unsigned. We saw the nice post they made on Facebook about how grateful they were and how excited he was. It was a nice feeling made even better by the fact that it was anonymous. There was no pressure for them to thank us, no praise from others, just a happy kid and relieved parents. No kid should be without a bike, especially when someone just takes it from them.”

3) PavementBlues wrote, “Back when I used to smoke, I noticed that a park near my house often had cigarette butts littered all over the kids’ area. It bothered me as a smoker, and I used to go out there at night a few times a week and spend an hour or two with a trash bag picking up cigarette butts and other garbage that I found.”

4) bhsgrade 2015 wrote, “I usually don’t help the homeless who are holding signs on the side of the road. I’m pretty

broke, and although I feel bad for them, I usually just pass them by. One day I went to Chick-fil-A and got fries with my meal. I don't like fries much and was about to throw them away when I remembered a man holding a 'hungry' sign when I was on my way there. So I took the fries with me and gave them to him when I was driving back home. The guy seriously looked so happy, and as I drove away I looked in my rearview and he was scarfing them down like he hadn't eaten in days. It felt pretty good and now I make more of an effort to help people. I've never told anyone about it (except for right now). It was the middle of July and hotter than hell so the next day I went back with a bottle of water for him and he wasn't there. I was pretty upset."

5) Smapdo wrote, "I have a friend whose wife was diagnosed with MS [Multiple Sclerosis]. He doesn't have a lot of other friends, but he wanted to participate in the MS walk to raise some money, so he posted a plea for funds on Facebook. I pledged right away. After a few days, I was still the only one to kick in. So, once or twice a day, I would pledge a random amount, anonymously. I think I was the only one to pledge by the end of it all. But he raised a few hundred from '40' or so people, so he was pretty happy and his wife was, too."

6) SpaghettiGulliver wrote, "I saw my friend's ex-girlfriend holding a sign on the side of the road, asking for money for food. My friend and she had had a pretty bad break-up, but I knew she had fallen into a pretty bad heroin addiction after that, but was trying to get better. I had just gotten my tax return and had all the money assigned to different things, to get myself ahead, pay some bills, etc. I couldn't just drive by. I stopped and told her to get in and that I would take her to the grocery store and then back to wherever she was staying. When we got to the store, she was super-reluctant to put anything in the cart, but I told



her to get whatever she needed. No limit. I didn't care if she got 50 boxes of Oreos. Whatever. She started (slowly at first) putting essentials and stuff in the cart, and we got to talking and she grabbed a box of fancy cookies and quickly put it back and started apologizing, but I told her to put it in there anyway. I think the total was somewhere around \$100. I took her to her apartment, dingy and small and in a bad part of town, helped her unload the groceries and gave her a hug and told her to please take care of herself and then left. Found out recently that she's completely clean and working a really nice office job! I really told only one person, because my friend is still bitter about the break-up and I also didn't even really think of it after."

7) b0ne\_thief wrote this:

"When I was either 15 or 16, I was staying at my best friend's house for the weekend and his sister came to us with a bottle of vodka and a bunch of peach juice boxes for chasers and asked if we'd like to get drunk with her. I'd never been drunk before, but we said sure.

"After getting about as far into the bottle as we were capable of getting, my friend went to go crash [sleep]. His sister and I continued to drink for a little bit, then she asked if I wanted to go for a walk. I said sure. It got a little windy out and she was rubbing her arms, so I gave her my sweater and we kept drinking a little.

"Eventually, we ended up back at their house and when we came inside, she asked me if I wanted to go down to her bedroom (the basement) and 'help' her 'take the sweater off.'

"In a moment of astounding clarity for a drunk virgin, I said no.

"It would have ruined my friendship with my best friend, who is still my best friend to this day. This was a very long

time ago now. She was two years older than we were and a complete babe, but I turned it down because one evening of bliss would have destroyed everything I cared about in my friendship.

“She still has my sweater, and she and I are on good terms to this day. Nobody other than she knows about this. I think I did a good thing that night.”<sup>8</sup>

### **“Lawyers [...], What’s the Most Morally Reprehensible Case You Represented and Won?”**

Flying turkeycouchie wrote this:

“None of my cases are morally reprehensible. I believe that all my clients are legally innocent until proven guilty, and I represent each to the best of my ability. Even in cases where the client has confessed.

“The reason I do this is to hold the prosecutors, police, and judges accountable. If the system can convict without evidence or violate the rights of a guilty person, it isn’t much of a stretch for them to convict or violate the rights of an innocent person. Thus, if the prosecutor doesn’t have enough evidence to secure a conviction, I will fight hard to get the case reduced or dismissed. If the police illegally searched or coerced a confession, I will work to get evidence dismissed. If they did everything right, I will fight hard for an appropriate and fair sentence.

“If it makes you feel better, remember that I’m not just doing this to protect the rights of rapists and murderers; by protecting their rights, I am protecting yours as well.”<sup>9</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Source: bailey\_heredge, “What’s a good deed you have done that most likely no one noticed?” Reddit. 2016.

<<https://tinyurl.com/ybew3toq>>

## **“Those Who have Weird Neighbors, What Does Your Neighbor Do that is Weird or Creepy?”**

1) MollyWeasleySlays wrote this:

“My neighbor secretly does my yard work.

“He’s a very reserved man in his fifties, and my fiancé and I are in our mid/late twenties. Our neighbor never talks to us, and will frantically avoid conversation with other people. He blows the leaves in his yard every single day, even during summer. He also waxes his car once a week. If there’s a storm, the next day he’ll walk around his yard picking up twigs that have broken off of trees until his yard is perfectly clear of twigs. I should mention we live in a forest and both of our yards are at least an acre or so with dozens of trees.

“The yard obsession doesn’t end with his property line, though. At least once a month, I’ll come home and our yard is magically groomed: the leaves have been blown (even if we just blew the leaves a few days prior), our gravel driveway has been sprayed for weeds, our tiny section of grass has been mowed, etc. We take care of our yard, I have flowerbeds I maintain, and we do a big ‘yard maintenance day’ once a month, but it doesn’t come close to our neighbor’s yard maintenance. I’ve even caught him in our yard a couple of times, and he just hustles out without saying a word. We have a picket fence around our acre lot, so it makes him silently leaving our yard just a little awkward since he has to walk all the way up to the gate.

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<sup>9</sup> Source: Aramisua, “[SERIOUS] Lawyers of this Internet space, what’s the most morally reprehensible case you represented and won?” AskReddit. 1 September 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ybc9luny>>.

“I’ve tried to thank him multiple times, but the last time I brought him cookies as a thank you for blowing our leaves he opened the door only a crack, took the cookie tin, dumped the cookies into his hand, handed me back the tin, and quickly shut the door. Now I just leave thank you cards in his mailbox.

“I’m guessing he’s either bored, has an obsession with yard maintenance, or is just trying to be nice to the young couple next door but really hates social interaction.”

2) SpaceCase25 wrote this:

“I remember one time in 6th grade, I had a friend dying of kidney failure. We were so young and wanted to raise money to help, so we had bake sale after bake sale and lemonade stand after lemonade stand.

“We were walking door to door one day to tell people about Jordan and what we were doing. This older lady bought some cookies and said we were good kids. Shut the door, went back inside. A half hour later, she walked down to the corner to give us a \$20 bill that her husband had sent her with. He was going through dialysis, too. I’ll never forget her, and I’m 26 now so it was more than 10 years ago. She was almost crying as she walked up to us and we were sitting on the curb counting change.

“We made enough eventually to help pay a good chunk of the liver transplant he had. Unfortunately, he then got a blood clot that traveled to his heart, causing him to go into cardiac arrest. They couldn’t save him. Jordan will always be 12 to me in a pink tie-dye T-shirt. I hope that man had a more favorable outcome.”

3) NotoriousTNT wrote this:

“He was a horrific gossip, and would literally run outside when he saw you to talk about so and so.

“Anyways, one time I f[\*\*]ked up and needed some Plan B. I go to the store, and he’s there. I notice him following me aisle to aisle, so I double back him, grab the birth control and split for the checkout. I was in the clear until the dumb[\*]ss cashier couldn’t open the box and yells to her boss ‘I NEED HELP OPENING THIS PLAN B.’ Of course he f[\*\*]king showed up.

“So the next day I have a pit in my stomach because I knew he was going to tell the neighborhood. I pass these two older ladies, who mention the Plan B I took once they assumed I was out of earshot. One said not to tell my mom, it was my business and she understood how rough that must have been. The other commented the neighbor had no business sticking his nose in a teenager’s life and she was going to talk to him.

“My mom never found out.”

4) SolidVirginal wrote this:

“Not so much creepy, just weird.

“I’ve lived in my current place for a few years now. My upstairs neighbors moved in about two years ago and they’re ... interesting people. When they first moved in, they would have really loud sex (their bedroom is right above mine). I wasn’t bothered by this because a) it’s an apartment, you get used to that sh[\*]t and b) they did it in the evening, so it wasn’t like they were waking anyone up. I always left it alone.

“One night a few months into their first year, I was trawling around on the top floor outside because the gutter was clogged and the apartment maintenance team is slow as sh[\*]t, so I was unclogging it myself with a yardstick. My upstairs neighbor came out onto the deck and I nearly scared the sh[\*]t out of him, but I told him I was just the downstairs neighbor and he relaxed. We got to talking, and

then he suddenly got nervous and said, ‘Hey, me and my girl ... we aren’t disturbing you, are we?’ I laughed and said, ‘No, I get it, I have a boyfriend, too.’ He said, ‘Okay, but we’ll still try to keep it down.’ And he went back inside.

“Ever since then, they’ve played loud music every time they have sex to try and cover it up. It’s kind of adorable. They had music playing for six hours over the weekend one day and I gave my neighbor a grin and a thumb’s-up the next day when I ran into him.”<sup>10</sup>

**“Have You Ever Judged Someone in Your Head, Only to Immediately Regret It When They Do Something that Proves You Wrong?”**

1) MeridaXacto wrote this:

“It wasn’t immediate, but I did judge somebody pretty harshly based on appearance only to be totally disproved and left feeling like an asshole.

“There was a guy in another department who was a big chap (like extremely muscular), heavily tattooed, heavily pierced, shaved head and looked very aggressive (in my mind). I never interacted with him so I based all this only on looks (to my shame).

“Well, one day a colleague of mine tragically lost his two-year-old daughter to meningitis. It was heartbreaking. After two weeks my colleague returned to work as he was going out of his mind at home and just wanted to keep busy. Everybody rallied round to give support and made things the best we could for him on his return to work.

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<sup>10</sup> Source: Cringer90, “Those who have weird neighbors, what does your neighbor do that is weird or creepy?” Reddit. 1 September 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y7uj5b6t>>.

“The next day the tattooed guy from the other department (his name is Jules I now know) comes over and asks my colleague if he can have a word. My colleague goes off to the side of the office and Jules hands him a cardboard box. They have a chat and then depart upon giving each other a huge hug and both wiping tears from their eyes. Keep in mind that these two guys have never spoken before.

“So it turns out that Jules had lost a daughter to a short illness a couple of years before and she was of a similar age to my colleague’s daughter who had died. Jules told him the box had some things in it that he thought would help make the next few months a bit easier. I never asked the exact contents (it felt way too personal between them) but my colleague looked so, so touched. It has to be one of the most endearing gestures I’ve seen made by one person to another coming right out of the blue — I honestly can’t describe the energy.

“I felt so ashamed of myself for judging Jules so harshly based on nothing but looks. I’ve since got to know him and he’s the least aggressive person you could meet. I felt like a total d[\*]ck and learned a valuable lesson that day. I’m not judging people purely off impressions made from a distance based on something as shallow as looks. To go out of his way to help a person in pain, a pain he himself knew, with such a personal gesture was amazing.”

2) AnneShirleysHat wrote, “Some of the kindest people I’ve ever met are the grungiest, most hardcore-looking punks. It’s hard not to judge them at first glance, but when an old punk dude with a septum [piercing] and a neck tattoo knits you gloves for Secret Santa it’s hard not to go, ‘Aww, man.’”

rlw0312 commented, “I’ve had people ask me if I knew where they could get drugs. I’m covered in tattoos and have a resting b[\*]tch face, so I guess I give off the vibe. Having

a glass of wine after dinner is me getting f[\*\*]king WILD, so people's assumptions are very far from the truth. It's ok, though, I guess ... if people want to think I'm more of a bad[\*]ss than I am, I'll let them, lol [laughing out loud]."

ithinkiamrich commented, "It's a cool thing to ask for abstention of judgment, but this only works as a Tumblr quote. There's no such thing as a world without judgment [later, ithinkiamrich wrote that he meant assumptions, not definite judgments] and no one should feel bad for doing it beforehand. What people really shouldn't do is let the vision they have of someone in their heads guide their actions when they don't even know the person."

4) pm\_me\_your\_molars wrote, "I did a door-to-door food drive once. The gangsta-looking guys gave much better stuff than the suburbia moms. Probably because they actually have some personal experience with the pain of poverty."

5) MagicalMonarchOfMo wrote this:

"As animals who evolved to look out for our own survival, we take whatever visual cues we can find when meeting another animal — or human — and use them to figure out whether we're safe or not. It's not great, but it's not something that we'll likely evolve out of anytime soon.

"Once I sat down next to a guy on a subway platform. He was wearing fairly beat-up clothes, had a window-washing kit with him, and had a big old grimace on his face that was complemented by his extremely potent scowl. He just looked kind of angry, and not particularly interested in other people. The train I was hoping for wasn't running much that day, as it was a holiday, so I had a long while to wait. After a while, as there wasn't anything else happening, I did what all city-dwellers do, and complained aloud about the public transit system that was failing us



both, it appeared. In a surprisingly upbeat voice, he agreed, and explained to me that he was going the same direction as me on a different branch, and hoped he'd make his gig on time. We kept talking, and it turned out he had two kids at home he was working two jobs for, including the window washing. He hoped he wouldn't miss this job, as it would cost him enough that he would have to work late that night and wouldn't get to eat dinner with his kids and his wife. We ended up talking politics, people, family, and the city over the next twenty minutes. He was extremely polite and happy to talk, and he eventually decided he'd take a different train and just walk half an hour to get where he was going. All so he could have dinner with his [wife and] kids. Suffice to say, I felt fairly abashed looking back on my first impression. I still think back on that and remind myself not to assume too much."<sup>11</sup>

### **“When and How have You Stood Your Ground Against a Creep?”**

Standing up against a creep is a good deed because it can protect other people — and educate the creep.

1) KnitKnackNo wrote this:

“I was 18 and traveling to a town about an hour away alone on Halloween and stopped at the local Walmart to grab a couple things. A group of guys (five to be exact) holding cases of beer walked out right behind me. They were obviously following me to my car. There was only one guy who spoke to me, but they all stood behind him.

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<sup>11</sup> Source: Existentialism91342, “Have you ever judged someone in your head, only to immediately regret it when they do something that proves you wrong?” Reddit. 1 September 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/ybs7oh3h>>.

“‘You’re pretty!’ Thanks. ‘Where you going?’ My car. ‘Your [\*]ss is seriously amazing.’ Silence. ‘Hey. I’m talking to you. You better stop and talk don’t be f[\*\*]king rude.’

“As I was unlocking my car door, he came up and grabbed my [\*]ss and I whirled open my door, turned around and f[\*\*]king decked him. Full-fledged Molly whop straight to the nose. Instantly explodes with blood. I immediately jumped straight in my car and locked the door and hauled [\*]ss. I heard him scream, ‘F[\*\*]king crazy bitch broke my f[\*\*]king nose!’ as I was putting my car into drive. One of his friends looked concerned, but the rest were laughing.

“My body was full of adrenaline. I pulled over at a gas station and threw up and was trembling. My hand was bruised for weeks. But I was proud as f[\*\*]k of myself.”

She added this in a comment:

“Honestly, I read my audience. I wouldn’t have done this if nature wasn’t in my favor. Yes, it was five dudes. However, all but one of them kept their distance and stayed at least 20 feet away. The guy who grabbed my [\*]ss was only 5’8 and I’m 5’6. He was scrawny and thin. I’m broad shouldered with wide-set hips and strong thick muscular thighs, and I lifted weights. I honestly had at least 25lbs on him. Had he tried to physically harm me, I’m 80% sure I could’ve got him on the ground with my knee in his back. The other guys looked uncomfortable with what he was doing in the first place and didn’t want to be a part of it; they just stood there.

“The other time this has happened to me I was 16 and the guy was 6’3 and built like a linebacker. I just had to go with it. (Not as in go with it and get raped but go with it and not cause a scene.)”

2) Governor\_Marley wrote this:

“I sat down on a tram [streetcar], thoroughly ready to go home after a late shift at the lab. I was about 23. It was the weekend, and a very drunk youngish guy slopped down with a thump right next to me (when there were plenty of other seats). I was polite. He rambled incessantly. He was distraught. Something about a casino. Something about ‘I’m from Malaysiaaaaa!’ I was polite. I was kind. He lurched in to kiss me. I pushed him off. ‘No!’ I said, like I was his stern mother or something. His face broke apart in confusion and tears. ‘You don’t do that to me, or any other woman, you understand?’

“He understood. He apologised. I said it’s ok. I rubbed his back as he sobbed. I told him not to do it again. I’m 34 now. I still feel sorry for that guy. But I feel more sorry for any woman just wanting to get home without having to play therapist for people randomly trying to assault them.”

3) You’reNotAGenius wrote this:

“A guy on a train was hassling an older woman, taking her photo and intimidating her. No one (including myself) did anything because we were all too afraid. Then, he decided to start doing the same to me. He was staring at me, and when I asked him to stop he took his phone out again and took my photo. I decided that was not on [was unacceptable] and I did something very silly.

“I took his phone from him and told him I was deleting the photo.

“He snapped, grabbed me by the throat, and pushed me backwards. Five dudes jumped up and tackled him, cops were called, and he was arrested. I managed to delete the photo in all the mayhem.

“The guy claims he was drunk and doesn’t remember anything, but he still went to jail for four months.

“Do I regret it? Nope.”

4) lozesome wrote this:

“Recently I was at a concert. A guy was staring at me, and I made eye contact with him. He did the down and up with his eyes and when he got back to my face I was still staring at him. I held eye contact with a blank expression and he got visibly uncomfortable and left the area.

“Sucks being stared at, eh?”

hurrem-hutan commented, “Yeah, I love doing that. Or likewise looking them up and down after and making a grossed-out face. Poor things hate it.”

5) ICanUnderstandYou wrote, “When I was 13, I was on a three-day covered-wagon trail ride with my family. On the first evening my dad asked me to get some tool out of the covered wagon. As I was leaning over the side of the wagon, under the cover, this old (maybe 40-or-so-old to me) pervert comes up behind me and grabbed my [\*]ss. I grabbed a wrench, came around from under that cover, and whacked the sh[\*]t out of him right in the gut. I yelled at him that if he ever touched me again I’d hurt him and then tell my dad, who would hurt him more. Old pervert rode at the end of the wagon trail the rest of the ride. Motherf[\*\*]ker. I bet he thought I was an easy target. Nearly 40 years later I’m still p[\*]ssed at that [\*]ss. I hope he’s dead.”

6) Shelly\_Bean91 wrote, “A couple of years ago I was at this party, and I was walking around looking for a friend. At some point I just stood in front of the bar to check if my friend was there. Next to me was a guy trying to hit on me, but I ignored him, which he didn’t like, so he grabbed my arm. I immediately shook it off and told him to not touch or talk to me. You could tell how he didn’t like being ditched by a girl because his facial expression went immediately to

aggressive and angry and he raised his hand to f[\*\*]king slap me! No lie, I was scared at this moment, but I also got super mad because what the f[\*\*]k was he thinking? So I just said in a somewhat calm voice, ‘Slap me and you can say goodbye to your balls.’ Dizzied, he lowered his hand and looked at me, and I left. Afterwards I was kinda shaken because I’m small, he was tall and I’m not sure if I would’ve taken a slap very well (or well enough to slap back).”

7) blandest wrote, “Three years ago I was cycling home from our local pub through the center of our sleepy south coast town and about six men walked out into the street and started shouting, surrounded me on my bicycle, and started grabbing me around the waist, and one held onto my hands on the handle bars. They were all laughing and having a real nice time, of course. I tried to calmly ask them to get off of me, but that just made them laugh even more and tell me they were just having a little fun, so I ended up grabbing a cigarette out of one of their mouths and stabbing it out on their hand, which got the guy off of the front of my bike, so I managed to cycle away, and of course as I did I got calls of ‘sl[\*]t,’ ‘wh[\*]re,’ etc., and one of them even said, ‘You’ve got sh[\*]t hair’ ... like that was really something I was going to be concerned about at that moment in time. It was enough to make sure I never go home alone and always make sure my friends never go home alone again.”

8) hopefulvoice wrote this:

“I Tasered a guy who snuck out of some bushes near the frat houses in my college town. I really think he was just playing, but I didn’t give him a chance to explain. He jumped out at me, in the dark, when I was trying to walk home. I did what my instincts told me, which was Taser him (I always carry one if the situation requires/allows),

kick him away from me, and then run like my life depended on it. (Who knows? Maybe it did.)

“I also was bothered by a guy on the Metro in Seoul near Itaewon, which is a neighborhood known for foreigners because of the US military barracks nearby. He wouldn’t take no for answer and called me a c[\*]nt, so I tore into him and told him that if he followed me off the train, I would ‘f[\*\*]king rip your balls off and shove them down your slit throat.’ I have never seen a more shocked look on another human. He got off at the next stop. I’m pretty sure he believed I was not all mentally there, and in a way he was right. I was blinded by rage; in short, I saw red. A woman on the train asked me in Korean if I was all right, and I answered almost perfectly, so that moment also sticks with me because I usually was so nervous to respond in Korean in case I f[\*\*]ked up. It gave me more confidence!

“TLDR [Too Long, Didn’t Read]: Tasered a dude who jumped from behind bushes, and I screamed at my harasser on a train.”<sup>12</sup>

### **“What are Redeeming Qualities of Humanity that Nobody Mentions?”**

1) Portarossa wrote this:

“In pretty much every town, there’s a space — often in a prime real estate location — set aside for free public education, paid for by taxes and available for everyone to use, based on the principle that knowledge and art should be encouraged to spread and not kept just for the rich. You can go there and get a lifetime’s worth of information and entertainment for no more trouble than the promise that

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<sup>12</sup> CartoonQueen66, “When and how have you stood your ground against a creep?” Reddit. 6 September 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/y7u5jygt>>.

you'll give it back in a timely fashion and in a good condition for other people to use it. And people actually do it!

“If the mere concept of public libraries doesn't warm the cockles of your heart, I don't know what would.”

2) HonestlyCurious94 wrote this:

“Tragic events caused by the worst people also led to selflessness by the best people.

Like the Las Vegas shooting at the country concert. Caused by terrible people. But there were also people doing what they can to help. People were leading other people to safety. People were offering their pickups to help carry wounded, [and there were] all the selfless armed personnel who risked their lives to secure the area.”

3) NationalCandidate wrote, “How we are able to develop medicine to cure the wildest and most deadly of diseases. I mean all you have to look at is polio, a disease that in the past has caused massive amounts of pain and suffering to many families — in the 1940s it would kill or paralyze over 500,000 people a year. In 2017 there have been only 22 cases reported. It's amazing what humanity can do to save their own kin.”

4) ijustsmokeok wrote, “How smart humans are, and how far we've come. It wasn't all that long ago that we were hunter-gatherers, and now we're regularly sending satellites into space that beam back so many numerous images of the globe that entire businesses have popped up to process and categorize the data, which in turn is connected to a rapidly globalizing and diversified international economy that is

raising the standard of living worldwide and pulling millions of people out of extreme poverty.”<sup>13</sup>

### **“Men of Reddit, What have You Purposefully Done to Not Seem Creepy?”**

1) ClumsySmith wrote, “I had been walking behind her about two blocks, going to a parking garage. When I got to the garage, I pulled the ticket out of my pocket to pretend to compare the address, and to give her time to get ahead, but we met at the elevator. We got off the elevator at the same floor on the parking garage, and she headed to where I knew my car was. So I wandered around the parking garage pushing the button on my remote, pretending to look for my car. She finally yelled, ‘It’s up this way.’ We were parked next to each other.”

Marriv commented, “Oh, my god, that reminds me of the time my boyfriend and I were going to get food at this restaurant that was approximately 30 minutes away from his house. A neighbor further down the street left at the same time and was in front of us long enough for us to joke about how creeped out she must be. It stopped being funny when we noticed she was making exactly the same turns as we were. We followed her into the parking lot. We followed her into the restaurant. She didn’t notice.”

2) Anjodu wrote this:

“I naturally walk pretty softly, so I generally make very little noise when I’m walking around.

“So if I notice that I’m walking near a girl, or even a group of girls (especially at night), I’ll purposefully make a little

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<sup>13</sup> Source: ReichSmasher2018, “What are redeeming qualities of humanity that nobody mentions?” Reddit. 8 September 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yb27xkw3>>.



noise just to basically announce my presence. Drag my feet, clear my throat, something like that just to be kinda be like: ‘Hey, I’m here, don’t freak out.’”

Ray\_Adverb12 commented, “I’m a woman, and I do this, too. I jangle my keys, scuff my heel, or otherwise make noise not to startle a woman walking alone at night. It’s sad, but it’s actually a super courteous thing to do to avoid alarming someone who is likely already on some level of high-alert.”

3) cheddarfever wrote, “One night I (a woman) was walking home alone from the bar at around 1am. There was a man across the street who started to cross over to my side, which always puts me on alert. He then started jogging diagonally across the street to get in front of me and yells, ‘I’m Firstname Lastname, and I’m going in front of you now so you don’t feel uncomfortable.’ It was extremely helpful.”

Haveredit commented, “I’m going to try this next weekend, and will actually say ‘Firstname Lastname’ just to see what the reaction is.”<sup>14</sup>

### **A British Charity that Helps Victims of Forced Marriage Recommends Hiding a Spoon in Your Underwear if Your Family is Forcing You Fly Back to Your Old Country, So That You Get a Chance to Talk to Authorities After Metal Detector Goes Off — Have You or Anyone Else You Know Done This & How Did It Go?**

1) Gasonfires wrote this:

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<sup>14</sup> Source: With-a-Cactus, “Men of Reddit, what have you purposefully done to not seem creepy?” Reddit. 7 September 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y895hbm3>>.

“One of the coolest moments of my former law practice was getting a court to emancipate a young girl whose parents in her birth country had commanded her to return from a US visit to marry a 55-year-old business pal of her dad’s. In telephone testimony to the court, the father emphatically insisted that it was his right to give her to any man he chose and that her age and wishes were irrelevant. He also refused to let the child’s mother testify despite being ‘ordered’ by the judge to put her on. It took a little more than that to carry the day for us, but not much.

“Lots of lawyers in lots of cities around the world will vigorously pursue this kind of case at no charge. Just contact the local court or bar association, if that’s at all possible.”

2) nutnerk wrote this:

“There are stickers in the ladies toilets at Birmingham Airport (UK) that say ‘Is there any reason you don’t want to travel? Call number xxx to get help from a police officer. You are in the green/pink/purple toilet’. I always thought that was great for women who feel trapped in scary situations.

“EDIT (to answer some responses): It’s a catch all for anyone in an abusive/scary situation. Not just targeting the extreme, but anyone who feels unsure or unsafe. I think it’s meant for terrorism whistleblowing, also; therefore, in many of these cases, I think people DO have access to phones.

“EDIT2: I haven’t been in the men’s [restroom] so maybe they have them in there, too, but I wouldn’t know.”

3) Wwwwweeeeeeee wrote this:

“My dear friend works intensely for a charity in Cambodia that rescues little children from the child sex trade ... little girls and boys, as young as one year old.

“I love seeing her photographs from the time she spends with them and the joy she brings them (several times a year, and relentlessly on various social networks) in person and through fund-raising.

“When I first saw photos of her with the kidlets at the rescue centers, I realized all the kids would hold their hands in front of their eyes like goggles, thumb to finger. I asked why ...

“It’s so the traffickers can’t identify their victims, find them, and kidnap (or kill) them.

“Reality check. This is real.”

4) Wissix wrote this:

“My undergrad Human Sexuality professor in undergrad had an encyclopedic knowledge about FGM [Female Genital Mutilation]. She spent an entire class period talking about the different types, what they were ‘for’, how old the little girls were when they had adults they trusted hold them down and cut them up with dull and rusty knives, and how many girls died because of infection or because the person performing the ‘operation’ cut something they shouldn’t have.

“She told us a story about when she went to an African country on a humanitarian mission when she was still a practicing surgeon. She spent about a week treating cuts, stitching people up, administering vaccines ... and then one day these women came up to her and asked her to come with them. They took her and a few other surgeons to this one-room building. It was filled with young girls; I can’t remember the age range, but they were young. And these

adult women asked these surgeons to perform the genital mutilation for them. And my professor was like, ‘What do you do? Do you tell them no, knowing that it’s going to happen anyway and some of these girls will die because the person doing it has no idea what they’re doing? Or do you perform the procedure because at least you can make sure the girls are safe and healthy afterwards?’ She just let us sit with that for a few minutes. One of the most memorable class periods for me, because that grey area is just gut wrenching. She told us she didn’t do it, she couldn’t. They went back to the village and made a phone call to try to get somebody to come out and dissuade the tribe from going through with it, but by the time they left no one had made it out yet.”<sup>15</sup>

### **“Mall Santas of Reddit: What is the Most Disturbing, Heart-Wrenching or Weirdest Thing a Child has Asked You For?”**

Xealaz wrote this:

“I was Santa for a local children’s theater last year [2013]. This exchange occurred.

“Me: ‘What do you want for Christmas, little girl?’ Her: (mutters) Me: ‘Ho ho ho, I’m sorry, dear, I can’t hear you.’ Her: ‘I want daddy to die.’ Me: ‘Oh ... that’s ... that’s not very nice.’

“She — maybe seven years old — gave me the single longest, oldest, most world-weary stare I have ever gotten — a look that said she wanted to cry, but had run out of

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<sup>15</sup> Source: megazver, “A British charity that helps victims of forced marriage recommends hiding a spoon in your underwear if your family is forcing you fly back to your old country, so that you get a chance to talk to authorities after metal detector goes off — have you or anyone else you know done this & how did it go?” AskReddit. 19 February 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y8jzuhde>>.

tears long ago. The owner of that gaze had, it said, seen more sh[\*]t than I ever would and had endured far worse than I ever could. I recovered quickly.

“Me: ‘Why do you want your daddy to die?’ Her: ‘I thought you knew everything.’ Me: ‘No. I wish I did, but I only know if little boys and girls have been naughty or nice. Not adults.’ Her: ‘Well, my daddy shouldn’t get anything for Christmas this year.” Me: ‘Has he been nau— bad?’ Her: ...

“She didn’t answer, just looked fearfully away as she rolled up her sleeve, revealing a bruise in the unmistakable shape of a hand around her arm. It was an older bruise, yellow around the edges but purple in the middle.

“I signaled my friend, who was in the role of an elf and watching the whole thing, to call the cops. The dad was arrested when he came to pick her up. Any doubts I had about her story were erased when he showed up drunk and attempted to deck the officer. He’s still in jail now.

“That year, for Christmas, Santa made sure daddy could never hurt that girl again.

“EDIT: Wow, first ever gold, thanks! And thank you all for you warm comments. :)

“I want to avoid going into too many details [in order] to protect the innocent, but I can say two things:

“The girl is doing fine, last I heard. She’s still involved in the theater, and my friend (who was the elf in this story) says she’s been happier and healthier than ever before.

“The mother found me through my elf-friend and thanked us both. She’s doing better, too — it looks like it wasn’t

just the daughter that was getting abused — and finding the divorce to be very easy.”<sup>16</sup>

**“Those of You Who Grew Up Poor or Without Regular Access to Hygiene Products, What’s the Most Ridiculous Thing You’ve Had to Do to Get Through a Period?”**

1) Krissyveen wrote this:

“My mother grew up poor. She also grew up in a family that was not very communicative.

“Even though she had older sisters, no one prepared her for when she got her period for the first time. She thought that she was bleeding to death.

“When she went to her mother in tears, her mother said that it was normal and happens once a month.

“She then went to a closet and brought out a rag for my mother to use in place of sanitary pads. It was a ripped-up piece of old clothing.

“Apparently my grandmother and aunts regularly used rags and had to wash them out and dry them. They couldn’t afford disposable products.

“My mother used rags until she got married to my dad. Then she went out and bought sanitary pads. Even though she and my dad were poor when they first started out, she felt that disposable sanitary products were a necessity.

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<sup>16</sup> Source: woo545: “Mall Santas of Reddit: What is the most disturbing, heart-wrenching or weirdest thing a child has asked you for?” AskReddit. 2014

<[https://www.reddit.com/r/AskReddit/comments/1rewhf/mall\\_santas\\_of\\_reddit\\_what\\_is\\_the\\_most\\_disturbing/cdmkiky](https://www.reddit.com/r/AskReddit/comments/1rewhf/mall_santas_of_reddit_what_is_the_most_disturbing/cdmkiky)>.

“When I first got my period, my mom opened up her closet and it was like a pharmacy, with all different types of sanitary pads and tampons. She didn’t want me to experience her childhood.”

2) areyoutherebob wrote, “I went to a school that would give you a day’s supply of sanitary products (like five pads iirc [if I recall correctly]) if you asked at the office so I’d ask when not on my period to build up enough supplies.”

Blondebumpkin commented, “I think all schools should do this. Teen girls have enough to worry about without period struggles, too! Our school had a vending machine in the changing rooms, but you had to pay. It was also not hidden, so it was embarrassing to use it.”

Razzle\_dazzle\_em commented, “I went to a bar a few years ago that provided FREE vending machines for pads, tampons, condoms, and wet wipes. It was glorious.”

Ok-I-guess625 commented, “I was recently digging for change when I unexpectedly started my period at REI [a store], only to find the machine busted. I was cursing about it until I turned around to see a basket on the counter full of tampons and pads. Honestly though, I’ve ever seen that kind of generosity only in a specific kind of store (i.e., a store mostly middle-class people shop at).”

IceArrows commented, “There’s a movie theater near me that has a big basket of pads and tampons in the women’s restroom. I know the movie theater has customers of wide-spanning financial situations, I really appreciate that they have that and it’s always refilled.”

Razzle\_dazzle\_em commented, “It’s so thoughtful, though, isn’t it? At my cousin’s wedding a while back they had some portable toilets and each one had a basket containing sanitary items, condoms, deodorant, and paracetamol [aka acetaminophen]. Aside from the bar I mentioned that was

the only other time I'd seen those things so openly available and it just struck me how such a small gesture can be a total lifesaver for someone."

Mablesyrup commented, "In my guest bathroom I have a small basket that sits on the back of the toilet with complimentary pads and tampons."<sup>17</sup>

### **"What Common, Everyday Things Reinforce Your Faith In Humanity?"**

1) opaquemorphology wrote this:

"Most recently, I had a flight diverted after a long delay due to weather. I'd been traveling since early morning and was due to arrive to my destination around 10:00 PM. Instead, it was closer to 1:30 AM. Because of poor planning on my part, I'd missed breakfast and lunch, and had eaten only a handful of grapes and an apple somewhere around mid-afternoon. I was frustrated, hungry, and confused due to poor communication from the airline. A guy behind me on the bus was commiserating with my unexpected travel delays, and a few minutes after we spoke his young son poked me between the slats of the seat. The kid couldn't have been more than eight. When I turned around, he offered me a granola bar out of his bag because he said he'd heard I hadn't eaten. It was the sweetest gesture from this young kid, totally unprompted and completely selfless, and it just made me feel so good that in the middle of all this frustration and annoyance this little boy saw something he had that someone else could use, and wanted to give it."

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<sup>17</sup> Source: whompthereitus, "Those of you who grew up poor or without regular access to hygiene products, what's the most ridiculous thing you've had to do to get through a period?" Reddit. 10 September 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y98pbzkg>>.



2) wic92 wrote, “In workout classes or gyms, it always makes me smile to see people comfort each other: ‘It’s always toughest during the first class!’ or ‘You’re doing a great job.’ Most of it is unsolicited, and people are just being perceptive of those around them and their pain. Restores my faith in humanity.”

virtuoussimpleton commented, “When I first started weight lifting at the gym, a couple of guys came up to me and told me how cool it was that I was there, working out harder than some of the guys. All of them offered to spot me if I ever needed it. As someone who was afraid to step foot in the gym at almost 300 lbs, this gave me so much encouragement and motivation. It’s always in the back of my head now.”

3) hockeychick23 wrote, “Firemen. EMTs. Doctors. Paramedics. Nurses ... There are just so many.”

NovaLoveCrystalCat commented, “Paramedics are my superheroes especially after they saved my husband’s life three years ago. Literally bought him back to life after a cardiac arrest. Who does that in a day’s work? Hats off to them.”

4) Baby-Got-Books-1989 wrote, “This isn’t a common, everyday thing for most people, but it is for me. I work as a volunteer coordinator for a large public library system, and every day I’m inundated by people asking to volunteer with our numerous different reading and literacy programs because they really just want to help others and make the world a better place. It’s just such a heartwarming reminder that our world is filled with genuinely good-hearted people.”

5) ketchupfiend wrote this:

“I have never seen a person fall down on the street without a swarm of people rushing over and hovering over him / her concernedly.

“Also, I live in NYC and if anyone comes on the subway and has a question about directions, a big portion of the car energizes and pulls out maps, apps, translators, etc., to help the hapless stranger. Then we all count down to the stop he / she should get off at and see the person off, then settle down with champion, self-satisfied sighs of relief.”

6) vrschikasanaa wrote this:

“We’re on vacation and my BF [boyfriend] is really worried about his family back home in North Carolina with [Hurricane] Florence closing in. We were in a restaurant making small talk with the waitress and she asked us where we are from. He said he’s from NC originally and we commiserated about the storm and being away from loved ones, etc.

“When we were finishing up our meal, this little old lady at the table next to us got up to leave and told us, ‘I’ll pray for your family. God bless you.’ It was so surprising and out of nowhere. We both found it really sweet, even though we aren’t religious. When we asked for the check, the waitress told us it had already been paid: Evidently this elderly woman paid on our behalf. I was just so touched by this.

“EDIT: I typed this out and realized it’s not pertinent to the question because it’s neither common nor everyday. But I’m going to keep it here because hopefully it encourages more people to share some kindness!”<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Source: femmthrowaway, “What common, everyday things reinforce your faith in humanity?” Reddit. 11 September 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/y8n5mulu>>.

## **“What’s Something You’re Proud Of?”**

1) llcucf80 wrote this:

“When I had a friend in prison and I found out about some of the mistreatment against the inmates, I tried to help him when he was still incarcerated but the prison started harassing my friend (they didn’t like pesky civilians meddling) so I had to back off for a bit until he was released.

“But once he was released, the Florida Department of Corrections was mine :) I found out all the complaints I made were discarded illegally, so I made a few complaints to the state and lit a fire on that prison’s [\*]ss. The warden was fired, a couple officers were fired, the state investigated the prison, and you don’t hear nearly as much about inmate abuse and neglect in Florida.”

2) [namecensored] wrote this:

“My kids are happy and well adjusted. You always wonder — ‘Am I doing everything I can for my kids? Am I missing something?’

“I was out the other day with my six-year-old daughter. We were checking things out at the store, and the woman at the register looked a little down. My daughter says, ‘Hey, I really like your hair, you’re really pretty.’ The cashier smiled real big and said thank you. I thought to myself, ‘OK. I am doing all right with my kids.’”

AlphaVictr 87 commented, “Came here to talk about my Kids, too! They’re only three and almost two, but all kids their age go through their tantrums and me and my wife constantly think ‘Ugh, what are we doing wrong? Why can’t we get them to listen or behave’ and then they do things like say ‘please’ and ‘thank you’ and hold hands and share toys and randomly tell us they love us and give each

other hugs and kisses and it just melts our hearts and I think we both just have a moment of ‘Yah, we’re doing all right so far.’”

ryguy28896 commented:

“My dad and I were talking one day, and I don’t remember how we got on the subject, but I told him that my brother and I have talked about it, and we both agreed we had a pretty great childhood.

“The look that came over him was, as far as I can tell, a combination of relief and happiness.

“That’s one of the best things a father can hear.”

3) Last\_Flow wrote this:

“I was brought up full-blown racist. My grandfather was very high up in the KKK. It wasn’t until my early 30’s that I discovered how wrong it was. I broke that cycle.

“My children and grandchildren will never know and I am very proud of the chain of acceptance that I alone have set in motion.”

4) RamsesThePigeon wrote this:

“I have 3,500,000 karma and 57 years’ worth of Reddit Gold.

“Now, there are definitely folks who view the accumulation of karma as a pursuit of its own, but to my mind, the numbers themselves don’t actually mean anything. They are, quite literally, imaginary Internet points, with no more value than the high score in a video game. You can’t trade them for anything, nobody outside of the site has any idea what they represent, and you can’t eat them (or so I’ve been told). The thing is, ninety-nine percent of mine — the karma and the Gold — came about in response to original

content that I created and offered here... so in a way, it's rather akin to applause.

“All I've ever wanted in life is to entertain people, and Reddit has given me a great platform on which to do that. Being able to see that I've actually accomplished that goal (albeit in a very small way) is nice, and quite frankly, I'm fairly proud of it.

“TL;DR: I am proud to be a dancing monkey for strangers on the Internet.”

5) Snaaaaaaaaaake wrote this:

“So I'm a teacher in China now, but many years back I was a student teacher in America. When I was a student-teacher, I had this one kid who had ADHD [Attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder] but he never quit: He always put his best foot forward even when the going was tough for him. He did fine in my class, and I was proud to see him graduate a year later during his 8th grade graduation.

“But that's not where the story ends, so I'm teaching in China right? One day I get this email from out of the blue from a kid who now attends Rice University and tells me how when I taught him he learned about the quadratic formula because of a silly little rhyme I told him. And at his physics class he was the only one who remembered it so well. Then he thanked me for being his teacher and hoped I was still teaching.

“Well, I still am, and I'm d[\*]mn proud of what I do, too. I hung the email on the wall to remind students that anyone can make it, even through difficulties, I'm here to support

you and remind you to give it your 100% everyday and leave 0% behind.”<sup>19</sup>

### **“What was the Wittiest Comeback You Said Recently?”**

1) scarletlyonne wrote, “I got catcalled a few days ago by a group of boys who were at least 10 years younger than me. One of them yelled out, ‘Yo, call me!’ and I turned around and said, ‘Why? You need a babysitter?’ His friends cracked up, and he kind of laughed, too. It’s a pretty innocent story, but that’s the only one coming to mind!”

2) SauceTheCat wrote, “Obligatory not me but my wife. We were at the grocery store the other day waiting to check out when a backup cashier made eye contact with my wife and waved her over to the next register he was about to open to help with the line. As we were moving over to the next lane that he opened for us, another shopper comes flying in with her cart and cuts in front of us to the point where my wife almost rammed her with our cart and she looks at us and goes ‘Sorry!’ but continues on her way cutting in front of us. As soon the word ‘sorry’ left her mouth, my wife immediately shot back, ‘No, you’re not’ in the best snarky tone. It was so quick and hilarious. We laughed about it the rest of the night.”<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Source: vzsax, “What’s something you’re proud of?” Reddit. 12 September 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y9qce58y>>.

<sup>20</sup> Source: peekingman, “What was the wittiest comeback you said recently?” Reddit. 14 September 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y9qz8evy>>.

## Chapter 2: 21-40

### “Reddit, What’s The Most ‘Chaotic Good’ Thing You’ve Ever Seen?”

1) Kharos wrote, “About The Great British Bake Off hosts: When contestants do cry — out of frustration or disappointment, generally — Mel and Sue stand near them and use un-airable language so the embarrassing footage is tainted, and won’t make it into the final edit.”

newredditsucks commented, “And strangely enough, I’ve heard that the un-airable language is predominantly brand names rather than cursing.”

jeedee commented, “True. I read about it. The BBC also wanted X Factor-style sob stories about the contestants, but Mel and Sue threatened to walk if they did that. They were rightly of the opinion that the show should be about baking and not about the contestants crying for whatever reason.”

2) eattyrat wrote, “On a crowded, slow-moving subway car full of angry commuters in Boston, these two women started arguing when one bumped into the other. A giant of a man stepped between the two and at the top of his lungs started belting out ‘*Que Será Será*’ in his most faux operatic voice. It worked like a tranquilizer.”

3) SwiggitySwoner wrote, “This one actually happened yesterday at work. A girl and her mom came in and got a few sandwiches, but the girl wanted a brownie. They were paying cash, but were like three bucks short for the brownie. The girl didn’t throw a fit or anything, but was pretty sad. I was just gonna let them take it, it’s just a brownie, but before I can say anything, the guy behind them says, ‘I would like all but five of your brownies.’ Mind you, this is like 40 f[\*\*]king brownies, which costs like a 110 bucks of just brownies. He proceeds to then give the girl all of the brownies, which needed three bags just to

carry all of them. The girl was ecstatic, and everyone else was laughing their [\*]ss off. We'll never forget you, brownie man."

4) HeavyDeparture wrote this:

"In high school two random girls who had nothing to do with me and never spoke to me before or after that occasion came up to me. They said: 'We saw M. treat you like trash and heard her talk s[\*]it about you and your family. You're coming with us now and you're gonna confront her and if she doesn't say sorry you're gonna punch her until she apologizes and promises to never mistreat you again. You can't let her do that to you, but we know you won't say anything so we'll help you out with this. If we get caught, you tell them (the teachers) we forced you to do it.'

"Of course such a thing was against the rules, we were supposed to inform teachers about bullying and not confront others by ourselves, except the teachers didn't really care and so the bullies got away with it. This resulted in the school having a rampant bullying and violence issue.

"I knew fighting was against the rules and was scared of being suspended or worse, and besides that I'd rather let someone bully me than hurt anyone. But no matter how lil ol' me tried to get out of the situation, the girls would not accept no for an answer. So I was forced to go up to my bully who had been treating me like sh[\*]t for the past couple months and confront her, with the two girls right behind me.

"They were hell-bent on not letting me or her continue with this any longer; they even said, 'Hey, this girl here has something to say to you' so that I had no other choice than to actually do exactly what they told me to do. Once I confronted her, the girl went real quiet, apologized all nicely and never bothered me again. And that's how two



strangers, who saw that I was being mistreated and didn't give a sh[\*]t about breaking the rules, taught me how to stand up for myself."

5) WatchForFallenRock wrote this:

"My grandma was a kindergarten teacher for 50 years. Yup, you read that right. She retired at the mandatory age of 72. It was a small community, mostly economically ok, but some poverty. Every few years grandma would develop a case of the clumsy. She'd trip while watering the plants and wouldn't you know it but she'd spill a bit of water on the child that was unwashed and wore the same clothes for weeks. Nothing for it but to make up for her mistake by giving him a bath and clean clothes ... then return the clothes she messed up after she cleaned them. A case of clumsy would last the whole school year and oddly enough she tripped near the same child every time.

"The case of clumsy often meant she miscounted her grandchildren every morning and made an extra lunch. 'Would you mind taking it so it doesn't go to waste?'"

lovestheautumn commented, "Your grandmother is the best. Just simply the best."

6) boudicas\_shield wrote, "I worked in daycare and over the summer the kids had to bring their own lunch. One extremely undernourished and developmentally behind toddler only got things like chocolate frosting between slices of white bread for lunch. I started packing extra of my own lunch (with healthy stuff like yogurt and fresh vegetables) and sat her on my lap each lunchtime and coaxed her to eat. It was totally against the rules and probably illegal, but the lead teacher and I couldn't just sit there and watch her literally eat frosting for lunch, so I got permission to take over myself. We just kept it quiet."

Coreyofcabra commented, "I don't know if this helps, but I wanted to share that there's still hope. When my dad was a baby, his mother was so chronically drunk that he'd go with unchanged diapers for a long time. When he got older, he was abused to the point that he got pretty ill in a number of ways. Despite this, he really pushed himself, got a job in computers, learned how to be compassionate and loving, and he and my mother provided an incredibly good environment for me and my brother. My mother had a similarly terrible childhood and is one of the biggest supports I have. Again, I just share this to say there's always hope. Humans are freaking amazing, and you never know just what they can pull off."

7) Uns0underfiddle wrote, "My parents stole my neighbors' dog and rehomed it because [the neighbors] were mistreating it."

Brickle0630 commented, "My sister-in-law and brother-in-law did this. The neighbors down the street's dog would always escape and come to their house. One day my brother-in-law went to bring the dog back and the neighbor kicked it for running away. My brother-in-law is a big scary biker and upon seeing the neighbor do this, pushes the neighbor, grabs the dog and says they are keeping it and if the neighbor has a problem with it he [the brother-in-law] can beat his [the neighbor's] [\*]ss the way he's been beating his dog. Needless to say, the cowardly neighbor didn't do sh[\*]t and now the dog lives very happily with my BIL and SIL [brother-in-law and sister-in-law]. He is very loved in his new home!"

8) The\_Sown\_Rose wrote this:

"Friend's mother found out her husband (friend's father) was part of a child pornography group when the police showed up to arrest him. He'd realised they were about to get him, so he was trying to escape the country via the local

airport; he'd told her his mother was sick and he was going to visit.

“She not only told the police where he was, but raced them to him, slide-tackled him at the airport before he disappeared and was in the process of beating him to a pulp when the police arrived and pulled her off of him.”

9) MrPeel11 wrote, “Friend of mine used to live in downtown Toronto. At one point she'd given a spare comforter to a homeless man to keep warm through our hellish winters.

Fast forward a couple months and she's cutting through the park at night to get to her apartment. Some guy stops her, clearly with bad intentions ... Looks grim ... Comforter Bro comes flying out of nowhere with comforter draped like a cape. Bad dude is scared sh[\*]tless and runs. Comforter Bro escorts friend through park to safety. Karma.”

Fztrpusers commented, “My boyfriend's aunt is like this: incredibly giving and super generous to people less fortunate. She'd become friends with some of the homeless people around her work and one day, some dude comes out with ill intent towards her. Next thing you know, she's got a posse of homeless men making this dude feel uncomfortable.”

Anoninkieli commented, “It's good to have friends in low places.”

sisko\_89 commented, “Mom taught me this; she used to befriend the gangsters by our house in order to have them protect it when we weren't around. They'd sometimes tell her about sh[\*]t going down in the neighborhood, too. They treated her like their auntie.”

10) wabbajabbawocky wrote, “When I was in high school, I was an extremely troubled teen. Legal trouble, drug usage, violence, mental illness, failing every class, the whole gamut. When I was in 11th grade, I was put into a special education program for people like me, and I did wonderfully. I adored my teachers and vice versa. One teacher in particular was especially amazing. She helped me set goals and get on track, and she even helped me find my first real job. My senior year I was doing really well in my classes, but this school was set up like a college in that you needed a set number of credits to graduate, and I was woefully short. I still needed something like 22 or 24 credits, completely impossible to make up in my last year. Even though I was doing well, there was no chance I was going to graduate. So, my lovely teacher started digging through my record. She somehow converted my community service, treatment stays, lock-up time, all of the consequences for my behavior into credits. She turned institutionalization into freaking elective credits. By the end of my senior year, I had one half credit to make up in summer school. I was able to walk with my class for graduation in June, and received my high school diploma in August. To this day I have no idea how she did it, but she absolutely changed my life. Thank you, Mrs. Johnson.”<sup>21</sup>

### **“What’s Something You Did When You were Younger that Haunts You to This Day?”**

CogDiss88 wrote this:

“I was homeschooled when I was younger, and didn’t really interact with kids my age until I started public high school in 9th grade. I desperately wanted to fit in and be

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<sup>21</sup> Source: deityofsky26, “Reddit, what’s the most ‘Chaotic Good’ thing you’ve ever seen?” Reddit. 16 September 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yd2p4kay>>.

seen as funny and cool, so when I noticed that ‘yo mama’ jokes seemed to get people laughing, I sprung on the opportunity to roast someone’s mother and solidify myself as an edgy comedy genius.

“One day, armed with an arsenal of ‘yo mama’ jokes I had looked up online the night before, I smugly turned to my brand-new friend Jon and said, ‘Yo mama so old, I told her to act her age and she DIED!’ Instantly, the group fell silent, and Jon looked intensely uncomfortable. But then his face lit up and he put his arm around me and said, ‘That was a good one, CogDiss88!’ with a genuinely kind smile on his face.”

“It was only later that day that someone pulled me aside and explained that Jon’s mom had passed away from ovarian cancer a month earlier, and that it’s hard for him to think about or talk about her death. I was mortified, and the fact that Jon responded with sincere kindness instead of publicly calling me out made me feel even worse. Jon was an awesome guy, and I still wish there was some not-weird way to go back and apologize to him about that.”

Bumblemumblenumble commented, “Maybe he acted so kindly towards you because people around him were acting awkwardly about his mother’s death not knowing what to say. That seems to happen a lot when people are grieving and need their friends: Their friends avoid them because they don’t know what to say. Maybe you helped him by breaking the ice.”

CogDiss88 replied, “Wow, that is a refreshing perspective. I really hope that was the case! Thank you :)”

Mydeardrsattler commented, “Wow, great kid.”

CogDiss88 replied, “I agree. He was and still is one of the coolest people I met in high school.”

OneFoxNoSox commented, “My kids are still pretty young, and I am hoping so hard that they end up being this type of kid. The type of kid who diffuses an awkward situation with kindness and smiles.”

CogDiss88 replied, “Just the fact that you are thinking about this probably means they will turn out wonderfully! We need more people like you who want to raise their children to be kind and gracious and not just disciplined and obedient.”

JimmiRustle commented:

“My mother passed away when I was 22, and a new girl in our friend group made a similarly themed joke, and I just (very bluntly) responded that she was dead. The girl was absolutely sure I was lying for at least 15 minutes until one of my other friends confirmed.

“I’m not really sure how she felt about it, but I never blamed her for it.

“They’re just jokes.”<sup>22</sup>

### **What’s Your Positive Story of When You Reported Your Abuser?”**

1) redbess wrote this:

“My stepdad was sexually abusing me. I ended up telling my boyfriend (now husband), he told a teacher, teacher had to report it. I was lucky enough to be believed all the way by everyone in my life. He was arrested and convicted and given 20 years with parole possible at 18.

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<sup>22</sup> Source: Ayy\_Johnny\_J, What’s something you did when you were younger that haunts you to this day?” Reddit. 18 September 2018<<https://tinyurl.com/y8ny8abe>>.

“Instead, he died three years later in prison of testicular cancer.”

a\_hoonter\_must\_hoont commented, “If that’s not karma, I don’t know what is.”

2) battyeyed wrote, “Lawyers were the most clear, stable, and supportive people. Same with judges.”

3) brookebmc wrote, “I was put in touch with a victim advocate who helped me file a restraining order and came to court with me. I was terrified to speak up, but the victim advocate gave me confidence to do what needed to be done.”

Asked how she got in touch with a victim advocate, she wrote, “I can’t remember exactly. I think I was referred to a victim advocate before I turned in the paperwork for the restraining order. She went over all the statements I wrote down, made sure it was clear and concise. I was fortunate to meet with her several times. Her office was in the shelter I had to stay at for a short time.”

thecrocodile44 commented, “I was given a card when I reported the assault. The advocate contacted me within a day of me talking to the police. She was an absolutely amazing person to have at my side through everything.”

4) rubatosisX12 wrote, “The positive is that the police believed me. I have heard so many stories of victims not being believed when they reported, and I was. I don’t want to do anything more, I just wanted to have the report on file, but they have decided they need to investigate anyway. Even though it is true and I know what happened whether they believed me or not, it makes me really emotional when I realize that they do believe me and took this seriously.”

5) thecrocodile44 wrote this:

“When I reported my sexual assault, my best friend was with me every step of the way. The deputy I initially spoke to saw how well she handled everything and how she advocated for me when I didn’t have the oomph to do so for myself, and he helped her get her foot in the door with law enforcement and helping survivors.

“She’s since accepted an amazing job, moved across country, and started an amazing life/career for herself. I always tell her that I’m glad some good came from all of the bad. I would’ve been lost without her during the process (and since), and I’m so glad she’s helping others now as well.”

6) salad\_cats\_fridge wrote this:

“Not me, but I helped two women get out by either being a witness or taking them to the cops who helped her ‘disappear’ to a high-security women’s refuge.

“It took time, but both women moved on and have good lives. Dudes got away with it, but the women I helped are living their lives how they want being free from all that sh[\*]t.

“The cops helped heaps. I think in all dealings I’ve had with abusers the cops have helped the most.”

7) peter-piperspickles wrote, “When I was a kid, about seven or eight, I was being groomed. Thankfully nothing happened. I knew something wasn’t right, but he was my dad’s best friend from the time they were kids. I told my sister one day why I didn’t want to go to their house. His wife babysat us when both my parents worked nights. My sister told my mom, and she told my dad. They both believed me right away, no questions asked. They made sure he didn’t take the next step. They cut him and his whole family off. I never saw them again. It must’ve been hard because his wife was the one who watched us all the



time and for free, and his family helped my dad get to work. My dad started carpooling with his brother because my parents didn't have a car. All I know is that my mom switched jobs, and she worked early days so we didn't have to ever go there again. It always made me feel safe and feel that no matter what my parents would take my side."<sup>23</sup>

### **“People who have had Somebody Die for You, What is Your Story?”**

1) EasyBreezyBandicoot wrote this:

“It might not count since it wasn't a person, but I think it keeps with the spirit of the question so here goes.

“When I was about ten or so, we lived on a farm. We had an Australian Blue Heeler named Smokey. He was an amazing dog, full of love for anyone he met. Smokey lived in a huge pen behind the barn, and it was my job to feed him and get his water when I got out of school.

“So one day I go out to the pen and start to open the gate. Smokey was acting very strange ... he was pacing back and forth, the ridge of fur on his neck raised, and when I made a move to step over into the pen, he growled at me.

“This was new. Smokey had never even growled at me when we were roughhousing, so something was up. I kinda stepped back as he bared his teeth at me. I was scared, and the first thing that crossed my mind was that he had been bitten by something rabid. So I closed the gate and started walking around the pen. As I moved away from the gate, he trotted along the fence, tongue lolling, happy grin on his face ... just like always. At this point I was super confused,

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<sup>23</sup> Source: alayne\_, “What's your positive story of when you reported your abuser?” AskWomen. 26 September 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/ydasrmv8>>.

but decided just to push the d[\*]mn dog out of the way and feed him whether he liked it or not.

“So I go back to the gate. Smokey follows, and once again as I made to step in, he starts growling. I was only around 10 at the time, but he wasn’t a huge dog, so I kinda pushed him with my foot to get him out of the way.

“And Smokey bit me. He lunged up and bit me right below the knee. I was wearing jeans so it didn’t break the skin, but I was scared sh[\*]tless of my old friend. I fell backwards out of the pen and then ran for the house.

“I told my grandma something was wrong with Smokey and that he had tried to bite me. She too was afraid of rabies, but since there weren’t puncture wounds on me, she decided to wait until my Dad got home to figure out what to do. He got off work about two hours after this happened, and immediately went out to the pen.

“He found Smokey dead, lying pushed up against the gate like he had been blocking it. In the lean-to where I would have gone to get Smokey’s food, he found not one but two huge rattlesnakes. When he looked over the dog’s body, Smokey’s face had swollen around the cheek ... he had been bitten.

“I know it doesn’t carry the same weight as if a human had consciously decided to die for me, but I know my good boy was keeping me out of that pen for a reason.

“Edit: Even though I’m leaving it in, I would like to recant the last statement, about Smokey’s sacrifice not carrying the same weight. It’s disrespectful of his memory. Smokey would have carried all the weight we threw on him and more.”

GoodMerlinpeen commented:

“We had an old sheepdog when I was about three. A brown snake reared up at me inches from my face, the dog jumped in between me and the snake, knocking me out of the way and barking at the snake. Amazingly, he didn’t get bitten.

“Dog probably saved my life. Brown snakes are I think the second most venomous snake in the world. I was three and lived on a remote farm.”

Note by David Bruce: Brown snakes are found in eastern Australia and Papua New Guinea.

2) kukola wrote, “My paternal grandmother was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumor in early 1956. She opted not to pursue any sort of treatment (radiation, etc.) in order to ensure that my Dad, who she was pregnant with at the time, would stay healthy. She died when my Father was three months old. She made the ultimate sacrifice, and without that my Father would not be alive. And neither would I. I’m told she was a very kind and compassionate woman.”

3) pierpontthegnome wrote this:

“Not me, my dad. He was in heart failure for several years, undergoing various procedures to try and get his heart functioning better, having to be admitted regularly to drain fluid from his body. When I was in the hospital having his first grandchild, he was on a different floor getting another catheterization.

“Fast forward a couple of years, he’s moved his way up the transplant list and is about to undergo surgery to have a portion of his heart removed and replaced with a prosthesis connected to a machine outside his body (last-ditch effort to keep him alive until he could get a transplant).

“The procedure was successful, but he was very swollen, so they left his chest OPEN, packed with ice so the swelling could go down before closing him up. While he was

unconscious with his chest open, a heart came in. Someone somewhere did not survive that night, but that person saved my father's life. Because he had not been sewn up (if he had, the risk for opening him again would have been too great and the heart would have gone to someone else), he went to sleep thinking he would wake up attached to a machine and instead woke up with a new heart.

"It took a while to get him to understand that the procedure didn't fail, and we were all a little stunned by how it played out, but somebody out there gave our family the best possible gift.

"It's been twelve years, and I thank that person every day for giving my kids a chance to know their grandfather.

"Be an organ donor."

Flobro4 commented:

"That's why I ride my motorcycle so fast! So when I die, someone can take my organs.

"Just kidding, but I guess it's an added bonus."

Pierpontthegnome added:

"You get a morbid sense of humor when waiting for a transplant. My dad would talk about 4th of July weekend and New Year's Eve being his best chances for getting a transplant, knowing he was basically saying lots of people might die.

"And he calls motorcycles 'donorcycles.' Not super creative, but he gets a dark chuckle out of it."

4) ImSquidwardsTentacles wrote this:

"My biological mother was a surrogate to my parents. She was my mother's best friend growing up and knew she wanted a baby more than anything in the world.

“So she offered to be a surrogate for my mother, who could not have children.

“Everything was perfectly normal. She moved in with my parents during the whole pregnancy. There’s even a few short videos of them at the hospital talking about me, or to me. And a video of just seconds after I was born, of the two of them holding me, singing ‘Happy Birthday.’ They hadn’t chosen a name yet, so it’s just ‘to you.’

“There were no more videos after that. But my mother went to get a nurse because my biological mother said she was just feeling very dizzy and was having trouble with breathing a little. According to my father, she was holding me ready to pass me to my father, and said something along the lines of ‘Bye, I’ll miss you.’ He said it still kind of bugs him today to think about it. In the moment he had thought she was kidding, or that ‘I miss you already’ kind of way.

“He picked me up and turned a second to grab a rag for his shoulder. When he turned back again, she was white as a ghost and unconscious.

“It was just a blur of people and rooms and faces after that. She died from some sort of internal bleeding.

“I think on it often, feeling awful that I took my mother’s best friend away. But my mother says it’s the best gift she’d ever gotten.”

Karrak commented:

“This warms my heart in a sad way.

“There’s so much true love in that friendship.

“And it sounds like your biological mother knew and didn’t have any regrets as she passed. She loved you and she loved your family and she did the very best thing any human can do for another human.”

5) 1Centered1 wrote this:

“When she was a little girl, one of my friends was swimming in the ocean and was getting pulled out to sea by rip currents. Her dad went in to save her. The currents were so bad that a rescue boat had to be sent out. They both went under right before the boat got there, but only my friend came back up. I think she was around eight or nine at the time.

“She’s now a very strong woman, and their family is very close. I went to her wedding a few years ago, and her brothers walked her down the aisle. She’s due any day now with her first child. I can’t imagine having to live with such strong love for a person who saved your life, and not being able to tell them. But I think she’s harnessed that feeling and used it to drive her forward. She’s an awesome, inspiring friend.”<sup>24</sup>

### **“What is the Best Compliment You Have Ever Received?”**

1) AmyHunty35 wrote this:

“About 10 years ago, I was at a wedding reception for a longtime family friend. While I was in the ladies room washing my hands, a little girl about five or six years old looked at me and pointed. She turned excitedly to her mom and exclaimed, ‘Look how pretty that girl is!’

“It was so genuine and sweet and made me feel so good. I’ll never forget it.”

2) P\_R\_I\_S\_M\_A\_ wrote, “The longer I look at you, the more beautiful you are.”

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<sup>24</sup> Source: TulipOfJustice, “People who have had somebody die for you, what is your story?” Reddit. 27 September 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y9fj5xah>>.

3) FrozenFractalsofIce wrote this:

“When I was having one of those days where you feel unattractive and gloomy, I was complaining to my husband and he gave me the best compliment I’ve ever received.

“He rarely compliments me or expresses his feelings verbally. So it was particularly special to me since I knew he was being totally sincere.

“He told me that his idea of beauty has changed as I’ve changed. It was so simple, but it had the most profound affect and effect on me.”

4) sno\_ble wrote this:

“A Spanish lady who owned a horse-trekking business for tourists said that I had ‘an admirable respect and understanding for the animals.’ I think she was used to people coming, taking a horse trek, paying, and then leaving. I was the scruffy girl who grew up on a farm and knew that the animals like to get used to the strangers first and also helped untack and brush down.

“It happened again when I went over to Ireland. The owner trusted me so much that she let me take one of her horses to the beach and have a race.”

5) atrueamateur wrote, “‘You always look like you walked out of a painting.’ I’m a historical re-enactor, so this is the highest praise that exists.”

6) searedscallops wrote, “Out of the blue, my kids will sometimes be like ‘You’re a really awesome mom.’ Hits me right in the pride.”

Ovz123commented, “It feels good to hear this from anyone, for sure, but it’s a different ball game when it’s your own spawn. Like d[\*]mn, I must be doing something right! Haha.”

7) AKEWMBER007 wrote, “‘You’re an incredible mom.’ — First-time mommy here and I feel like everything I do is wrong. Hearing that from people makes me want to cry tears of joy.”

ColfaxBarber commented, “As a first-time father, I would second this as being an awesome thing to hear.”

hddrummer commented, “Same. My mom tells me I’m a good mom sometimes (seemingly at random) and I tear up every time.”<sup>25</sup>

### **When Did You Last Feel Like a Hero and What Did You Do?**

1) LND\_Escort wrote this:

“One of our barns is used as a summer roost by a colony of lesser horseshoe bats and this week I found a bat crawling around in the garden, too weak to fly. I took it in and the vet looked at it and said it was lightly injured and exhausted so we could either put it outside again and let it die/get eaten by the cats/have it euthanized or take care of it until it’s flying fit again.

“Obviously I chose to take care of it, and this morning just before dusk I released it and it took off happily and flew towards the barn, so I’m assuming it’s doing fine.

“Mega pleased with myself.”

2) phdinexisting wrote this:

“It was a super small thing, but it made me feel really good.

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<sup>25</sup> Source: YaboyDC3, “What is the best compliment you have ever received?” Reddit. AskWomen. 27 September 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/y8vmypd7>>.



“I was sitting in my car in a Walmart parking lot about to drive home, when a young mom walked up to her car with a baby in the front of her cart and a ton of stuff to load into the car.

“The wind was blowing REALLY hard, and she was having a lot of trouble even keeping the car door open, some of the groceries in her cart were nearly blowing away, and sand and tiny pebbles were blowing into the baby’s face and the boy baby was crying and pretty freaked out. The poor girl looked completely overwhelmed.

“I hopped out of the car and stood in front of her car door to keep it open, held her basket in place and shielded the baby’s face so she could load her groceries into the car.

“It was a small gesture, but the look of gratitude on her face made my day. That experience filled me with so much happiness.”

3) MyPowerJorts wrote this:

“Yesterday [27 September 2018], while the [Brett Michael Kavanaugh] hearing was on, a junior staffer was looking very affected.

“So I asked her if she wanted to go to lunch, and I took her out. We ate oysters and had a sandwich, and she talked about how no one believed her when a similarly styled prep-school mediocrity took her virginity (she was 14, he was 18) and bragged about it to everyone who would listen while treating her like sh[\*]t unless his d[\*]ck was hard.

“So, giving her that escape.”<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>26</sup> Source: salad\_cats\_fridge, “When did you last feel like a hero and what did you do?” Reddit. AskWomen. 28 September 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ydg9l7mj>>.

## **“What is the Brokest Thing You’re Ever Done?”**

1) Julieatacademy wrote, “I’m pretty sure that for about four to six months around the time I was eight, our meals were coming from my stepdad dumpster diving at the local Safeway. At one point I can remember him breaking down emotionally when we came home one day and someone had left three bags of groceries in our driveway right before Thanksgiving.”

Scrambo91 commented, “Someone did that for us, too. A friend of my mom’s had told a local church how all our money had gone to rent and to get our furnace fixed. One afternoon our doorbell rings, and I answer it. No one is there but there are two Rubbermaid tubs in front of our door: one full of food, and the other with Christmas presents. This was the day before Christmas Eve, and my mom had spent the whole month crying because she couldn’t afford to get us gifts. I’m so thankful for that stranger. The true gift was seeing my mom smile for the first time in a long time. I was 13-14 when this happened.”

Jerico\_Hill commented:

“We were very poor when I was a child. I have three siblings, and my Dad raised us on his own. Thankfully, the UK’s benefit system was more supportive at that time and my Dad was unbelievably frugal so we never starved or wanted for food (however low quality), but Christmas was always a struggle.

“One year there was a knock at the door. I answered it. I must have been about six. There was an old guy dressed as Santa with a big box of presents for us all: simple things like colouring books and pencils, dolls, and toy cars. It was amazing. I genuinely thought it was Santa; my dad had no clue who it was. Turns out an elderly neighbor had arranged for a friend to dress up as Santa to give us gifts,

knowing my dad wouldn't be too proud to accept them from Santa!

“It's one of my most enduring happy memories. All thanks to Maggie (our neighbour). Thanks, Maggie!

“Edit: we lived entirely on benefits. When I was 12, my dad was in the hospital for a while so I went to the post office to collect his benefits with my friend (whose family were significantly better off than mine). My dad got housing benefit, income support and child benefit for four kids. It worked out to £96.50 a week to live on (we didn't have to pay rent or property taxes). I'll never forget the look of dawning realisation and horror on my friend's face as she realised how little we lived on. I, however, was pleasantly surprised it was that much; I remember thinking that was loads at the time (1997).”

Bread\_Design commented:

“I have a very similar memory of a person showing up dressed as Santa giving us gifts. At the time my parents didn't know who it was and [Santa] gave us Tonka trucks that we used for many years after. Money was a very precious thing at that time. I remember one year my Christmas gift was brand-name cereal.

“We were poor (parents deciding to spend money on meth) and went many months without electricity. Luckily we had a wood stove to keep the house warm. My dad is still drinking (parents divorced many years ago), but my mom has been sober for many, many years and is the most amazing and strongest person I know. She's dealing with terminal cancer now in her early 60's but still kicking [\*]ss and having a blast.”

2) justme\_allthe time wrote this:

“I told the kids we were going to pretend to be camping for a few days. Lit candles, cooked food on the grill, opened the windows at night and took cold showers for three miserable days to get to the next payday because my now ex was terrible at handling money and we didn’t have enough to pay the d[\*]mn electric bill.

“Kids thought it was great.

“Edit: I am blown away with the positivity and similar stories. Thank you all so much! Here I was thinking the brokest thing I’d ever done would be basically a s\*\*tshow story and instead I get kudos. Excuse me ... something in my eye.

“Yes, thanks, things are much better. Kids are all adults now, ex is ex now, finances are well and truly sorted. They not only remember this fondly but know why, recall all manner of penny pinching, and are frugal to the core. I’m a super-proud parent!”

perskes commented:

“My mum (single mom of three kids) and we kids were having ‘sleep parties’ where we all gathered in the living room with blankets and pillows. We watched TV and stayed up until midnight (we had to go to bed at 8pm usually) — it was so much friggin fun!

“Years later I realized that our house was just too old to heat, my mum could not afford to refill the tank for our heating, and four people in one closed room stay warm enough with blankets. That moment of realization....”

20160207KLANH commented:

“My step-kids went camping with their bio [biological] mom during the beginning of summer. They had a blast and

still talk about it. They don't know that their mom was homeless at the time and that's where she was living.

“And just so everyone is aware, we had no idea she was homeless. She didn't tell us she was living in a tent in the woods when she came to get them for the weekend. We only found out after.”

3) txschnikies wrote, “I was buying tampons from the dollar store and my card was declined. Nicest cashier ever just told me it's okay and to go ahead. Super embarrassing. I'm still a regular at that location.”<sup>27</sup>

### **“What's That One Story You've Always Wanted to Tell on R/AskReddit, But No One Has Ever Asked the Right Question?”**

1) Enovara wrote this:

“Sixth grade, I had hit a major growth spurt so most of my clothes didn't fit and my family couldn't afford new ones. Once winter came around, the only jacket I had that I could still fit in even a bit was much too thin to be of any use. My teacher noticed, and I walked in to class one morning to see a big, fluffy winter coat on the back of my chair and a *Chicken Soup for the Soul* book on my desk. Her kindness still makes my eyes water, even almost two decades later.

“Ms. Robertson, if you're reading this, thank you. I never forgot.”

2) notsolittleliongirl wrote this:

“I live in a small rural town. When I was seven, my parents let my older sister and I ride our bikes about 3.5 miles into

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<sup>27</sup> Source: anonymousturtle, “What is the brokest thing you're ever done?” Reddit. AskReddit. 1 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y9zw8l4v>>.

town to get lunch at the only restaurant in town, which my mom's cousin owns. I didn't realize how long of a ride 3.5 miles was and was hot and tired and crabby and burned my tongue on my burger, so I threw a fit and refused to ride my bike home.

“A stranger overheard my sister and me arguing about this and offered me a ride home. He said he could just put my bike in the back of his truck and everything would be fine. My sister agreed because she didn't want to have to call my parents to come pick us up and she was tired of my whining and also she was 10 years old and dumb.

“I realized on the drive home that I hadn't given the man directions or told him my name, but he somehow knew my name and where I lived. He dropped me off at home, helped me put my bike in the garage, and then drove down the road to go visit my grandparents. It turns out that the man was my grandpa's brother (one of 12 siblings). He recognized me because I looked just like my mom did at that age.”<sup>28</sup>

### **“Dads of Reddit: What is Your Advice for New Dads?”**

Zerbey wrote, “The biggest thing kids need is for you to pay attention. Your kid is going to constantly want to show you stupid stuff when they're little; it's very important to them even if to you it's just a leaf they picked up off the ground. Show interest. Ask them about the shows they're into, or the comics they're reading. One day they'll want to talk to you about something that IS very important, and they'll know you'll listen and won't be afraid to ask advice when it's truly needed.”

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<sup>28</sup> Source: A\_Cheesy\_Taco, “What's that one story you've always wanted to tell on r/askreddit, but no one has ever asked the right question?” Reddit. 2 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y9prgajh>>.

Brijjen commented, “As an adult looking back, I now see how my dad did this throughout my childhood and entire adolescence. He was always interested in my music, would never turn down an invite to watch a movie or listen to a song or read something that I wanted to share with him. I didn’t question it then, but as an adult I put it together that he wasn’t listening to ‘Sk&r Boy’ on repeat because he loved it, and he didn’t read *Twilight* because he thought it was riveting ... he just really cared about connecting with me. It means so much to me.”<sup>29</sup>

### **“Congratulations on the Good News! What are You Celebrating Today?”**

Huflungpu2 wrote this:

“My best friend died about a year and a half ago. Shortly after I searched my phone and computer files for some video footage or voicemail where I could hear his voice. Sadly I found nothing, and he wasn’t big on social media so couldn’t find content there.

“I basically gave up hope that I would ever hear my best friend’s voice ever again. A couple days ago I was hanging with my friend and he mentioned he had a video with him. Not only did he speak in the video, but he laughed, too. Probably the best moment I’ve had in a while. I think that’s worth celebrating.”

Fezzyness commented, “My great uncle who was practically my grandpa passed away a while ago when I was younger. I never thought I would be able to hear his

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<sup>29</sup> Source: Sarnek18, “Dads of Reddit: what is your advice for new dads?” Reddit. 2 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yaqjmfcj>>.

voice again until I found a cassette tape he had recorded for me when I was six wishing me a happy birthday.”<sup>30</sup>

### **“What’s a Fact You Wish You Didn’t Know?”**

Half\_Line wrote, “When you’re on your death bed, hearing is often the last sense to go. In that case, your last sensation from the mortal world will be the sound of pain and distress from the people around you.”

Abestar909 commented, “This one actually comforts me. I watched my stepfather pass from cancer, I was the only one in the room, and I told him I didn’t know what came next but that we would miss him and he was a good man.”

Tactically\_Fat commented, “A literal few minutes before my dad passed away (22 days ago), I whispered into his ear ‘Dad, it’s me. It’s ok. You can go now.’ And he did.”

HedgehogzMom commented:

“My friend died of morbid obesity three Novembers ago.

“Her sister called and told me she was in a medical coma after a failed attempt at surgery on her split duodenum and to come quick if I wanted to say goodbye.

“She loved Jane Austen, so I hit the library and picked up *Pride and Prejudice* on my way; they were out of her fave [favorite], *Jane Eyre*. [...]

“I took my friend’s hand and began to read from the beginning of the novel, hoping these so familiar words would lull my friend and capture her imagination [...]

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<sup>30</sup> Source: [name censored], “Congratulations on the good news! What are you celebrating today?” Reddit. 2 October 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/yc43chay>>.



“About 20 minutes later, her heart quit beating. I never let go her hand, and I never paused reading in a calm and steady tone.”<sup>31</sup>

### **“What is the Best Thing Other Women have Done for You?”**

1) dadadawn wrote this:

“Just this summer I was driving alone cross country on a road trip and in the middle of the night, out in literally the middle of nowhere off I-80, I blew a tire. I pulled over and called triple A, who said they’d be three hours. A group of female bikers came along an hour or so later, stopped and asked if I was ok, and offered to change the tire. When I told them I didn’t have the key to get the tire off and had to wait for AAA, they said, ‘It’s not safe for you out here alone. We’ll stay until they get here.’ And they stayed with me for two more hours and waited while the guy changed my tire. They were incredible. I wanted to get their names or pay them or something, but they wouldn’t hear of it.

“That said, I have been lucky to have amazing, supportive women in my life, whether it’s friends, coworkers, bosses, family, or total strangers.”

2) innovativesalad wrote this:

“Believed me.

“Not argued about what really happened. Not argued about what he meant by it. Not argued about how I misinterpreted what happened. Just f[\*\*]king took my word for it that someone did *this* and it affected me *like so*. That one seems to be weirdly challenging for a lot of people.”

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<sup>31</sup> Source: moveome, “What’s a fact you wish you didn’t know?” Reddit. 3 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ya5xeq4w>>.

3) DisloyalMouse wrote, “If you’re looking for a specific situation, I was at a bar once getting a drink after work. This guy kept pestering me and wouldn’t let me alone. Suddenly this woman I’d never met came up and said, ‘There you are, we’ve been looking for you,’ and took me over to her friends. They said they could see the guy was making me uncomfortable and decided to step in. I’d never seen them before and never saw them again after staying with them for a little bit.”

aitchbee commented, “I was once in a similar situation, waiting to meet a friend who was running late, and this group of women (total strangers) came over to me, pretended they know me from school, went on about how it was *so weird* to bump into me, that they were sure that the dude bothering me understood but we just *had* to steal ‘Becca’ (not my name at all) and catch up, etc., etc. I sat with them for about ten minutes until my friend arrived, we traded war stories of persistent guys in bars, and then I never saw them again.”

4) NotAnotherWhatever wrote, “Grew me in their body, raised me, educated me, and stood by my side come acne or cellulite.”<sup>32</sup>

### **“For Anyone Who has been a Victim of Sexual Assault, How has It Subsequently Affected Your Sex Life or Partnerships?”**

lestrades-mistress wrote this:

“Almost immediately after leaving a long-term abusive relationship, I went kinda nuts. I finally had control over my own sexual encounters, and hardcore played the field. I

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<sup>32</sup> Source: motheroffailure, “What is the best thing other women have done for you?” Reddit. AskWomen. 5 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y7crla2c>>.

couldn't bring myself to intercourse, however. Cue a string of unfulfilling, nerve-racked encounters that didn't lead to much of anything.

"I took a long break, full of nightmares, panic attacks, and fear. I found my now-husband, who encouraged me to seek counseling. I was diagnosed with PTSD and depression.

His gentleness brought the best out of me. It was a very short time before we had sex, and having complete trust in him, I actually full-heartedly enjoyed it, no reservations. It was like a cleansing.

"At times, there would be certain things that he would do/say that would trigger a flashback during sex. He could instantly tell, and we would always stop and he would console me, and reaffirm me. The affirmations were so crucial to my healing, and I am so thankful for them, and for him.

"I still occasionally get nightmares, but he always takes the time to wake up and reassure me. It gets easier with understanding and trust.

"My favorite line of thought is that after seven years, our body has completely regenerated every single cell to the point where no cell from seven years ago is alive. So in seven years, you will have a body that your abusers have never touched."<sup>33</sup>

### **"What is a Positive Childhood Memory of Yours that Has Really Shaped Who You Are?"**

1) kat\_the\_houseplant wrote this:

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<sup>33</sup> Source: templemads, "For anyone who has been a victim of sexual assault, how has it subsequently affected your sex life or partnerships?" Reddit. AskWomen. 5 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yaoecsu5>>.

“I was watching the news with my dad when I was about 10. I said, ‘I think I’d be a pretty good senator’s wife,’ when I saw a family campaigning. My dad made me look him in the eyes and he said, ‘Don’t ever say that again. You would make a good senator, not just a senator’s wife.’

“HUGE turning point in my life. My conservative father made me a feminist.

“(Don’t worry, folks. I rehabbed his political affiliations and he now votes blue.)”

2) msstark wrote, “My grandma taught me how to read when I was three. I always loved reading. I’m 29, and it’s still my favorite hobby. I’m also a grammar Nazi in two languages.”

3) halloweenaway wrote this:

“I disliked school and subsequently didn’t do my work. My mom and my fifth-grade teacher set up a system where I had to check with my teacher at the end of the day to make sure my assignment notebook was all filled out with what I had to do that night.

“Obviously I didn’t like this, because f[\*\*]k that. One day after school I was feeling particularly irritated by it, so after my teacher looked it over and she was handing it back, I snatched it rudely out of her hands and turned on my heel to go. She paused me and asked to see the notebook again.

“She grabbed it, as I had to her, from my hands and piercingly asked me how that felt. She didn’t treat me like crap afterwards or carry a grudge. She got her point across.

“First time I distinctly remember feeling shame for being a brat (I don’t think I was particularly bratty, but maybe). It also inspired in me respect for her.

“I highly value treating others with respect. I also understand the importance of knowing when not to.”<sup>34</sup>

**“Women of Reddit. What is the Best First Date a Man has Ever Taken You On? What Specifically was Unique, Exciting, Seductive, or Glorious About It?”**

hallucinogenicapple wrote, “My first date was with my older brother. He was 21, and I was 12. I grew up without my dad, so he was like the man of the household. He gave me flowers, he took me out to eat, he complimented my dress. At the end he told me that’s how all my dates should go, whether with a boy or girl, and to never settle for less because I’m worth more than older me will realize. Young me was like, ‘Whatever, dude.’ Now I realize how much my older brother truly cares for my younger sister and me.”

Swanreply commented, “I swear, my husband told me a few days ago that he would do this for our daughter so she will never have to settle for less and know what she is worth. You have an amazing brother! What a smart dude for such a young age.”<sup>35</sup>

**“What’s a Secret You Won’t Share with Anyone in Person, But You are Willing to Share Anonymously?”**

betasp wrote this:

“I am a man and was abused in a relationship for over a year. Physically and mentally. I felt trapped, I had given up all control in the relationship, and she controlled all of the

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<sup>34</sup> Source: MajesticLilFruitcake, “What is a positive childhood memory of yours that has really shaped who you are?” Reddit. AskReddit. 5 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yavdreee>>.

<sup>35</sup> Source: dailymanup, “Women of Reddit. What is the best first date a man has ever taken you on? What specifically was unique, exciting, seductive or glorious about it?” Reddit. AskReddit. 6 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yazlsh6n>>.

finances. We were living together, and I felt I had no options except suicide.

“I ended in confiding in my ex-wife, and I accepted her offer to sleep on her couch until I was able to get back on my feet. I’m college educated and make \$130+k/year and was basically homeless for three months.

“Five years later, after some therapy and a short stint on medication, I’m happy and re-married. I’ll always be in debt to my ex, and she knows if she ever needs anything to just call.

“Here is the thing no ones knows: After getting back on my feet, I pre-purchased a long-term, term life insurance policy on myself through work and she is the beneficiary. We were married for over 14 years and always made better friends than a couple, and if something happens to me I know she will be ok financially. I felt it was the best thing I could do for a lifelong friend who really helped save my life. It will come with a thank you note my attorney holds.”

Guisada commented, “What a great thing to do. It’s refreshing to see two adults act like level-headed adults without petty bullsh[\*]t. Good work, sir. I’m glad to hear you are doing so well.”

TealHousewife commented, “You and your ex-wife both sound like really good people. I’m glad she was there for you when you needed it.”

betasp added this:

“Divorces are hard. On everyone. During the time from the separation to the divorce (has to be one year apart in the state I live) was not easy. We each said things we regret. We each almost lost friendships and even the support of relatives. People always feel like they have to take sides. So one day we were texting about ... well, who knows ... and

she brought up how she missed my family. That opened the door for us to fix things, and so I called my family members and talked to each of them about how hard the year was, but my ex and I had set aside our negative feelings and that it was ok to talk to her or reach out.

“Of course, things take time and that was years ago. There was a point in dating when I would tell potential partners up front that the ex and I are close and ok with each other. There’s no drama and won’t be, just to make sure they were ok with that. My ex and I have a now-adult child and nothing makes me happier than when he tells his friends that we are all still family.”

TealHousewife commented, “Thanks for providing that context. My mom and dad have been divorced since I was four years old. She left him for another man, and it would have been very easy for him to hold a grudge, but they worked really hard to build a good co-parenting relationship. When I was younger, they alternated custody on holidays, but over time it evolved until we were all just together on holidays. If my dad was dating someone, she was welcome to join us, too. Now my sister and I are grown with kids of our own, but we still all have Christmas together and usually we all celebrate the grandkids’ birthdays together. It really enriched our lives because we knew we never had to choose between them.”<sup>36</sup>

### **“What Would You Do if You Saw Someone Shoplifting Baby Food and Diapers?”**

1) butisotik wrote, “I saw a guy trying to buy formula for his infant through the WIC [Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children] program, but

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<sup>36</sup> Source: nelsonewan, “What’s a secret you won’t share with anyone in person, but you are willing to share anonymously?” Reddit. 6 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ydepydz7>>.

for whatever reason he couldn't purchase what he needed. He set it down and walked out looking devastated. I bought it for him and caught up to him outside. It felt nice to help him feed his kid, but I'll be damned if that sh[\*]t wasn't \$40."

2) billapapa wrote, "Die a little bit, then quickly run to the front, buy a gift card for a \$100 or whatever I could reasonably afford, and hand it to them discretely and wish them luck."

3) MadLintElf wrote this:

"Definitely offer to pay for the stuff and ask if there was anything else they needed. I work in healthcare and could probably put them in touch with resources that they might not know are available to them.

"No child should go hungry; no parent should have to rely on stealing to take care of that child. Sad that it does happen, especially here in the US."

4) CarbonAltered wrote, "I personally helped a women steal some baby food. She was looking all suspicious and stuff as I walked by, so I stopped by her and said, 'I'm blocking the camera, so if you're gonna take it, take it now and no one will see you.' She came out to me in the parking lot and was crying, saying, 'Thank you,' and such. I gave her 20 bucks. [...] Some people don't steal cause they want to — some steal because they have to."

SuzyQP commented:

"Okay, playing devil's advocate here.

"Suppose this happens often enough that the store is seriously losing money. The store owner is a good guy, early 40s, three kids at home, maybe an immigrant trying to better himself and his family, sending money back home to



his parents in the old country every month. He's working his [\*]ss off trying to make ends meet, but no matter what he does, he's just barely keeping the doors open. The cashier and the stock guy are his only employees, and they both really need the job. The cashier has two kids herself, her husband took off with the waitress at Denny's, so this young mother works part-time at another store on weekends just to keep a roof over her kid's heads. The stock guy comes from a poor family, but he's super bright and goes to community college, working hard to make something of himself one day. He's got a modest scholarship and he works nights stocking shelves to pay for his books and fees. Our store owner does everything he can think of to keep it together, but the numbers just don't add up and he's got no choice but to let the stock clerk go and reduce the cashier's hours by 20%.

“So now we've got a poverty situation that includes our original desperate shoplifter, the store owner and his family, the cashier and her kids, plus our unemployed stock clerk.

“Not a good outcome for anyone.

“Next time, just help the person out by paying for what they need. Stealing doesn't help anyone, and it hurts more than we realize.”<sup>37</sup>

### **“Have You Ever Reported a Medical Professional for Some Kind of Ethical Violation? How Did It Turn Out?”**

joannagoanna wrote this:

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<sup>37</sup> Source: AlanMichel, “What would you do if you saw someone shoplifting baby food and diapers?” Reddit. 6 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y9xdnsvj>>.

“My story is maybe different because I’m a medical professional myself. I reported a coworker for poor treatment of our clients (very verbally abusive, not following plans of care which resulted in a pressure sore re-opening for at least one person, and a whole bunch of other stuff.) She was suspended for a month+, and had to attend some sort of training IIRC [If I Remember Correctly]. I can’t say exactly what happened as disciplinary actions are confidential. I don’t know what happened exactly, but I suspect there was another complaint about her as she was fired about a year later.

“I got a lot of praise and thanks from my other coworkers over this. Apparently she’s been an issue for a long time, but people were afraid to say anything and just worked around it.

“This is typical in my experience — complaints are taken very seriously, and there is always an internal investigation. If physical harm resulted, the police will also be involved. I live in Canada, but the stories about [US?] American healthcare are very different from my experience here. I sometimes take supervisor shifts, so I have been involved in the reporting process as well. I have had to report to the police and the Ministry of Health on two occasions.”<sup>38</sup>

### **“Current or Ex Theme Park Employees, What are Some Dirty Secrets that Most People Don’t Know About?”**

nutterysquirrel wrote, “The claw machines are loosened so that they will never be able to grab that iPhone or xbox for you to win. Sorry.”

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<sup>38</sup> Source: RaHxRaH, “Have you ever reported a medical professional for some kind of ethical violation? How did it turn out?” Reddit. AskWomen. 6 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yb42pjo6>>.

Spartan133 commented:

“There’s two methods that I was told by a guy that filled the machines at the theater I worked at. Both involve the claw’s tension being rigged. The first method is the claw will be loose until a certain amount of money is inserted and then the claw will tighten and the second is some machines have a sensor on the prize drop that will loosen the claw after a prize falls in until a certain number of plays and then the claw tightens again. Basically the claw won’t grab anything until the owner ensures they get their money’s worth.

“He also told me they can set it so that the claw will tighten for only a couple of plays after a certain amount of money so if the timer is set to 15 plays and the claw will tighten for two plays and someone messes up both of those plays then the claw loosens anyways and the owner gets even more money.”

enjollras commented:

“When my sister was twelve and I was fourteen, we went to an arcade in Tokyo. These teenagers were lurking in the back, watching everyone playing games. Every so often, someone would walk away and they’d swoop in, play a few rounds and win a prize. I figured they knew the payouts and were waiting for someone to leave close enough to it that it would be worth playing.

“Anyway, my sister was playing this claw game with the concentration of an airline pilot in a hurricane. They were watching everyone so carefully that I guess they noticed how badly she wanted to win.

“They walked over to us, and gestured us towards a different game. She really, really didn’t want to leave her machine, but they were very insistent. She played two rounds and won a giant stuffed edamame bean. She was so

proud of herself — they were cheering and clapping for her. I think she still has the thing.”

enjollras added, “It was so sweet of them! Everything about it — helping her out, of course, but also making her feel so cool for being able to win. It’s one of my favorite memories. They must have spent so much time at that arcade to figure the system out. I often wonder what they’re doing now; they seemed like genuinely nice people with an interesting hobby.”<sup>39</sup>

### **“What’s an Encounter with a Celebrity You’ve had Where They were an Absolute D[\*]ck?”**

Despite the question, some responders replied with stories about nice celebrities. Others gave advice about meeting celebrities.

1) JayTheDity wrote this:

“Nicest guy ever — Billy Ray Cyrus. The studio had a policy that you’re never supposed to touch the food any of the artists order or bring in and you’re especially not supposed to take any home. As I was leaving, he slipped me two huge meat and cheese trays out the door when no one was looking.

“As an intern trying to make it as an audio engineer, that sustained me for almost two weeks.”

Typicalbrownwhitey commented, “It’s possible that some of your coworkers now go around telling people about the night that Billy Ray Cyrus came to work and ate like three of those monster plates all by himself in one night like it was nothing.”

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<sup>39</sup> Source: MrYellow8666, “Current or Ex Theme Park Employees, What are some dirty secrets that most people don’t know about?” Reddit. AskReddit. 7 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y9veksyk>>.

mtttdesinz commented, “We left him in his changing room for five MINUTES, I swear! We went back and all the cheese and meat GONE, GONE!!! He’s a f[\*\*]king wolf, lemme tell ya.”

2) sana1313 wrote this:

“I met Leslie Nielson, when I was around 12, on a film set some family members worked on. He had, unknown to everyone at the time, a little fart-noise machine in his pocket. “Not some stupid little one, but a full-on, several different ‘types’ and durations, pro-level fart-noise machine. When me and my four siblings were around him and a bunch of other adults, he would periodically let the thing rip mid conversation, and then stay perfectly calm, not leading on. Only then to give little eyebrow raises and other funny faces to us kids when no one else was looking, putting us in on the joke but leaving the adults all confused/embarrassed.

“This went on the entire day we were on set, and I could barely keep from peeing myself.

“TL;DR, Leslie Neilson is the coolest adult ever. Rest in peace, good Sir!”

3) FiveFingersandaNub wrote, “I was a bookstore worker for a large chain in a popular city. We did a ton of author signings and talks. Authors are almost universally great. George R.R. Martin was fantastic and really insightful to fan’s questions. Stephen King is awesome and stays for everyone. Chuck Palahunik is great, and really hilarious. Toni Morrison stayed and talked in the coffee shop for hours. Margaret Atwood knows more about books and sci-fi than literally anyone I’ve ever met.”

4) soulwrangler wrote this:

“I’ve worked on the sets of major films and television shows for the past four years. I would like to share a different perspective, if I may.

“When a show/film has a cast with a fanbase, those fans show up to on location filming. On some shows that have well known reoccurring locations, there are often many fans that will show up to set. The locations team does their best to corral them into a single location that is out of camera but close enough that they don’t try to sneak around and become security risks. Many times, the cast members will take the time to come over to the group of fans and take pictures/shake hands/sign autographs.

“I’ll begin with the things that people say. There’s always a few birthdays in the crowd because ‘It’s my birthday’ demands attention. There’s always someone who traveled from a different country just to be there. A bunch of people bring fan art and random gifts. Sometimes someone missed a cancer treatment or a funeral or any other number of things that are an attempt to garner sympathy. Now I may sound cold, but who are any of those people to put that kind of baggage on a stranger? And all at once, no less? Having stood there and listened to the fans bark out their ailments and woes in an attempt to have the ear of their crush, it’s a pathetic sight and it must weigh on those actors. When Justin Beiber announced that he was no longer doing meet and greets with fans while touring, I agreed with the little sh[\*]t.

“Now, the things that people do. Remember a couple years ago there was a news story out of Argentina about the baby dolphins being killed by tourists who had captured them and then passed them around to take selfies? That’s what comes to mind when I see our cast with a giant group of fans. They’ve got security and still they’ve been surrounded. People get grabby. People push forward.

People are determined to get their damned selfie. People feel some misplaced sense of entitlement. And the actor has to keep a straight face because mixed in with the press of fans are paps [paparazzi, aka photographers of celebrities] waiting to snap a ‘nasty moment.’

“There are reasons people want to be left alone, and actors are people at the end of the day.”

5) Elliephant51 wrote this:

“I met Geoffrey Rush when I was working reception at a small hotel when he was filming *The Daughter*. I lent him my umbrella and recommended a cafe in town; rather than catch the bus right outside, he decided to walk the 45 minutes into town.

“He came back and blew me a kiss as I returned my umbrella and said he liked the cafe.

“Reminded me of my late grandfather.

“He can rock a pink business shirt.”

6) caseycatlady wrote this:

“I have a good story about celebs that might even up the score. My sister met Jack Whitehall, Freddie Flintoff, and Jamie Redknapp in Miami Airport as we were both flying home to the UK. I’m going to assume they had just finished filming as I know they are in a TV programme together in the UK that’s super popular.

“My sister approached Jack as she was a fan, and the other two bantered with her as she didn’t know Freddie or Jamie (she’s not a sports fan). They laughed and bantered back and forth about it and they took it like champs and took selfies on her phone and Snapchat mucking around, and without her even asking, they all signed her plane ticket.

“She felt really star struck about it all, but they were so nice to her and genuine she now has a crush on Jamie and wants to get into football and cricket!

“Jack Whitehall even asked how our trip was and high-fived my sister when she said Harry Potter World was her favourite part. They all bundle-hugged her before they went to catch their flight.

“All in all, they gave my little sister their undivided attention for 30 minutes and just made her feel special. It was so great, and I’ll always love them for doing that for her, and they all gained a life-long fan in my sister!”

7) ukyah wrote this:

“Here’s a solid tip for everyone when you see a celebrity. leave them alone. Give a nod, if you must. Just leave it at that. You don’t know them, you only recognize them. Celebrity does this weird mind f[\*\*]k to us because we usually know someone we recognize.

“Imagine having strangers all day long want to stop you from your task, or whatever you’re doing. It would be maddening.

“On the other hand, the ones who enter a room with demands? Get the f[\*\*]k outta here with that nonsense. Here’s a piece of advice for them: You’re not important; you’re just a stranger that I recognize.”

Googalslosh commented, “The nod thing. James Spader was standing next to me at LAX [Los Angeles Airport] baggage claim. I looked at him. He looked at me. We smiled. And that was that.”<sup>40</sup>

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<sup>40</sup> Source: [\\_Sullyy\\_](#), “What’s an encounter with a celebrity you’ve had where they were an absolute d[\*]ck?” Reddit. AskReddit. 7 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ydgmyz2j>>.



## Chapter 3: 41-60

### **“What is the Nicest Thing Someone has Ever Done for You?”**

1) Valiantlycaustic wrote, “Consoled me in a airport bathroom when I was crying my eyes out at having to leave my husband behind in another country for who knew how long. She was a cleaner who just saw that I was crying and without a word grabbed a giant wad of paper towels and handed them to me. She then guided me to a little seating nook and just sat with me until I got myself under control. She talked about the latest movies and how she hated all the new pop songs and just kept talking until I stopped crying. She saved me that day.”

2) Nato23 wrote, “I just started driving — maybe had my license for a week. Went to go fill up gas for the first time. Realized I never learned how to fill up a car. A guy saw me struggling for about 10 minutes, and he walked over, pulled out his credit card, and showed me what to do. Ended up paying for my gas and teaching me a lesson. Never got his name or anything.”

3) tealfeels wrote this:

“It musta been my junior year of high school, and I was on a huge class trip (something like 60 students) to attend a conference four hours away from home. It was the week after Thanksgiving and this trip coincidentally landed on my birthday. I remember being really bummed out because I was barely starting to make friends outside of my classmates, and I wasn’t going to be able to celebrate it with them. I’ll admit it: I was really mopey in the way teenagers get about dumb sh[\*]t.

“Towards the end of the night, I was just sitting on my bed and my good friend from class came up to me and just said, ‘Happy birthday,’ like it was nothing. ‘First and only

person to wish me a happy birthday,' I thought to myself. We chatted for a bit and he said, 'Hey let's go get you some food at the Denny's next door.' I agreed and we left.

"On the way there, he did a pocket check and realized he didn't have his wallet and panicked. We went back to the room and found nothing. He was freaking the f[\*\*]k out so we went to the lobby and asked the concierge if they had a lost and found, and we called our teachers and had them ask everyone if they had seen it. He was trippin' at this point.

"A few minutes later we get a call from the program director saying someone found it and turned it into him. Relieved, we head up to the teachers room and as he opens the door my friend just says, 'Come on, get inside.' My mind was not on his wallet. My mind was back home. I follow him inside and it's completely dark except for this huge birthday cake with a bunch of candles and 60+ people yelling 'SURPRISE!'

"I was so shocked, I just started bawling, hard. Everyone came up and group hugged me. It was a feeling unlike any other. Up until that point, I'd never had a surprise party before in my life. I guess while we were running around 'looking for my friend's wallet,' everyone was making their way to my teachers room. That's one of my favorite memories from high school."

mereplane commented, "When I was in high school, I got suspended for being near the principal's daughter while she was drinking at school and not telling any adults. The whole thing was pretty messed up and had a lot to do with my dad being a teacher and not being a friend of our school's administration. I missed my national honor society induction, my band concert, and my junior prom. About a week later, feeling kind of bummed, my mom sends me out to get groceries — while I'm there, she calls and asks if I

can grab soda. I think it's a little weird because no one in my family drinks soda, but I grab it anyway and head home. When I get inside, my six best friends are all standing in my house wearing prom clothes with music playing and food and decorations everywhere. They threw me a surprise prom at home since I couldn't go to the other one."

Alligator commented:

"Oh, man, I had something similar happen recently.

"So I moved to a new city a few months ago, and the other week it was my birthday. I don't really know many people here that well yet, and I was acting in a play the night of my birthday. Though I got to spend that day with my visiting parents, I was still feeling pretty homesick thinking of how I'd be celebrating with friends if I'd stayed in my hometown. Anyhow, the play finishes and I'm tempted to just go home and hit the hay. I decide to just stick around for a drink with the cast, and they all bring out cake and champagne and start singing 'Happy Birthday.' It meant so much to me."

4) shadypines33 wrote, "When I was about five, my mom was single and in nursing school. She had very little money, and we lived in this tiny one bedroom apartment. This elderly Greek man who lived in our apartment complex dressed up as Santa on Christmas Eve and brought me presents. I can still remember him saying 'Ho ho ho! Merry Christmas!' in that wonderful Greek accent. That was one of the sweetest memories of my childhood."

5) -pumpkin- wrote, "My best friend's mother saw that my home life with my dad was getting steadily worse and more abusive. She went to Children's Aid to see about taking my brother and me in and becoming our guardian. She already had four kids of her own but still found room in her heart to

take in another two teenagers. She fed and clothed me, paid for braces and expensive properly fitting bras. She treated me as an equal to her other children. If she hadn't stepped in, I have no idea where I would be today. She saved me. It would have been her birthday today actually, but she passed away two years ago."

6) shikuto wrote this:

"When I was a senior in high school, my band was going on a trip out of state to go skiing. I had moved a lot as a kid. Aside from going to that high school at two disjunct periods of time, it held the longest amount of my education.

"I hadn't been able to go on any of the band trips, though. I had to work to pay my own way. I had problems with my mom and her stepdad, and hadn't yet fully forgiven my dad. I had my own bills that I was responsible for. I could never afford to go on one of the band trips.

"All of a sudden, about a week and a half away from the trip, my band director pulls me aside. He asks me if I want to go on the ski trip. I responded something to the effect of not being able to afford it. He cut me off, saying that's not what he asked. Obviously, I told him I wanted to go.

"Turns out some benefactor saw some of what was going on behind the curtains in my life. They were — and still are to this day — anonymous to me, but they footed the bill for my charter ticket, food money, and ski gear money. I cried. I just started crying right there in the band director's office.

"It was great for me, but my best friend ended up getting altitude sickness."

drunk\_haile\_selassie commented:

"I've been a music teacher in Australia, and when a kid was really keen on something that cost money and their parents

couldn't/wouldn't pay for it, it was a single phone call to a local charity or local rich business person to get the money.

“Even the local court put all of their money that came from fines (parking fines, drink driving fines, e.g.) into the local hospitals and schools.

“I called up the court a few times because a kid couldn't afford an instrument, and it was never a problem.”

WeirdOctopus commented, “I grew up in a middle-class area with very little poverty in my school district. It was quite common that parents would pay a certain amount into the ‘social fund’ of the school so the few children with poor parents could come to school trips without a big fuss and especially without anyone (children, other parents) explicitly knowing. All the parents had to do was to make a little X at the invitation/rsvp letter and no questions were asked.”

7) Sethdubbs wrote this:

“I have a knack for getting people to feel very comfortable talking to me, and there was a girl in particular who during the two times we hung out told me about some abuse and terrible things that happened through her life that she had never told anyone about and also clearly never dealt with. I talked to her about them for hours, but ultimately said that I think she would benefit a ton from talking to a professional, but that I would be here for her when she needs it.

“A few days later she had her first therapy appointment, and while we barely talked she would update me or I'd check in on her about her weekly appointments and things seem to be really improving for her.

“Fast forward a few months, I haven't had much communication with her, but she heard through a random

grapevine I had been used by someone close to me (the details of which are unimportant).

“The thing is when she heard that she called me out of the blue to check on me and tell me how much I mean to her, how much I changed her life and that she knows she wouldn’t be alive today if she hadn’t met me by chance. The thing she said that really got to me was that that day someone had attempted suicide by jumping off a local bridge and she said the first thought she had when she heard about it was that the person just needed someone like me. She said she called because she wants to make sure that someone doesn’t hurt me to the point I stop being there for people in the way I was for her.

“I f[\*\*]king bawled; it was the nicest thing anyone had ever said to me, and after working on myself extremely hard for most of this year to be someone I could be proud of and the person I needed at darker times in my life, it was the first huge validation I had ever received and while I didn’t need it, I’ll never forget it.”

8) Fertile\_Squirtle wrote this:

“When I was super pregnant, working at DQ [Dairy Queen] (actually paid amazingly well), I was only 18 so I got a lot of anxiety about rude customers. One lady at one point had told her daughter I was a wh[\*]re and not to end up like me. She was the only really rude person, but it had totally put a damper on my spirits and made me feel permanently more on edge about being the stereotypical ‘teen mom.’

“This guy comes in, average early 40s/mid to late 30s looking. As he’s waiting for his food I’m making, he makes small talk with me. Asking things like ‘a boy or girl?’ ‘What will her name be?’ ‘Are you excited?’ We made really great small talk until it was done. As I handed him his food, he grabbed my hand and slapped \$30 in it. He told

me, ‘Get yourself something nice for your baby girl.’ I didn’t compute was happening and stared at him, barely yelling out ‘thank you’ as he walked out the door because I was so shocked.

“I went in the back. Everybody thought he offended me because my cheeks were red and I was slack jawed until I explained. He was the first stranger to make me happy-cry. I wish I could remember exactly what he looked like. I’d try and find him so I could let him know how much it meant to me and that I did not mean to stand there like a dumb[\*]ss with my mouth open.”<sup>41</sup>

### **“What is the Nicest Thing a Person Trying to Sleep With You has Done?”**

1) wickerocker wrote, “He kept his physical distance politely and asked before doing anything. There was an obvious desire to be physically near me, but he still was so respectful. I was just supposed to be couch-surfing for the night, but he let me choose where we both slept and whether I wanted to snuggle. While we were snuggling, he asked if he could kiss me and then there was no more talking. Then it was like the fiery passion of 1,000 suns was unleashed on my body, which was also nice.”

2) Commonsalism wrote, “We were making out and pretty much already naked when he asked my permission before he took off my underwear. Then before we even got to actual sex he stopped and made sure I was okay with him not being ready to jump into a relationship. I love that he didn’t wait until afterwards to bring up that topic since I feel like some guys would.”

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<sup>41</sup> Source: MrWuTangStyle, “What is the nicest thing someone has ever done for you?” Reddit. AskReddit. 9 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yc46szj4>>.

3) joannagoanna wrote, “He treated me respectfully and like I’m a whole person, not a fantasy or a hole to stick his d[\*]ck into.”

4) random\_yoyos wrote, “He waited until I wanted him to.”<sup>42</sup>

### **“911 Operators, What’s the Funniest Thing You had a Kid Call In?”**

1) datangeldoe wrote, “I had a little one call in to our center about 10 times, just so she could tell us that she loved us and appreciated us, and we are doing such a great job. Our center is pretty big, so she would get a different person almost every time. However, if she got you more than once, she would say something like, “No no no, I already told you! I need to tell someone else. You’re great, but they need to know they’re great, too! Okay, I love you, bye!” It was all from a disconnected cell, and we weren’t really getting a great phase on her location, but she stopped after about an hour, so it wasn’t super concerning. Made my day! I hope she grows up and keeps that big heart of hers; we need more people like her in the world. (They don’t necessarily need to call 911, but the point still stands. Lol.)”

2) COSAS wrote, “When I was four years old, I was watching a fire safety video. They told me to call 911, so I did.”<sup>43</sup>

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<sup>42</sup> Source: ihugsyi, “What is the nicest thing a person trying to sleep with you has done?” Reddit. AskWomen. 9 October 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/yarjaul6>>.

<sup>43</sup> Source: Ialonesurvive, “911 operators, what’s the funniest thing you had a kid call in?” Reddit. AskReddit. 8 October 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/ytsyf8ah>>.



## **“What is Your Life’s Biggest Mystery that Will Probably Go Unsolved?”**

\_Robin\_ wrote, “I got home one day, and my daughter told me a guy had turned up on my doorstep asking for me by name with a huge bunch of flowers. She sent him on his way and didn’t even ask for his name. I will never know who my lost love is.”

JamRel commented, “I once sent my mom a bunch of flowers for Valentine’s Day. She was a single mother her whole life. When I got home from work, my sister told me that mum has a secret admirer and it was clear she was kinda happy about it, so I kept my mouth shut. She got into a relationship not long after that, so I thought I shouldn’t send anymore.”<sup>44</sup>

## **“Who is the Most Badass Person You’ve Ever Met?”**

KogoDogo wrote this:

“My mom.

“When she was in her early twenties, she got bucked out of a moving vehicle and had severe brain damage. She was supposed to be dead within 48 hours, and when she lived, they said she’d be a vegetable for the rest of her life. Instead, she woke up, re-learned how to walk, talk, read, and function, and walked out of the hospital on her own.

“I was a mistake that she raised on her own without complaints. She raised me alone, went to school, got into nursing, and weaseled her way out of the projects into an honest-to-god house — without child support for the bulk

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<sup>44</sup> Source: Moonwomb, “What is your life’s biggest mystery that will probably go unsolved?” Reddit. AskReddit. 10 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ycdwz8v9>>.

of my childhood. I can honestly say that I had an amazing childhood and she never once made me feel like a burden.

“I have never seen her back down from anything. Ever. “Somebody trying to break in? Well, they ain’t gonna get far. Ex-boyfriend threaten her daughter? Bitch, she dares you to open that gate. Boss low balls her and then has the gall to call her lazy? Have fun, because she can be put to better use elsewhere.

“She’s now fighting ovarian cancer with a very low chance of surviving, and her response to talking to Hospice is, ‘I will never talk to them. *I’m not done.*’

“She was offended they gave up on her.

“She’s in a bad place now, but she’s lasted way longer than they anticipated and has even been improving. She just kind of shrugs it off. In her mind, she doesn’t have to relearn what English is, so, you know, this should be easy.

I wish I was half the woman she is.”

2) yellowwalks wrote this:

“My grandma.

“She broke her neck in a car accident driving in a rural road in winter. The car went into the ditch, and unfortunately no one was around for ages, and night was coming soon. So, she managed to climb out and [travel] for quite a distance to the nearest house.

“This was decades ago, and now she’s almost 90 and despite chronic pain, she’s travelled the world, and still lives on her own.”

3) sitcom-noir wrote this:

“I work for my state’s parole board and every two years we see this woman who, in all honesty, should be dead. The

couple who kidnapped her ended up stabbing her many times after they both raped her. They left her in a ditch, came back later, and stabbed her some more just to make sure she was dead.

“She regained consciousness and walked to the nearest gas station. Now she comes to oppose parole every single time they’re eligible for it. Hearing her talk about the incident is riveting and awful, I don’t know how she does it every two years. But she wants to protect other people who might become victims if they’re released.”

Bobbyxcorwen commented, “Very similar to this. A lady was raped and every parole hearing she would come to make sure he wouldn’t get parole. After she died, her family started showing up to make sure he didn’t get parole.”<sup>45</sup>

### **“What is the Creepiest Thing that has Ever Happened to You?”**

1) DiggaryDonaldson2 wrote, “My cousin was caught up in a terror attack in London last year [2017], and she said her legs were like jelly and she just couldn’t run. Every time she tried, she slipped over and then some dude running past just grabbed her and dragged her for nearly half a mile.”

nanna\_mouse commented, “I used to laugh at the horror movie ‘falling down for no reason’ trope. Then I saw some of those prank videos where real people are scared sh[\*]tless and trying to run. If anything, the movies downplay it.”

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<sup>45</sup> Source: lordofravioli, “Who is the most badass person you’ve ever met?” Reddit. AskReddit. 10 October 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/y7m6t4xn>>.

2) nightcrawlerCRD wrote about a good experience in commenting about another story that was scary but turned out OK: “I had a completely opposite experience than this when I was like six, I was in a supermarket (I think) and I went to go look at a movie on a shelf and when I turned around my family was gone, looked for like two minutes (felt like forever) for my family before I started freaking out, ran outside and was going to just keep looking in the parking lot, but a homeless guy outside saw me panicking so he stopped me and told me to wait at the entrance with him for my parents or else I might get lost; he calmed me down by telling me funny stories and like 10 minutes later my mom runs out freaking out just to find me chilling with the homeless guy, needless to say he was thanked profusely and I got an [\*]ss whooping for not letting anyone know I was leaving the group.”<sup>46</sup>

### **“What has Been Your Most Awkward Encounter with a Cashier?”**

LDN\_Escort wrote this:

“Once in New York I went into a bodega to buy that most American of foods: Maruchan ramen. It was run by a German for some reason who was on the till speaking with his friend in German about how dumb Americans are. Standard stuff but I didn’t want to join the fray so I gave no indication that I understood them.

“Eventually I wanted to pay so I got in line, in front of me was a black woman and behind me a brown man. The two German idiots at the front notice the guy behind me and loudly start getting into how New York is overrun with

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<sup>46</sup> Source: sophaloaph13, “What is the creepiest thing that has ever happened to you?” Reddit. AskReddit. 10 October 2018. <<https://tinyurl.com/y94fika4>>.

terrorists nowadays, all these Islamists ruining the country, etc., etc.

“I look at the guy behind me who is blissfully unaware of what’s going on, turn to the front and very loudly say in English, ‘Hey, you two f[\*\*]king geniuses up there, you do know this guy is Sikh and not Muslim, right? If you’re going to be f[\*\*]king racists, at least get your racism right.’

“The remainder of the transaction was very awkward indeed.”

whoopsea commented, “I’ve had [a] similar [experience] in Paris. The wait staff were mocking an American woman for being a ‘fat cow’ (and she was not particularly fat, nor was she unpleasant in any way, or to them). I told them if they’re done with the cow jokes could we all get some service? It was quiet for the rest of the meal.”<sup>47</sup>

### **“When was a Time People were Gossiping or Badmouthing Others in Another Language and You Called Them Out on It or Showed that You Understood?”**

1) BebaColombianaXo wrote this:

“I am white with light green eyes and in an airport outside of Mexico there was a pilot from Aeromexico who was talking to another pilot grotesquely-sexually about what he would like to do with me. He probably didn’t think I knew Spanish. I was able to hear him, and he didn’t know I was listening.

“I waited a bit until the other pilot left and went up to him and spoke to him in Spanish. He was shocked. I told him

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<sup>47</sup> Source: talgirlfemme, “What has been your most awkward encounter with a cashier?” Reddit. AskWomen. 10 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yc5xo8mk>>.

that I didn't appreciate his grotesque remarks and that is was inappropriate. He got really nervous and apologized. I told him I was going to contact corporate and file a complaint. I took note of his name on his airline ID. He just continued to keep apologizing. It was a disgusting experience."

She added, "It was an unpleasant experience, but I had to confront him because I have my dignity. I am not going to let any man disrespect me on any level, and I know my worth. I was direct and to the point and he was scared and nervous. I did report him, too."

2) heathersuer wrote this:

"Let me preface this by saying in high school I took three years of French, German and Spanish. I am not fluent in either language, but I know enough to understand a lot.

"We were in France, and we were looking for something. We stopped at a local shop and asked for directions. I tried the best I could to do it in French but was apparently short a few words. So I asked in French if they spoke German (we were living in Germany so my German was better then my French), and they said no. They said no to every. Single. Language. Embarrassed, I left defeated. We were standing outside the shop and a customer came out. She asked if we were Americans and I said yes. She said they were being [\*]ssh[\*]les and I asked correctly. She then gave us directions to where we needed to go."<sup>48</sup>

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<sup>48</sup> Source: kween\_of\_Pettys, "When was a time people were gossiping or badmouthing others in another language and you called them out on it or showed that you understood?" Reddit. AskWomen. 11 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y76ezq5f>>.

## **“What’s the Most Thoughtful Detail You’ve Seen at a Wedding?”**

1) haelesor wrote this:

“A friend’s dad died a few months before her wedding.

“She was in a bit of a state because not only was her dad not there to walk her down the aisle, but every single person in her family refused to walk her down the aisle. She was going to ask a friend to do it, but her mother convinced her to wait and that it would all work out the day of.

“Wedding day arrives. She is about to walk down the aisle: alone. Instead of the wedding march a video is projected on the front wall of the church of her dad on his sick bed telling her how beautiful she is and how proud he is of her and how he knows this marriage is forever and he’s so sorry he had to miss the wedding and that he loves her.

“Video is paused to allow her to gather herself, then the wedding march is played. She makes it to the front, priest asks who gives her away, video unpauses and finishes with dad giving her away and blowing a kiss.”

2) Joretta wrote this:

“At a wedding I went to, when they sent out invitations, they included a small card and asked invitees to write out their favourite family recipe (along with some joke about the couple finally learning how to cook).

“At the wedding, they had gorgeous little specialty recipes books printed with all of their family and friends’ recipes in it, with a little dedication thanking everyone for their contribution towards helping them start *their* new family. I unfortunately can’t remember exactly what the dedication said because I lost the book in a move, but it was

something along the lines of thanking the people who had been *their* foundation in life helping them lay a new foundation together :)

“You better believe the extended family was over the moon with how special it made them feel.”

3) SydneyCrawford wrote this:

“... I was in a wedding last month and I almost cried when I heard something along the lines of:

“‘And who gives this woman away?’

“‘She gives herself away but with our blessing.’

“It was such a little thing, but it was so perfect and so her and so powerful.

4pcnugget commented:

“I have always had issues with the idea of being ‘given away,’ but wondered what a good option would be that wouldn’t take an important role from the father of the bride.

“This is a great solution!”

4) OpalMoonn wrote this:

“A decorated poster board with pictures of loved ones who have passed away, like a ‘wish you could be here.’

“Also, a bin full of blankets if you have your wedding outside at night and it gets chilly.”

5) starfishandcoffee wrote, “My dad passed when I was young, and so husband wore one of my dad’s ties. I didn’t know until the ceremony. It meant a lot to me. :)”

6) PuddleOfHamster wrote this:



“My sister had little activity clipboards for the kids at the reception; that was nice.

“A friend of mine had an outdoor wedding. She let all the kids sit up front on a rug so they could see, and gave them bubble-blowing mixture to keep them amused. She also got them to ring bells (the little tinkly Christmas kind) during the first kiss. It was lovely; it made the kids feel really special.

“And another wedding I went to had the inevitable gap between ceremony and reception for photos; but during it we were given fancy ice cream and posh soft drinks, which made the time pass much more pleasantly (and was very welcome on a hot day!).”<sup>49</sup>

### **“What Simple Things Do You Do to Make a Person Feel Extra Special on Their Birthday?”**

Eggshell101 wrote, “I smile at them and say, ‘Seeing you makes me happy; thank you for existing.’”<sup>50</sup>

### **“Divorced Folk, What’s the Most Underrated Part of Divorce?”**

Yeahbabs wrote, “You get to divorce your mother-in-law, too!” Fortunately, many people have good relationships with their ex-in-laws.

1) insertcaffeine wrote this:

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<sup>49</sup> Source: loafersandlattes, “What’s the most thoughtful detail you’ve seen at a wedding?” Reddit. AskWomen. 11 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ycya4fhx>>.

<sup>50</sup> Source: miss-karly, “What simple things do you do to make a person feel extra special on their birthday?” Reddit. AskWomen. 14 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y85bh765>>.

“My in-laws (ex-husband’s parents) sat me down and said, ‘We have cut no ties with you.’ They still act like they always have — we get together for holidays, they send cards and letters, my former brother- and sister-in-law still refer to me as an in-law and I’m still ‘Aunt insertcaffeine’ to my nieces and nephews.

“I divorced my ex, but I’m still a part of his family.”

Chick-inn asked, “Are you and ex husband still on good terms?”

insertcaffeine answered, “We’re on pleasant terms. We have a son together. So, for his sake, we work together at giving him the best shot in life: No badmouthing each other, regular meetings to go over schedule and budget, we both go to his school events, and so on.”

catgatuso commented, “That no-badmouthing rule is so important. As the oldest child, I got it from both parents many years before they divorced. It soured my relationship with both of them, and the last conversation I had with my dad before he passed ended with me hanging up because he was still badmouthing my mom, ten years after the divorce was finalized.”

2) bruetoof wrote, “Weirdly I somehow got my ex’s family in the divorce. Weirder still they seemed to take to my next spouse extremely well — they came to the wedding.”

3) Frudusa wrote, “I stayed in contact with my ex mother-in-law because she was a lovely person. She never forgave me for divorcing her son, but she was always kind to me. Once she was visiting him for out of town and he had gone somewhere. Anyway she was in a small fender bender and couldn’t get a hold of him and so called me. I went and picked her up and called a tow truck and kept her company until we could find him to come take her home. She marveled at how helpful I was. I told her, ‘You were

always good to me and I appreciate that. You're a good person and I care about you.”

4) ijustwanttobejess wrote this:

“My mother refuses to let my ex-wife go. She still goes to her house and spends weekends with my ex-wife and the kids, has a house key and everything!

“My ex and I are good friends, though, and she says she appreciates that the kids get to spend time with ‘nanny,’ so I’m not going to say anything until she asks me to, lol.”<sup>51</sup>

### **“What’s the Scariest REAL Story You Have?”**

After telling a scary story, Coco-bears wrote this:

“One bar in town got rid of a biker gang in the most genius way. They started painting their walls each day before opening bright, pastel, flowery colors. They started wearing flowery print clothes, and put out the rumor they were the gayest bar in the Midwest. Made the bar less appealing for a violent takeover. For bikers, the whole thing is respect. You gotta show me respect. You better not disrespect me or I’m going to make you pay, raise my cred. So biker gangs who war, or do business, they don’t want to be laughed at by rival gangs. It will make them a target, for takeover, or for street cred. So they moved on to a different bar.

“Most creative, peaceful way to protect a bar ever.”<sup>52</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Source: Decembrio, “Divorced folk, what’s the most underrated part of divorce?” Reddit. AskReddit. 13 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yc2669ea>>.

<sup>52</sup> Source: Mrcolty5, “What’s the scariest REAL story you have?” Reddit. AskReddit. 15 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y7t7fzzt>>.

## **“Haunted House Workers of Reddit, What’s the Most Extreme/Funniest Case of Fight or Flight You have Seen?”**

Torynn wrote this:

“I do up an ok scary house for Halloween. One time I parked our Jeep on the front lawn, doors left open, had those electrical fake fire lanterns under it with a fog machine so it looked on fire. Had one of those ‘emergency zombie broadcast’ alerts playing on the sound system, I was in a zombie outfit 1/2 sprawled out of the car, keeping still so I looked like a mannequin.

“A group of young teens came up to trick or treat; they were standing around my body when I jumped to my feet and screamed. They were all pretty startled, but one girl took off screaming .... I heard her for several minutes screaming as she ran away. Oof, I felt bad

“One-half hour later she comes back, upset, and demands her candy because she didn’t get any the first time. I starting laughing, then belly laughing because her screaming had been epic; she started laughing, too, so I gave her tons of good loot.

“Her dad came by to see me the next day, said she was talking about it all night. Turns out she had Down syndrome. (I had no idea.) Omg [Oh, my God] I started to apologize so fast. But it was all good; this was her first time just going out with friends and not her parents, and she loved it. Every year after I kept an eye out for her just so I could give her extra scares and loot candy.”

Conchobar8 commented, “It’s not often that looking for the girl with Down syndrome so you can scare the crap out of

her is a good thing. But you made it so. Bravo, sir! (Or insert word of choice.)”<sup>53</sup>

### **“What is the Funniest Story You have Ever Read on Reddit?”**

1) drew1111 wrote this:

“As a bagpiper, I play many gigs. Recently I was asked by a funeral director to play at a graveside service for a homeless man. He had no family or friends, so the service was to be at a pauper’s cemetery in the Kentucky backcountry.

“As I was not familiar with the backwoods, I got lost; and being a typical man I didn’t stop for directions. I finally arrived an hour late and saw the funeral guy had evidently gone and the hearse was nowhere in sight. There were only the diggers and crew left and they were eating lunch. I felt badly and apologized to the men for being late.

“I went to the side of the grave and looked down and the vault lid was already in place. I didn’t know what else to do, so I started to play. The workers put down their lunches and began to gather around. I played out my heart and soul for this man with no family and friends. I played like I’ve never played before for this homeless man. And as I played ‘Amazing Grace,’ the workers began to weep. They wept, I wept, and we all wept together.

“When I finished I packed up my bagpipes and started for my car. Though my head hung low, my heart was full.

“As I was opening the door to my car, I heard one of the workers say, ‘Sweet Mother of Jesus, I never seen nothing

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<sup>53</sup> Source: Gunshin015, “Haunted house workers of Reddit, what’s the most extreme/funniest case of fight or flight you have seen?” Reddit. AskReddit. 15 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yc629wzc>>.

like that before and I've been putting in septic tanks for twenty years."<sup>54</sup>

### **“What are the Best Power Moves You’ve Ever Seen Someone Do in Real Life?”**

1) bcrabill wrote this:

“I was at a Mexican restaurant on Cinco de Mayo. Place was absolutely packed, yet somehow there were only like two, maybe three waiters on staff. We'd been there like 40 minutes and had drinks, but still hadn't gotten to order food.

“This dude at the next table stands up, starts taking people's orders and delivering them to the kitchen. The other waiters seemed like they really appreciated it, because people were starting to get p[\*]ssed until that point. He didn't take my table's order, but he took one nearby and he sounded pretty fun. A friend ran into him a few months ago and said he's really cool.”

2) sanchower wrote this:

“Junior year of high school, AP Physics class. It's the end of the year, AP tests are over, we have nothing left to do, so our teacher is leading a game of Scientist Hangman. The puzzle on the board is

“ \_\_ N \_\_\_\_

“ \_\_ R N \_\_\_\_\_

“The classroom door is open. There's a senior walking down the hallway past the classroom. He takes one glance at the puzzle and yells ‘Daniel Bernoulli!’ without breaking stride.”

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<sup>54</sup> Source: Chr15py0696, “What is the Funniest Story You have Ever Read on Reddit?” Reddit. 2016 <<https://tinyurl.com/y858ebch>>.

CounterfeitCactus commented, “Teacher was probably elated her alumni remembered something.”

3) GangsterRaspberry wrote this:

“One time in high school gym class, one of my boyfriend’s friends tried to pants him and instead of just getting his shorts he sent shorts and underwear down.

“Everyone was shocked, and rather than being embarrassed my boyfriend yelled, ‘IS THIS WHAT YOU WANTED?’ and the pants ended up far more embarrassed than he.”<sup>55</sup>

### **“Besides Mr. Rogers, Who Else Could Pick Up Thor’s Hammer?”**

1) Booksgnome wrote, “Mrs. C. She’s one of the cafeteria cashiers at my university, and she doesn’t get a lot of attention because there is another, gentler lunch lady, but Mrs. C *really* cares. She remembers hundreds of names, faces, the tests they have coming up, the projects they’re working on .... She once threatened to spank me with my flip flops because she deemed it too cold to wear them. (She wasn’t wrong.)”

2) Commander\_Ivanova wrote this:

“I’m pretty sure I know a guy who could have. He is the guy who rescues animals from abusive owners. He just got back from delivering literally thousands of dollars worth of supplies to shelters in the Hurricane Michael zone of destruction. He regularly gives to charity, volunteers his time, was a foster parent for ‘difficult’ children for years until his wife got too sick. Then he nursed his wife for the rest of her life. When she died, he donated her very

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<sup>55</sup> Source: Akilonn, “What are the best powermoves you’ve ever seen someone do in real life?” Reddit. AskReddit. 15 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yaplz8nz>>.

expensive motorized chair and special hospital bed to a guy at his church.

“It’s like he’s not even human, he’s so nice.”<sup>56</sup>

### **“Reddit, What was a Simple Gesture from a Stranger or Acquaintance that Made All the Difference?”**

1) WesternWhatnot wrote, “My father was terribly burned in a freak car repair accident when I was in my second month of being a freshman in high school. He was rushed to a world-class burn unit almost two hours away and I was told — without seeing him — that he would remain there until he was better. (This ended up being 20 days.) My parents had been divorced a few years at that point and my mother lived out of state. My best friend at the time let me crash at his house with his family. That happened on a Friday night. The following Monday, I was called to the principal’s office and found our landlord waiting on me. He was also a local judge. He had checked me out of school, and then he drove me to the county offices to enroll me in aid for dependent children, food stamps, and emergency funds. I later found out he didn’t charge my father rent for the next year while he got back on his feet. I’ll never forget how much that meant to me and I know my dad was very grateful. They have both since passed.”

Vich95 commented, “In a similar case, I got really sick in my sophomore year of high school and at the time my dad was between jobs just with a part-time job at a convenience store. What was thought to be a simple headache and vomiting turned out to be a big brain tumor that needed emergency surgery. Well, turns out that after the first surgery I needed a second and couldn’t leave the hospital

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<sup>56</sup> Source: Fossilhog, “Besides Mr. Rogers, who else could pick up Thor’s hammer?” Reddit. AskReddit. 15 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ydy9qua2>>.



without staying a few months. Throughout that time, the convenience store owner kept my dad on the payroll and let him basically work whenever he was back home because he stayed with me in the hospital a couple of days. After two years when I was finally discharged, he sold my dad a good car for basically nothing because we needed one for my physical therapy sessions. Good man, my dad found another job, but my brother still works there and the owner keeps my dad as a substitute if someone can't make it so he'll make some extra cash."

2) d\_magzz wrote this:

"A couple of years ago (around when I was nine), my mom was admitted to the hospital after a bad car accident. We were financially unstable since we were focusing on paying the hospital bill. At the time the signups for the new Little League baseball season was about to close, so we went to the community center to see how much it was to sign up. It was \$150 for the whole season. However, at the time we didn't have the money to pay it off so we just decided to go home. However, the man who announces our games, an elderly man with an inspiring character, comes up to us and says, 'Hey, what's wrong, son?' To which I replied, 'We don't have enough money.' He then tells the lady at the front desk, 'Patty [fake name], sign this fine young boy up for this season!' To which he turned to my family and said, 'Don't worry, I'll waive the charges for ya folks.' I cried and gave him the biggest hug a nine-year-old could give him.

"He passed four years later. Rest in peace, Gene Burris, my town's voice for baseball, I will never forget you."

3) hpimhbcrimg wrote, "I couldn't sleep the evening after my brother's funeral. I went to the cemetery in my pjs [pajamas] and sat next to the burial site (there was no headstone yet) in a daze. This old man walked up and sat

next to me early the next morning. It was hard for him to lower himself into a sitting position on the ground, but he did. He didn't say anything; he just put his arm around my shoulders. I broke down and cried harder than I've ever cried before, and he just held me. After I had calmed down, he told me that he wanted to show me his wife's grave. He started talking to her like she was standing in front of us. He told her that my brother is new to heaven and that he'd appreciate it if she'd help him get settled in. I don't know exactly why, but it brought me so much peace. He was completely confident that his wife could hear him, which made me confident, and the idea of my brother having someone to take care of him was such a huge burden off of my chest. He walked me to my car and told me that he'll check on my brother every morning when he visits his wife. I never saw him again, but I will never ever forget him. I don't think I would have had the strength to walk away from the cemetery without his support."

4) Epik\_Guy wrote, "A guy in line at McDonald's accidentally saw my self-harm cuts on my arm, and he came over and showed me his scars and hugged me. He told me he cared about me, and that he knew I could get through this. That was on May 2nd this year. I think about him every time I see my scars, and I haven't cut in months now. It really helped to know someone cared, even a stranger."

5) ChefMan24 wrote this:

"I was long boarding one night and hit some broken concrete, the board stopped but I didn't. I knew to roll with the fall, but I landed on my shoulder really hard. I didn't think anything was really wrong with me, just figured I was going to hurt because my 200lb [\*]ss just flung itself violently onto cement. I walked to a nearby liquor store parking lot to check myself in the light, and saw a lady

leave the store and get in her car. She begins to pull out of the lot, sees me, and pulls back into the spot.

“As she gets out of the car, she says, ‘Is your shoulder dislocated?’ I tell her I don’t know and explain what just happened. She tells me to stand straight and let my arms hang down at my side, looks me over, and says, ‘Yup, that’s out. Don’t move.’ And with one quick jerk/twist/I don’t really know what she did, my shoulder was back in its proper place. She got in her car without another word and drove off. I was barely able to say thank you before she closed her car door.

“I went to a doctor the next day because my Mom berated me into it, and they told me the lady did a great job and probably saved me from tearing something.”

elzbietanagrom commented:

“Similar story.

“Last year [2017] I was driving from Northern to Southern California and stopped to use a restroom at a Target somewhere in LA. I hung my purse on the hook on the back of the stall door. It had a part that stuck straight out, and beneath it a small hook. Somehow, between the purse straps and the hook, as I was removing my purse, it caught and dislocated my index finger.

“I yelled or screamed or made some sort of sound. A loud and commanding voice shouted, ‘Are you ok?’ I couldn’t even answer, still catching my breath. I’m certain this woman thought I was being assaulted or something because I was definitely making sounds but not words. She said, ‘Stand back’ and literally kicked open the door.

“I just held out my hand. She grabbed it in both of hers and did some similar magic although on a much smaller scale,

and it popped painfully back in, followed by intense relief. She told me to get ice and Advil, which I did.

“She was some kind of bad[\*]ss. She was in scrubs and by the way she carried herself I’m going to assume she was at some point a military medic, or at the very least an ER doctor or nurse. She was no nonsense, it hurt like hell, but my doctor brother let me know she saved me a whole lot of pain by replacing it immediately.

“Drive-by joint re-locators are amazing.”

ItsTwutchyy commented, “Yup, definitely sounds like an ER nurse to me. They’re a whole other breed of bad[\*]ss.”

6) Zeretul4 wrote this:

“‘You’re not weird, you’re just quiet.’

“I was actually thinking about this last night. In 10th grade I was super socially awkward and shy. Because of this the only real crowd I fit into was the misfits, who were often very obnoxious and not well liked by most people. I wasn’t really like that, but since I associated with them I figured I was and I always felt so embarrassed — it caused a bit of a snowball effect and I kept getting more shy and awkward.

“That is, until I had a group project in math class. We spent that class split into groups, and in my group was a popular jock kid. I always thought he was a douche from a glance, but we ended up vibing [getting along together] pretty well. Once I’m comfortable with someone, I open up and am able to socialize pretty well. He was one of the first non-outcasts to see this side of me and by the end of the period he told me the quote (I’m paraphrasing though) and it left an impression on me. After that, things started to change for the better and I became much more confident and outgoing in the end.

“Although we got along fine, we didn’t exactly become friends mostly due to different interests and stuff so we didn’t talk much after that year ended. Unfortunately after graduation I heard he got into heroin and passed away from an overdose a few years later.

“Rest in peace, my friend. You have no idea how much you helped me!”

Geopatra1 commented:

“Reminds me of a good friend I had. He was one of the ‘cool kids’ who was friends with everyone and everyone wanted to be associated with him. He had an effortlessly cool style that guys would try to emulate, had a ton of interesting hobbies and was a very talented musician. Every girl wanted to date him because he was not only handsome, but had that mysterious, almost tragic aura about him.

“My sister lucked out and was his girlfriend for five years. I was the younger, dorky sister, but I remember feeling like the most special person in the room every time he came around. He could hold a conversation with everyone, and I noticed he always took a special interest in the ‘losers’ of my high school, always asking them about their interests and inviting them to go to concerts and parties. His maturity was years beyond our classmates ... but unfortunately that also threw him into deep addiction issues. He was a huge alcoholic and had to go to rehab three times, and then he got into heroin. It was so depressing watching this joyous, positive role model to so many just break down into a ghost of his former self. He and my sister broke up because he couldn’t stop shooting up, and he basically lost touch with everyone he used to be friends with and fell into obscurity.

“A year ago he died from an overdose, alone in his house. All those kids from high school whom he had supported

and uplifted showed up and told anecdotes about how he could make their week by a simple gesture. He changed the lives of so many people but was unable to change the path of his own life.

“RIP. [Rest in Peace.]”

7) moribes wrote, “I used to work at a gas station and this older man came in to buy a newspaper but was a dollar short. I gave him a dollar, and he asked my name and left. A few days later, my boss told me someone left an envelope with my name on it. The man had written me a sweet little note saying thank you along with a five-dollar bill. Idk [I don’t know] why it made my day so much, but I still have the note in my wallet three years later.”

8) thebigcomfycouch wrote, “About six years ago my grandmother was on a ventilator in the hospital. It happened fast and was devastating. I was missing work to spend the night shift with her. (I worked night shift at the time.) I was in the hospital cafeteria in the middle of the night. We were quietly talking and crying. I was telling my mom I couldn’t afford my rent because I was missing work. There was an older couple a few tables away and I didn’t think anything of it. A few minutes later I got up to go back to my grandmother’s room when the woman stopped me. She grabbed my hand and told me I needed to stay with my grandmother and put a 100-dollar bill in my hands. I started crying and telling her I could not accept her money. She insisted and hugged me and walked away. I have never been more moved by an act of kindness in my life. I will never forget her. [...] I’m crying. My grandmother survived after a couple months in the hospital. I can’t ever tell this story without crying.”

9) timechuck wrote this:

“It’s 1998. Early Nov. Snowing like a bastard. One lane of the interstate I had to drive on to get home is closed. They’re not plowing it. I’m forced out of my lane, my truck loses traction, and I hit a guardrail at about 45 mph.

“Fast forward to Christmas night. First time I’ve had to drive home from work in a snowstorm since. Roads are packed with last-minute shoppers, I’m driving suuuper slowly, and I’m a nervous wreck. About halfway home I notice the truck behind me is keeping up turn for turn. Even after all traffic leaves the highway, they’re behind me. They take my exit. They turn into my neighborhood. I pull into my driveway, and they start to speed up. I run to the street and stop them, thinking I’m about to get into some kind of fight. It’s an older couple. Probably 60’s. They said that they noticed I seemed nervous on the road and saw the damage to my truck. They wanted to make sure I got home safe for Christmas. They went 15 miles out of their way on Christmas night to make sure I was ok. Since then I’ve stopped and helped everyone I’ve seen on the side of the highway to try and pay it forward as they did for me. I think about those people often, and every Christmas I silently thank them for being there for me even though they didn’t have to be, and I didn’t need them to be.”<sup>57</sup>

### **“What is the Cutest Thing Your SO [Significant Other] Did for You?”**

1) Katiep86 wrote, “It was our first Christmas together. I was working overnights at the time and had to work Christmas Eve through Christmas morning. We had been talking about family traditions, and I mentioned in passing how stockings were my favorite part of Christmas morning.

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<sup>57</sup> Source: aidanbradley, “[Serious] Reddit, what was a simple gesture from a stranger or acquaintance that made all the difference?” Reddit. AskReddit. 15 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y9t4othb>>.

We had an open house at my house Christmas Eve, and when I got into my car (exhausted because I did not sleep that day), I saw that he had snuck one of my many stockings out of my house, filled it, and left it on my front seat to find. It made me smile heading into a crappy shift.”

2) WrathChild94 wrote, “I used to work in a sandwich shop where I had to close by myself. I would be alone for the last hour before the doors locked, and then however long it took me to finish up after close. We weren’t officially together yet, we weren’t even really dating, we were just hanging out and getting to know each other. Anyways, I would get really freaked out being in that building by myself with the doors unlocked: It was in a bad part of town and anyone could just walk right in. I expressed this to him and he started coming and just sitting in the lobby doing homework and stuff and talking to me while I cleaned until I locked the doors, then he would sit in his car while I finished up and then drive me home. It was the sweetest thing anyone has ever done for me. It still makes me smile when I think about it.”

how\_about\_no\_hellion commented, “My husband (then boyfriend) did the same for me! Smoothie shops are slow in the winter, and if labor got too high with another worker there I’d have to send them home. My guy would help me mop and take the trash out because a close by myself could take an hour with all the sh[\*]t that needed cleaning.”

Latrappe commented, “I did this for my wife, too. She’s a veterinarian, and when on duty at weekends has to visit the surgery late in the evening to check the inpatients. In the dark Scottish winters, being alone and in the basement of that building wasn’t much fun. So I would tag along, help with letting dogs out for a pee, talk to the cats and generally keep her company. It was a great way to spend time together actually.”



Sdforbda commented, “This is really nice. My store has a nearby restaurant, and sometimes one of the teenage workers from there has to wait for a pick-up to go home. After a couple of times, I told her to come inside the store to be safe and we just talk until her ride shows up. It’s kind of like a little-sister-type thing.”

3) kiwiqueen wrote, “On cold mornings when he goes to work early, he fills a hot water bottle and puts it in bed with me to keep me warm.”

Brutallyhonestfemale commented, “Mine puts one of the dogs in the bed (too short to hop up on their own).”

She added, “There’s only one other and he keeps to himself in the mornings; he’s our ‘teenager.’ He tries to sleep till noon on the weekends. (He’s under 10 years old most likely, though.)”

4) RoxyFurious wrote, “My husband and I have wildly different settings for our shower. He likes ‘power blast’ while I prefer a gentler spray. I got in the shower the other day and thought about how I never had to switch it to my setting. I realized then that every time he takes a shower, he always switches it back to my favourite setting so I’m not surprised by a blast of water. I have never done the same for him.”<sup>58</sup>

### **“Pro-Life Who Became Pro-Choice, What Argument Convinced You?”**

1) BruceSharkbait wrote, “My close friend could not end her pregnancy even though she was carrying a nonviable baby with no kidneys, no brain, and no chance of survival

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<sup>58</sup> Source: Infected356, “What is the Cutest Thing your SO Did for You?” Reddit. AskReddit. 17 October 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/yalec2u2>>.

to term and delivery. The trauma of seeing her go through the hell of having to explain it over and over again to coworkers/strangers/friends and people who asked her 'When are you due?' And her other two young kids who didn't understand they weren't going to get another sibling. Horrible. Heart breaking. It nearly broke her emotionally."

apul\_madeelaud commented, "My father is an obstetrician. When he was working at a Catholic hospital (that didn't do abortions), he had a patient like your friend. She was carrying a nonviable fetus. Too much time had passed and she was no longer able to get assistance for an abortion. So she was going to have to carry it to term. In order to spare his patient this trauma, he paid for the woman's abortion at a different hospital without his work or anyone else finding out."

-ksguy- commented, "That's a top-tier dude right there."

Sir Squeakington commented, "Amazing dude. Arguably a hero."

apul\_madeelaud replied:

"Yeah, he's awesome. We once fostered the older children of one of his patients. I don't remember exactly what the scenario was. I think she may have been going to rehab, and there were no family members to look after her kids.

"He's the type of man I aspire to be."

SOME IMPORTANT POINTS

devoted2trouble wrote this:

"The fact that the same politicians that are pro-life are also against birth control expansion/availability and sex education. Oh. And they also love cutting programs that help struggling mothers and children.

“I would love to see abortion rates as close to zero as possible. But you don’t get that by restricting the ways to prevent the need for abortions in the first place.

“Bernie Sanders nailed it when he was asked about this at Liberty University.”

NoMrBond3 commented:

“THIS! Everyone wants those [abortion] numbers as close to zero as possible. But the same people who claim to be pro-life, don’t care about actually reducing the numbers of abortions through tried-and-true methods, they don’t even care about the kid once it’s born. I would love to see more women not need the procedure in the first place, or have the means and ability to make the choice to keep the child.

“I remember asking my ‘pro-life’ friend where women would go to get abortions if they weren’t legal, she seemed to think making them illegal meant suddenly no woman would ever have one. Illegal abortion means more dead women, and that’s not very pro-life, is it?”

ifiwereabravo wrote this:

“I realized that the argument is framed in a deceptive manner.

“Right now the argument is: Is it right to kill babies? Or to use abortion as birth control?”

“But after living in the Midwest and working in an area that has only religious hospitals, I saw what happens when medical procedures are banned in a geographical area:

“Women who miscarried were unable to get the fetus corpse removed.

“Several doctors refused care. She had to leave the state to get treatment that in another situation could have been life threatening if she couldn’t have gotten timely care.

“I realized that the pro-life movement was being used to hurt and jeopardize the lives of pregnant women.

“Abortions aren’t the worst-case scenario. The worst-case scenario is to need one to save your life and to not be able to get one.

“This is the conversation that needs to happen.”

Jennay-4399 commented, “Literally the thought of being pregnant, WANTING a child with everything in my being, and being forced to carry ‘to term’ after a miscarriage breaks my heart so much. Pro-lifers think women getting 3<sup>rd</sup>-trimester abortions are people who suddenly change their minds. Women getting 3<sup>rd</sup>-trimester abortions WANTED that pregnancy so f[\*\*]king bad. Those women had husbands/wives/boyfriends/girlfriends who f[\*\*]king wanted that kid too. They had a name. A nursery. They told family and friends. They bought clothes, and toys, and baby-proofed their house. They had a birth plan. They imagined what their child would look like. I cannot FATHOM the despair and turmoil an expectant mother would go through if faced with an unviable fetus that she has to now carry to term.”<sup>59</sup>

### **“What Evidence Do you have to Show that Our Pets Actually Love Us and Do Not Simply Suffer from Stockholm Syndrome?”**

1) cincyfano4 wrote this:

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<sup>59</sup> Source: scmaua666, “Pro-Life that became Pro-Choice, what argument convinced you?” Reddit. AskReddit. 18 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yc9r2b6o>>.

“We have a small fenced-in backyard that shares a fence line with the neighbors. Our neighbors have an aggressive dog that is very territorial and barks and snarls at my dog or people in the yard 100% of the time she is outside, so she’s not outside often. My dog is terrified of this dog and will run away whimpering when it is outside.

“I was in the backyard, working near my fence line when the neighbor’s dog came out and aggressively charged at the fence. My dog, which is much smaller, ran in between me and the fence and leaned his weight against me, pushing me backwards, and growled at the dog. It was the first and only time I have ever seen my dog stand up to the neighbor’s dog, and it was to protect me. It was so awesome.”

PandaPuddings commented, “That’s so cute. My dog who is smaller than all my cats tried to protect my mom from a moose. Luckily for her my much, much bigger dog was behind her, but she sure felt like she was the one to chase the moose away.”

2) UKisBEST wrote, “DOG CAME INSIDE AFTER RUNNING AROUND WITH OTHER NEIGHBORHOOD DOGS. Dog wanted water. Gave dog water. Dog runs back out, stops, turns around, runs back in and puts his forepaws on me and starts licking me. Runs back outside to play.”

3) snowdropKP wrote, “I’ve had many pet rats in my life. I once bought a new, bigger cage along with four baby rats I saved from being feeders. The bars of the cage held the bigger three rats, but one of them, Loki, was small enough to get free. He could’ve gone anywhere in the house at night those first few weeks — no matter how hard I tried I couldn’t keep him locked up — but every morning without fail I’d find him curled up on my pillow right next to my

head, sometimes nestled into my hair. Smartest and most loving rat I ever owned, I was so sad when he passed.”<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>60</sup> Source: crunchytigerloaf, “What evidence do you have to show that our pets actually love us and do not simply suffer from stockholm syndrome?” Reddit. AskReddit. 18 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ycrcg5a9>>.

## Chapter 4: 61-80

### **“When was a Time You Experienced Genuine Kindness from a Total Stranger?”**

1) doomsdatydanceparty wrote this:

“When I was finally ready to get sober, utterly defeated, and I called a hotline.

“The social worker who took my call was willing to drive an hour to pick me up and take me to a hospital another hour (in the other direction) away.

“Five+ years sober now. I try to help others in any way I can.”

2) AtlantisLuna wrote this:

“Besides people who were just doing their job ...

“When I was about 22, I went to a bar I wasn’t familiar with to watch a UFC [Ultimate Fighting Championship] fight. When I went up to the bar to grab a round for the table, this guy came up and started talking to me in that really aggressive drunk way that some men do. So I faked broken English and pulled out all the German I could remember to try to put him off. Drinks arrive, I pick them up, dude tries to take one, and he put an arm around me.

“Then I hear someone go ‘Clara? *Da bist du ja! Was dauert es so lange?* [There you are! What took you so long?].’ A total stranger came up, retrieved the drink from the guy, and chattered in German as he politely escorted me back to the table.

“I thanked him and offered to buy him a drink. He dropped the German and in a thick Jersey accent told me it was fine, he just couldn’t watch that sh[\*]t.”

3) hangeryyy wrote, “An amusement park I worked at has a day where day camps/day care centers for disabled people are the only ones allowed to be in the park until about one or two. A special-needs man called me beautiful and shook my hand before getting on the ride, and then when he got on again he told me he loved the ride and he was happy he got to see me again :)”

4) unitythrufaith wrote, “I was passed out drunk on the side of the road after a long day of partying. Cop found me, appreciated that in my blackout state I had made an effort to walk home rather than drive, and took me back to my house with just a warning and a bottle of water.”

I\_Automate commented, “Police in my hometown would drive you home instead of the drunk tank, as long as you weren’t being an [\*]sshole when they talked to you. One of the highest drunk driving rates in the country, so they appreciate anyone who isn’t behind the wheel.”

5) Klumm wrote, “I was in Romania and in a rush to catch a train. I ran up to the ticket desk, but an older Romanian woman who didn’t speak English was behind the counter. Luckily a woman helped us buy the tickets she was getting on the same train as us. Got to the train with no supplies for the maybe 4:30hrs journey, I asked her whether there will be a vendor on board; she said there wasn’t but she’ll see what she can do. Maybe an hour later she came over to us and said I’m getting off here, but my friends have brought you something. I went to the doors and low and behold her friends had bought us three litres of water, chocolate, crisps and biscuits for the ride. I tried to give them money for the



cost/trouble but they wouldn't accept it. Really was such a lovely thing to do.”<sup>61</sup>

### **“Teachers of Reddit, What have Your Students Accidentally Sent to You, When They Meant to Submit an Assignment?”**

pm\_me\_\_your\_\_pain wrote this:

“A ‘coming out’ letter meant for their parents. For context, she was a first-generation, Chinese girl from a very traditional family who now live in North America. This is a big deal. Very brave on her part.

“She sent it in the morning and did not show up to school. It was on the school email server so you could see if people had opened/read attachments. The letter was honest and beautiful, and I was moved to tears in my office that morning.

“Naturally, I was very concerned for her mental health because she likely put together what happened because she did not send the required assignment by the deadline. This was extremely unlike her. It was a complete mistake because the email title indicated it was the assignment.

“I quickly called the secretary to check her attendance right after the day started. Determined she was not in school. “Then I called the counsellor and told her the issue, I knew she had a relationship with the student. I did as well through coaching the improv team.

“We determined that it would be ok if I reached out to her. I had her phone number from previous trips/improv events

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<sup>61</sup> Source: parfaitdream, “When was a time you experienced genuine kindness from a total stranger?” Reddit. AskReddit. 26 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y79qnreh>>.

and such, and I elected to call her from the counselor's office and check in.

“She was hiding at the coffee shop a few blocks from the school, in full panic mode. I was able to tell her how brave she is, how proud I was of her taking this step, and how I am here for her for support.

“I ended up going to pick her up, I gave her a big hug, and we went for a pretty long walk. I had told my admin what had happened, they were in full support of me stepping out for an undisclosed amount of time.

“We got her back to school after lunch, she sat with the counsellor and me. She met with us for a few weeks until she finally informed her family about her orientation.

It didn't go great, but it didn't go as bad as we thought. She is now a young scientist with a new partner. We connect for coffee from time to time.

“She wrote me a letter on her grad day that I still keep when I need a reminder that I am not a terrible person. It helps me cry when I need it.

“I am so happy to be a teacher (admin now), not because I teach science.

“I love being in education for human moments. Those moments are what life is about.

“For all you struggling students out there, you got more people in your corner than you think. It does get better. I've seen it myself.”

HardcoreHybrid commented, “Teachers like you are the best :).”<sup>62</sup>

### **“What’s a Meaningful Compliment You Received that Sticks with You, and What Made It Memorable?”**

1) UnderSleepingBaby wrote this:

“Before I had kids, I was a high school teacher, and I had a student who was having a really tough time. She’d slept with some guy whom she no longer liked, but she thought she needed to stick it out with him since she was no longer a virgin.

“I had a heart-to-heart with her and told her flat out that the whole virginity thing was bullsh[\*]t. I explained it a little bit and how adult men were not going to care how many partners she’d had. There was a lot more said, but I don’t remember the rest.

“In any case, after I finished, she told me I was going to make a great mom someday. I’d been told that before, but coming from this particular student it meant a lot.”

2) flowersonfire wrote, “I was at a local garden shop with my mother, and we were chatting with a woman who works there and who we’ve gotten to know quite well over the years. While my mother was speaking to her, she suddenly turned to me and said, ‘You’re so pretty,’ and that’s the first compliment I’ve received that felt so genuine that it touched me to my soul. That may be a bit vain of me, but I don’t think very highly of myself too often and it’s always touched me and made me smile to remember that moment.”

3) phoenixtears14 wrote this:

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<sup>62</sup> Source: SeaJay823, “Teachers of Reddit, what have your students accidentally sent to you, when they meant to submit an assignment?” Reddit. AskReddit. 27 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y96h4bft>>.

“When I was twelve, we were having some sort of family gathering and I was all dressed up. My uncle told me I was beautiful. There was something about the way he said it; it was the first time I remember feeling like someone truly meant it and wasn’t just saying it because I was family.

“One other compliment that always will stick out to me is ‘You’re really good at that’, said by my now husband, right after our first kiss. We were so tense and nervous and those were the first words out of his mouth when we pulled apart. It made me laugh and definitely broke the ice.”

4) T-Flexercise wrote this:

“I got an opportunity to do some contract work outside of my normal office, and one of my coworkers there was saying something about how much he really enjoys being surrounded by so many really skilled engineers. And I agreed, and said something about how refreshing it was to work with so many really smart people. And he just turned to me and said, ‘You know I mean you, too, right? You’re a rock star.’

“I dunno, it felt really good. Sometimes my normal coworkers treat me like they think I’m an idiot. And being in a situation where I feel like I’m doing a really good job and the people around me think I’m doing a really good job is really meaningful.”

5) TemporarilyAHotdog wrote this:

“I was at my favorite bar where I had walked up for a drink, and the person next to me started chatting me up, making me laugh. My favorite bartender turns around with a big smile of his face and says, ‘I knew it was you before I looked, as soon as I heard that giggle!’

“I have no idea why that stuck with me. Being recognized for something like my laugh? It was just sweet? It’s the

only place where I'm a regular, and it made me feel all that more welcomed? I don't know."<sup>63</sup>

### **“People Who have Ordered a Bar’s ‘Safeword’ Drink to Get Out of a Bad Situation, What was Your Date Like and How Did the Staff Help?”**

1) misspurplemonkiii wrote, “I had to use it when on a date off Tinder. We met up and he had already got me a drink just sat there (shot of something clear) and then said to me that I should do the shot and then he would take me somewhere better for more fun. I wasn't comfortable so excused myself to the bathroom and saw a poster that said [to] ask for Angela if you're uncomfortable. Went to the bar and asked for Angela and immediately this guy was playing along saying, ‘Oh, yeah, she's working in kitchen tonight.’ He got me a taxi and walked me out the back door and into the taxi to make sure I got there without any hassle. Never saw the guy again.”

2) Missfrulouf wrote this:

“My university town had the highest incidents of sexual assault for five years in a row, the school and community took it really seriously and implemented procedures all over the place.

“I asked my friend, who was a bouncer at my favourite bar/club, what happens when a girl orders the drink. He said it changes week to week in the ladies bathroom to confuse men when word gets out. You can use any of the former ones and the bartenders will jump into action.

“Generally they find a way to get you away from that person whether it be a ‘phone call’ or they need to show

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<sup>63</sup> Source: rkgk13, “What’s a meaningful compliment you received that sticks with you, and what made it memorable?” Reddit. AskWomen. 27 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y7m9qc78>>.

you something. Once you're out of eyesight, they whisk you away to the opposite floor of the place (bar is on the bottom, club is on the top) and keep the date occupied until you're gone. If he gets away from his 'company,' they radio that the drink got spilled and every bouncer abandons their post to try and keep him away from you.

"They escort you out the backdoor into a waiting cab. They pay the cabbie to take you home and make sure you're not followed. When you get home, they ask that you flick your front porch lights on and off and call the club to let them know you're safe. They also save the security cameras from that day in case you have need of it at a later date.

"I never used their service because my friends were the bouncers and usually intervened before I needed to say anything. My friends did, though, and they said it was a relief to be in a bar that took women's safety so seriously because in other bars in that town you could pay a bartender \$20 to spike a drink. I learned the hard way to never accept a glass from someone who had their open palm over the glass. Some people really suck."

3) neva-electra wrote, "I had a creep corner me in a bar once and tried to stroke my thigh. A dude I've never met before came up and said, 'Hey, sis, I've been looking all over for you!' Then he put his arm around me and walked me out. Thank you so much, stranger."

Brugor commented, "I once got hugged by a random girl sitting at a bar who whispered in my ear (or actually talked normally; the music was loud) 'pretend to be my boyfriend'. I grabbed her on the thigh and yelled, 'Honey, I've been lookin' for you!' The guy who hit on her gave me the sorry-had-no-idea-it-was-your-girl look, and then she asked me to dance. She pulled me into the crowd and we danced for like 30 seconds, and then she gave me a smile

and she left. Never saw her again but I felt like a f[\*\*]king hero. Very small thing I did, but I felt great.”

graywalrus commented:

“I had a similar situation in college. A creepy guy followed me around a frat party all night. He was in a history class with me, and all night he kept trying to push himself against me or stroke my hair and neck. I was backed into a corner by a door, and I grabbed the arm of the next guy that came through and asked him to pretend he was my boyfriend to escape. He played along, and he kept the creeper away from me for the rest of the night. So much appreciation for guys who are willing to help out on these situations.

“My fake boyfriend became my real boyfriend, and eight years later we are now married.”

4) durberville wrote, “Not exactly the question, but where I live we once had an epidemic of pick-up artists on every corner. There was this one guy who was incredibly persistent and wouldn’t take no for an answer. When I told him I had a boyfriend, he wouldn’t let me leave and said I had to give him one of my friends’ numbers. Thank god a kind girl noticed what was happening and came up to us while saying, ‘Well, there you are! We have been looking for you! Come on, let’s go. The show is going to start!’ She got me away from him, and I was so thankful. To anyone out there, please don’t ever do [what the creep did]. It’s such repulsive and scary behaviour.”

5) HRP\_3006 wrote, “I went out on my own one night and was having a few drinks at a local pub. I had just moved to the area so didn’t really know anyone. A guy sat down next to me and was chatting. At first it was just casual, but he eventually became really tipsy/handsy. Then the guy actually kissed me just out of the blue, and I told him I was

not ok with it. He said I was leading him on — which was not the case at all. He got angry and stormed off to the washroom. I was feeling really uncomfortable and unsafe. I didn't know my new neighbourhood yet. The bartender saw that I was feeling off right away — he didn't even know me but could tell. He asked if I wanted to be shown out the back door and if they could put me in a cab home so that I could go without the guy following me. They even paid — and apologized that I felt unsafe in their bar. I was totally blown away. I would totally go back there and feel completely taken care of.”

6) kati\_e\_ wrote this:

“Semi related, but I was out at the pub on campus for a show, and I had been there previously in the day celebrating our last exam with some friends. Some guy who was sitting at a table next to us and trying to chat us up earlier was still there with his buddies and was drunker and braver, and of course he got me alone when my friend went to the bathroom.

“He wouldn't stop talking to me and getting in my face and yelling about himself, and when I excused myself to go to the bar (literally was like ‘ok, bye’). He followed me to the bar and ordered the same thing as I did and offered to pay and I said I was good and he did not. stop. talking. And I must have looked mad as f[\*\*]k because the bartender walked over and went ‘Hey, you were here earlier right? Buddy, give us a second. I need to speak with her about her tab.’ The guy leaves and the bartender tells me I looked distressed and asked if everything was ok, I told him I was fine, but this guy was in my personal space and not leaving. So he said if he doesn't stop that I should come back and order a whiskey lemon and security would be notified, and he would walk me back to my car if I needed it.



“We ended up moving tables, and I think he got too drunk to stand up and left not too long after that, but I was so relieved to know the bartender was watching out. I’m not one for confrontation, and it just feels so much safer to be able to duck out with someone having my back.”

7) AnythingControversial wrote, “I’m going to ask at work tomorrow if we could install a safeword drink policy at the bar. That would be such a great idea.”

secondphase commented, “That’s the real win from this thread.”<sup>64</sup>

### **“What’s a Fond Memory You Have of a Person You Haven’t Talked to in Ages?”**

DoctorNato wrote, “My first friend at college was a girl who I became friends with literally due to my social awkwardness. We were both at orientation (day of introduction to college life and stuff, if anyone doesn’t know), where they took us to a local soccer game. We had snacks there, and there was a whole bunch of tables to sit at (there were a ton of us there that night), but since it was my first day and I didn’t go to the same high school that most everyone in the district had gone to, I did not know anyone. So there I was, standing there with my food, trying to find a place to sit that was separated from everyone else since I’m rather introverted. This girl walks up to me (she was super cute btw [by the way]), and says, ‘Hey, you want to come sit with me and my friends?’ Naturally I’m thankful but kind of terrified, but I agree and we walk back to her table where I sit down with her and her two other friends. Total ‘I bet you’re wondering how I found myself here’ situation

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<sup>64</sup> Source: PodoTheGreat, “People who have ordered a bars ‘safeword’ drink to get out of a bad situation, what was your date like and how did the staff help?” Reddit. AskReddit. 27 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yaf8wdve>>.

for me. The rest of that night was kind of uneventful after that, but over the course of our friendship she helped me a lot to loosen up and come out of my shell. We shared a writing class the next semester, and after every class we would walk to her dorm and talk about anything. I attribute my success in making friends at school almost entirely to her, because if she hadn't stepped up and invited me to share her table, I would have had a pretty sucky first day of school ... she got me to open up more and because of her I've made a lot more friends and grown significantly as a person."<sup>65</sup>

### **“What’s a Non-Obvious Sign that Someone is Poor/Low Income?”**

Palexander\_6 wrote this:

“Hygiene. The school I work at just turned one of the coaches’ locker rooms into a room for kids to take showers in.

“They come to school, one of us steals them for first period, they take a shower and are given some comfy clothes to hang out in while we wash and dry what they came to school in, they don’t want to wear a new outfit because other kids will know they changed. We pretend we’re taking them for speech therapy or something.

“One girl wears her dad’s old T-shirt’s that smell like men’s body order really badly. One student said that his parents let all their friends live with them so he doesn’t get to take a shower anymore because they all share the one bathroom. I took a sixteen-year-old girl to our hygiene supply closet and said she could take whatever she wanted.

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<sup>65</sup> Source: “What’s a fond memory you have of a person you haven’t talked to in ages?” Reddit. AskReddit. 27 October 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/y7e227m5>>.

She started sobbing: She never had deodorant or her own toothpaste.”

TV\_PartyTonight commented, “This is just a thing some schools do, if they can. I don’t know of any program. For me, when I was a kid, they let me come in and eat breakfast before school, because somehow they knew I wasn’t eating enough. I don’t remember how that came up actually.”

TheWhisperedthing commented, “In my school at least, if you qualified for free lunches you usually got offered free breakfast, too. Or, if you were a child you may have just said something about being hungry and struggled to focus before lunches because you’re hungry and it spurred from there. My teachers knew I was awful at sleeping due to some family issues and often sent me to the nurses for a nap.”

Alpinestarhero commented, “I grew up pretty not-well-off. Everything we had was hand-me-down: sofas, the TV, some clothes, tables, all sorts of things. My mum was a housewife, and she kept on top of cooking and cleaning and finances like some sort of demi-god. Everything was clean, everything was looked after, meals were balanced but cheap. Sure, we couldn’t afford fancy cars or holidays abroad (one time, my dad borrowed a big tent and we went camping for a week around different places in the south of the UK, it was brilliant).”<sup>66</sup>

### **“When is the Last Time You Honestly Evaluated a Moral/Ethical Position You Hold, and Ended Up Changing that Position?”**

1) SweetTeaBags wrote this:

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<sup>66</sup> Source: 12345burrito, “What’s a non-obvious sign that someone is poor/low income?” Reddit. AskReddit. <https://tinyurl.com/yd4b3dgv>.

“I used to work at a jail earlier this year, and I went in ready to kick some doors down, like I was ready to tackle someone. Only when I started running dorms by myself did I realize how horrible my ethics were. Not all inmates are evil, and drug addictions are a terrible thing. Watching someone withdraw and people younger than I having seizures from drugs were some of the most horrifying things to witness. I worked in Kentucky. and their rehabilitation services are terrible. Made me really appreciate my bf [boyfriend] majoring in social work to help drug addicts, vets particularly. It also made me realize that job wasn’t for me. I’m too empathetic.

“Really the only people I ever had an issue with were the thieves.

“So yes, my position did change thanks to that job. I’m definitely an advocate for better drug-rehabilitation services because what we’re doing is clearly not working.”

2) Shaematoma wrote this:

“Maybe not the last time, but this one is my favourite:

I was maybe six or seven, and my parents and I were playing the game of Life. I landed on the got married spot, and mom asks if I want to marry a boy or girl. My response was ‘Ew! A boy! I can’t marry a girl! I’m a girl! That’s gross!’ My mom answered, ‘Well, you know, grandma is marrying a girl.’ (My grandma came out very late in life, and a few weeks before this got engaged to her now wife.)

“What was my response?

“‘Oh ... okay, grandma’s not gross, so I guess it isn’t gross. I still want a boy, though.’

“Just like that. I’m embarrassed I thought that way in the first place, but I’m glad it took that little effort to change my opinion.”

3) yesnogoodybye wrote, “I’m a leftist who has grown to really deplore a lot of the behavior associated with social-justice culture. I’ve really flipped in respect to the widespread practice of public shaming in particular. I think there are occasions when it’s called for, like when the person being shamed is so immunized from consequences by their own wealth, power, and influence that there’s no other way for regular civilians to hold them accountable. But the practice of ordinary internet denizens digging up ‘receipts’ on each other to prove so-and-so said something problematic in 2008 is at best unproductive and at worst actively harmful. If we don’t allow people the luxury of evolving beyond their past mistakes, what impetus do any of us have to be better people?”

harmonyineverything commented, “Same. There is so much weird moral posturing and virtue signaling that goes in ‘progressive’ communities with little actual kindness. I’m still generally lefty as f[\*\*]k, but I am really, really done with sj [social justice] culture and common activist spaces.”

Yesnogoodybye responded, “The lack of kindness that leftists and especially ‘allies’ of various stripes show toward each other is one of my biggest pet peeves with those sorts of communities. So many people seem to think only they have noble intentions and everyone else is acting in bad faith or with self-serving motives. And the lack of humility and gracelessness with which people address each other’s mistakes is staggering. If you don’t give newcomers some room to f[\*\*]k up without dogpiling on them, people are never going to learn and they’re going to quit giving a sh[\*]t about your cause.”

4) Aleriya wrote, “I’ve spent most of my adult life voting third party, believing that you should vote for the candidate who most closely represents your ideals. Now I vote for whoever is most likely to defeat the Republicans. I’m not 100% on board with Team Democrat yet, but I’m willing to prioritize pragmatism over idealism.”<sup>67</sup>

**“What is a Small Thing that You Deliberately and Consistently Do in the Hopes of Positively Affecting Someone Else’s Life?”**

1) PawleaseImPurrfect wrote, “I used to have a Deviantart account dedicated to giving compliments to people (mostly young kids, I’m guessing) posting admittedly not very good artwork in the ‘new’ section. I now do it in the Instagram artwork tags. I do it because I remember when I was a young artist online and people leaving positive feedback really encouraged me to keep drawing and keep improving.”

DaydreamerFly commented, “This is so beautiful. [...] on Instagram [...] occasionally I get comments that I suspect have an intention like this tbh [to be honest], but it’s very encouraging regardless.”

2) Firetop12 wrote, “I’m a teacher, and if a student asks, I let them stay in my room during lunch. I let them do what they want, such as watch Netflix, eat (which isn’t allowed in classrooms), use their phone. I know how stressful the lunch room was for me, so I hope they realize my classroom is a safe space.”

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<sup>67</sup> Source: u/0129387456, “When is the last time you honestly evaluated a moral/ethical position you hold, and ended up changing that position?” Reddit. AskReddit. 29 October 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y86dclhe>>.

AnalyzePhish commented, “My ex told me she used to eat in the library alone. I was surprised because she was/is a beautiful wonderful human being, but she was ostracized in high school. I’m glad these comfortable spaces exist and people like you are out there and understand.”

TallulahandHula33 commented, “I am in my 30’s and the memories of my crippling social anxiety in the lunchroom forcing me to spend lunch period crying in a bathroom stall in high school are right beneath the surface. It would have been such a blessing for me to have a teacher do that. Thank you so much for being awesome!”

3) Dropposition wrote, “After a winter storm, I shovel every sidewalk and driveway on my block, especially for the older folks, and then check exercise off my to-do list.”

4) ILoveWashingtonRain wrote this:

“I always bring up if someone undercharges me at a store. Once, I was picking up some beef jerky for my dad and some cheese for me at a butcher shop and the lady accidentally charged me 10 bucks less. Got out to my car, realized it, went back in, and told her.

“I got a free beef stick from her for my honesty. I’m a vegetarian, haha.”

5) low\_penalty wrote this:

“I read to my kids every night.

“A little while ago I got an unexpected 400 dollars. Me and wife decided to invest it. I bought piles of new books for my kids. Pretty sure this is the best investment I have ever made.”

Dirtysecretsofmine commented, “This makes me happy for your kids. Books are always a good investment. Even when the kids get older and outgrow them the books could be

donated to the local Domestic Violence shelter or Children's Hospital for the kids who need an escape from reality, which is the best part of reading. From a random book lover, you're awesome parents for gifting your kids the love of reading."

6) ClipIn wrote this:

"I wave at kids from the fire truck when we're returning from a call. I learned this from my Lieutenant who waves like a crazy person: I finally asked and he said it always made his day as a kid when firemen waved back. I started doing the same. Kids seem to love it.

"On calls, I'll squat down to their eye level, ask their name, smile, tell them why it's going to be ok. If we have the time after and they've asked to see the truck (or clearly want to but are too afraid to ask), I'll show them our tools and let them climb inside."<sup>68</sup>

### **"What is the Kindest Thing a Total Stranger has Done for You?"**

1) timelesstaxi wrote this:

"I got into a pretty bad car wreck when I was 19 and was alone and scared. The cop dropped me off at a gas station, so I didn't have to wait for my parents to come get me on the side of the interstate.

"A kind lady came over and asked me if I was all right. She gave me directions and drew me a map to the local tow yard (I had the tow yard name and street from the cop). She

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<sup>68</sup> Source: Mr\_Pint, "What is a small thing that you deliberately and consistently do in the hopes of positively affecting someone else's life?" Reddit. AskReddit. 1 November 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/y7d3alu7>>.



helped me calm down and gave me water and waited close to an hour until my parents picked me up.

“I’ll never forget her kindness. I think of her often, and I hope she remembers what she did helped so much in my time of shock.”

neverforgedit commented:

“That was actually very thoughtful of the cop to move you. LPT [Life Pro Tip]: If you’re ever in an accident at night on the freeway, wait on the other side of that concrete barrier. Intoxicated people (and other distracted drivers) tend to crash into accidents and stopped vehicles.

“I know a police officer who said the worst accident he ever saw was when a young girl got in a minor accident on the freeway. She called her mom to say she was in an accident and was okay, and she waited there by her car for her mom to come get her. While she was waiting, she was hit by an intoxicated driver and killed. When her mother arrived, she was told her daughter was killed and she refused to believe it, saying, ‘She just called me and said she was okay.’ Absolutely heartbreaking.”

loldradams commented, “When I was a kid, I was in a small car wreck with my grandma in a fairly big city. (I was from a small town.) I was freaking out a little, and we had to wait an hour for my parents to come get us. The only place open nearby was a bar so we went inside to sit instead of waiting on the side of the street. They gave me a free root beer, which was my favorite drink at the time. That small act of kindness turned a frightening experience into a fun one for little-kid me and I still remember it.”

2) apollodeen wrote this:

“This is going to sound really backwards, but someone once stole my stolen food and it saved my life.

“When I first started college, I was young, broke, and stupid.

“I was attending an art college my family couldn’t afford, and I was working day and night to make sure it worked out.

“One night I was starving, was completely out of money, and had to be up all night to work on homework.

“I went to the local grocery store, grabbed a plastic bag, and proceeded to pick out several items to steal in order to eat and walk out as if I’d already paid.

“It turned out this grocery store experienced RAMPANT theft as opposed to the suburban grocery store I was used to. No one would’ve looked twice at my old place.

“The security guard immediately trotted out and asked me to come back in with him. Yes, I did steal, but I still had a polite nature and obliged.

“The security guard proceeded to place my groceries in the ice bag cooler by the exit and call the cops. He asked me for a receipt, which I was unable to produce.

“Meanwhile a heavy homeless contingent was hanging out and just making a place to hang at this 24-hour grocery store because ... why not.

“As I’m standing there, exhausted, broke, and busted, it’s slowly dawning on me that I, who had never committed a crime before, who was trying to be good and make an impossible situation work, was about to be thrown in JAIL.

“The police finally arrive, I’m numb with fear. As the security guard goes to over to show the groceries I had in fact stolen to the cops as evidence, he suddenly realizes it is gone.

“One of the homeless men had stolen the bags right behind the security guard’s back.

“I was let go, and still to this day cannot believe my impossible luck. I have not nor will ever steal again.

“Thank you, kind homeless stranger who helped me not go to jail that night, devastating my parents.”

3) themorporkian wrote, “I got lost in Holland, totally didn’t know where my stop was. Kind bus driver finished his last route of the shift and drove me directly to my destination.”

puddle-land commented, “I had a similar experience. I was on my way home from a party and my phone had died, it was late, dark out and there was a very heavy rainfall. I missed my turning (because of road works and because I couldn’t for the life of me see anything), so I figured if I keep in the same direction I’ll find my way again. Wrong. I had driven about an hour in the wrong direction down all these small country lanes trying to find a slip road [a road that drivers use to drive on and off a highway] to the motorway. Starting to panic, I pulled into the first open shop I saw, which happened to be a fish and chip shop and asked the ladies if they could point me in the direction of my hometown. They hadn’t even heard of it — major bad sign right there — and similarly I hadn’t heard of the small village in which I found myself completely lost. There was a man in the chippy [restaurant where you can buy fish and chips] buying his tea who had overheard my conversation and took pity on my plight and tried to draw me a map but the route was complicated and said it best if he took me as it was a short cut and would very likely get lost on my own, it was only a 10-minute journey and he really didn’t mind. So I was following him in my car down all these small country lanes in the pitch black and the 10 minutes passed and then another, and another, 30 minutes in and he

indicates to pull into a garage. He must have sensed that I would be scared as he approached my car cautiously and kept a distance and told me to take the next left onto the motorway and I would know my way from there. I didn't get much of a chance to thank him because I was feeling quite scared and emotional. But truth to word he had driven me right to the motorway slip road. The next day, overwhelmed and grateful I tried to track him down so I retraced my steps on Google Maps until I found the chip shop and googled their number. I recounted my story to the owner, and they remembered me. I said I was trying to track him down to thank him and asked if I could leave some money with them to pay for his next meal but they said he wasn't a regular customer and they didn't know who he was but that THEY had gave him a free meal when he returned. So this kind-hearted stranger drove an hour out of his way just so that I could get home ... his kindness is something that will stick with me forever."

4) MrsoneZone wrote this:

"Four months ago, I got the call at work that 'something was wrong' with my stepdad, who raised me. I walked outside to follow up, as nobody would give me details while I was at work. Found out he had killed himself. I fell onto the sidewalk and sobbed and sobbed. Honestly I barely remember it, besides the feeling of being unable to breathe or move. What I do remember is a beautiful stranger picking me up off the sidewalk and half carrying/half walking me back into the building so I could get myself together and collect my things so I could go home. It turns out she works in my building (there's probably close to a thousand people, and we work in different departments, plus I'd been there only five weeks, so we'd never met before), so I eventually found out her name and wrote her a thank you note, but no note will ever

adequately express how grateful I am that she picked me up off the sidewalk that day.

“Edited to add another related encounter two months later. My camera bag (my wallet was in it, too) fell out of the back of my SUV [SubUrban Vehicle] when the trunk didn’t latch properly as we were leaving the Cape May, NJ beach. In the camera was the SD card [memory card] with the only copies of the last photos of my son and my stepdad when he visited for my son’s second birthday six weeks before his death. A stranger returned it to the police station with free boardwalk tram passes and a little note.

“My stepdad was one of the kindest, most compassionate, and generous people in the world. These experiences at least made me feel like there are still people out there with a soul like his.”

Lamireille commented, “I’m truly sorry for your loss, and for the pain he was in that led him to do that. You must miss him so much. Your loving words about him are a wonderful tribute to him, and now we all know what a good person he was.”

MrsToneZone replied, “I miss him every single day. Luckily, he lived his life as one of the happiest, most hopeful, and optimistic people on the planet. I think anyone who knew him would say the same. He had experienced a lot of loss and trauma, but always found some way to stay upbeat and positive. His last year was particularly tough, and we’ll never know why he did it, or why that single year of struggles broke his spirit, but I’m confident that he didn’t live a life of suffering, and for that, I’m eternally grateful. Thank you for your kind words.”

5) Jaynezzy wrote, “My family had a tradition of spending Christmas Eve with my dad’s side of the family, and Christmas Day with my mom’s side of the family. For quite

a few of the Christmas Eve parties, a man I didn't know would wander around with a old camcorder, and talk to people. He was a friend of other people in the family, but I had no idea who it was. Several years later, after both my mother and grandmother had passed away, he handed us all a copy on DVD of his Christmas videos, edited together as a thank you for inviting him every year. It was about the nicest gift I've ever gotten, as it's the only video footage I have of them left, and it was from a total stranger.”<sup>69</sup>

**“They Say Character is What You Do When You Think Nobody is Watching. What are Some Things You’ve Seen People Do When They Thought Nobody was Watching (Wholesome Or Not)?”**

Mixfortune wrote, “My family grew up really poor. Food and money were hard to come by. Stress was plentiful. My dad did the best he could to provide for us, but that didn't stop him from crying behind closed doors when he thought his children weren't home or were far enough away not to notice. My little sister had made a little bit of money babysitting, just a couple bucks, but I saw her putting it into my dad's wallet one day. She never said anything about it. Never told my folks. Just did something good and kept quiet. Her actions helped contribute to me just wanting to do good even if I'm not recognized for it.”

Mixfortune added, “Kids really are the best. :) My little guy is two now and sometimes we get a small pack of M&Ms to share between us for family night or something. He generally takes one at a time, puts one to my mouth, and then takes one for himself. Doesn't matter how bad my day or how rude a customer was or just life's tough moments in

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<sup>69</sup> Source: [Name Censored], “What is the kindest thing a total stranger has done for you?” Reddit. AskReddit. 3 November 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ybfiw52p>>.

general, when my son smiles and hugs me or does something as simple as giving me an M&M first much of my stress just melts away.”<sup>70</sup>

### **“Men of Reddit, What is that One Compliment You Got that You’ll Never Forget?”**

1) Rockies14 wrote this:

“Some little girl in a cart, in a grocery store, once said, ‘He’s pretty,’ about me, to her mother. I could hear her mother telling her, ‘That’s not what we say to boys.’

“I didn’t bother to say anything, but I would’ve told her that it’s ok to call anyone pretty.”

PunnyBanana commented, “Considering children are notoriously, brutally honest, you must be gorgeous.”

2) expertofwombats wrote, “Delivered a pizza to two drunk chicks, and as I was walking away they yelled that I should turn the AC [air conditioning] on in my car. I turned around just as one yelled, ‘CAUSE YOU’RE LOOKIN PRETTY HOT,’ as she slammed the door. That was a good day.”

3) Edgarbc9411 wrote, “Once, a blind girl whom I helped to arrive at her place told me that she could feel my very good vibes and she was comfortable walking with me because of that. I won’t forget that.”

4) glory\_of\_dawn wrote this:

“A girl I worked with once asked if I could give her a ride home because her ride wasn’t able to pick her up. I did, and I asked her out to dinner, which she agreed to. While we

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<sup>70</sup> Source: EClaire468, “They say character is what you do when you think nobody is watching. What are some things you’ve seen people do when they thought nobody was watching (wholesome or not)?” Reddit. AskReddit. 4 November 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yeh24kkg>>.

were at dinner, she confessed, ‘I didn’t actually need a ride home. I just wanted a ride from a cute guy.’

“I was riding that compliment for months.”

5) RandomRedditor 1916 wrote this:

“On a night out, I had a girl tell me I looked like Waldo, then proceeded to flirt with me.

“11/10 the funniest compliment I’ve ever received.”

Mrkatov commented, “I once won a costume contest by telling everyone I was coming as Waldo and then not showing up. It was awesome.”<sup>71</sup>

### **“What are Some Acts of Kindness You Do Around the Holidays?”**

1) Scubaboom wrote this:

“My grandma throws this huge party every year. We really are blessed with a good life and amazing giant family and she feels we need to share that. She’s somewhat of a celebrity in my hometown. Not in a like red-carpet way but everywhere we go she knows everyone and they all consider her a friend.

“She finds people who don’t have a family on Christmas, or who can’t afford presents for their kids, and she invites them to this party.

“She’s had the same Santa impersonator for like 12 years. The guy is a professional. Amazing suit, GIANT sack of presents. And every year he has one for every single kid at the party despite there being more every year. That’s

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<sup>71</sup> Source: MostarRed, “Men of reddit, what is that one compliment you got that you’ll never forget?” Reddit. AskReddit. 6 November 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yauwwvjy>>.



because their parents give us a little bio on them and a week or so before Christmas my grandma and I go out shopping and buy them all presents. Nothing insane like iPads or something but if the kid likes science I get him some chemistry sets or if he likes cars I get him a hot wheels track and by the end of the day we spend probably a few hundred dollars.

“Nothing in this world beats some little kid who recently lost a parent or isn’t expecting a Christmas present, sadly looking at Santa then hearing their name get called. I’m a 22-year-old man, and I still cry like every Christmas because of how beautiful it is honestly. And Santa has this book we write down for him on every kid. Things they do well and things they need to work on and how proud their parents are of them.

“I f[\*\*]king love Christmas, man.”

2) g-a-r-n-e-t wrote, “Because I live by myself and don’t really see a point in cooking a sh[\*]t-ton of food for one person, I usually get something delivered and then give the delivery driver a ridiculously large tip, usually in the range of \$150-\$200 depending on what I can afford that year. It blows that people have to work on Thanksgiving and Christmas, so I may as well make someone’s day.”

AyeBB8 commented, “Someone did something like this for my coworkers and I last year. We worked Christmas morning at McDonald’s (never again), and some guy came through the drive through, got one coffee, and gave everyone working \$20. He had just a huge stack of 20s for everybody. Made our day.”<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> Source: gvxo, “What are some acts of kindness you do around the holidays?” Reddit. AskWomen. 7 November 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/yd49jw68>>.

## **“What Teacher in School Made the Most Impact on You and Why?”**

Mogilny89Leafs wrote this:

“My favourite teacher ever is my grade 12 English teacher. She genuinely cared about her students and made class fun.

“I remember I was out sick for several weeks and missed our Shakespeare essay due date. Once I was back at school, she stayed after class for about a week to help me work through it. She was also very pregnant at the time and lived about an hour away. Also, this was wintertime in Canada, so I imagine the roads weren’t in the best shape.

“Speaking of winter, I guess now would be a good time to reveal that I’m disabled and have great trouble walking. I can do it, but it gets dicey sometimes, especially in winter.

“The football team had a game in late October, and the weather was just awful. Blowing slow, piles of snow everywhere, icy conditions, and it was cold as sh[\*]t. I love football and was at every one of the team’s games from about the 4th grade on, but I feared I might have to miss this one. I could usually get to the games myself, the field was just a short walk from the school, but I wasn’t risking going out there in these conditions. My friends I am sure would have helped out, but they were all on the team and had to warm up and get dressed or whatever.

“My teacher heard about my situation, and offered to help me out to the field, sit with me at the game and drive me home after. I only lived about a block from school, but again, conditions were awful.

“So we got our snowsuits on and began the trek out to the field. She also helped get my jacket on, but I have a story about that later.

“We walked out to the field, she was holding my left hand (which is dead due to cerebral palsy) while I’m pecking at the ground with my cane in my right, trying to make progress.

“We got there and had a good time, learning more about each other outside of school. I’m guessing she knew a lot about me already, as I always trusted and confided in her. After, we drove home and I’m guessing she didn’t get home until 7-8 that night. All because I wanted to go watch the football team.

“She would also help me with my jacket at the end of each day senior year and help me pack my homework.

“My last class each day senior year was also gym class. My gym teachers were great, too. They were always making sure to include me in the games.

“I’d always leave class a few minutes early to beat the rush of students as they poured out of rooms at the end of the day.

“She told me, ‘You come to my room after gym. I’ll help with your jacket and backpack.’

“The thing was, she was teaching another class at the time. I’d walk into the room as quietly as possible not wanting to interrupt, but she’d always spot me and come help me get ready while lecturing.

“I tried many a time to say, ‘You know, you can finish teaching. I can wait.’

“She never would. ‘No, no, you need to get going,’ she’d say.

“She also made sure a staircase was built so I could get up on stage for graduation and that I was seated near the front so I wasn’t trying to dodge chairs.

“Honestly, this woman was/is probably the best person ever. A lot of teachers don’t ‘get’ disabilities. But she did and she did her best to — I don’t know if this is the proper word for this — adjust to my situation. She went above and beyond anything I could have asked for.

“The last time I was ever in that school was my last day of high school. I walked to my desk to gather any leftover belongings, which she of course helped gather. I was all packed and ready to go, and she wrapped me in a hug.

“‘I’ll miss you,’ she said.

“‘Thank you for everything,’ I said.

“I walked out fighting back tears.”<sup>73</sup>

**“[Serious] Financially Struggling Parents of Reddit Who have Children that Still Believe in Santa: How Do You Explain the Differences in Gifts that Your Children Receive Versus What Some of Their Friends or Classmates may Get?”**

1) qqeen-ell wrote this:

“We tell ours that while Santa buys and brings the presents, we have to give him money to go towards the costs (reindeer travel and food/ elf wages, etc., etc.) and that’s why some little boys and girls get a bit more.

“Thankfully ours aren’t old enough to have reached that age where they evaluate things on cost or number of presents. But we’ll cross that bridge when we come to it.”

2) lokiswolf wrote, “Until she was four years old, it was no big deal — she never noticed. When she was five, she

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<sup>73</sup> Source: BasX, “What teacher in school made the most impact on you and why?” Reddit. AskReddit. 13 November 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/y8e2cw6h>>.

asked, but the very complex ‘my friends told me Santa isn’t real, and that you get me all the presents from Santa, is that true?’ I had to tell her that Santa wasn’t a real person. I explained that Santa was a concept made up by adults so that they could give you presents anonymously. That we shouldn’t spoil the surprise to the other children who still believed, because as a concept Santa was very important, because adults liked to give presents but we didn’t always want the person to know we were giving them something. I told her that the real spirit of Christmas isn’t the presents, it’s everyone getting to see and share things with people that they don’t get to see all year. I explained that since I don’t have a lot of money, she doesn’t get what the other kids get. I swear, she made me cry right in front of her when she said, ‘It’s ok, Mommy, getting me a present doesn’t mean you love me more. Santa got Kaitlyn an American Girl Doll, but Santa isn’t real, so Kaitlyn’s mom really got it for her. She yells at her all the time so I think you love me more. I don’t need an American Girl doll.’”

3) ajokestheresomewhere wrote this:

“The story that we were told was that Santa really gave each kid only one gift, but some families bought more because they could afford more. And some families couldn’t even afford to keep that one gift and need food instead.

“They also explained that some kids had aunts and uncles without kids who would buy them gifts.

“I was pretty young when I found out about the Santa deal, but I had younger siblings.

“My parents were very poor, but managed to get us each a gift, AND donated at least one gift to ‘the poor’ of our community (because they felt that we were middle class).”

4) noopibean wrote this:

“Santa had to start skipping my house when I was little, or coming a few days late, depending on when Mom got paid. I’ll admit it was sad to me the first year, but the older I got the more I hated that Mom felt like she needed to go broke for Christmas.

“Once the child is old enough to notice discrepancies in Santa’s gift-giving, it’s probably time to come clean.”

5) merry\_pippins wrote this:

“I’m not really financially struggling on a day-to-day basis, but as a single mom, coming up with a big pile of presents isn’t easy, and it turns my kid into a Materialistic Asking Machine. We also don’t do Santa (my family was religious, so it was more about the Christ part of Christmas) so it’s not hiding anything from him.

“I do, however, say that ‘Jesus got only three presents, so we’re going to do that, too’. Also, none of the presents are clothes or things kids would think are lame.... My job as his parent is to make sure he has clothes, right? So that’s not a gift (maybe when he’s older and really into fashion).

“I also started hiding the last present and making it a treasure hunt, which is really fun. I found a cool treasure chest and fill it with a bunch of cash and candy (last year it was about \$20 in one-dollar bills) and he thinks that is amazing.”

6) juarez31 wrote, “My nine-year-old asked me if Santa was real this morning. I told her there was a real Saint Nicholas. And then I asked her what she believed. She said she believed in Santa but knew that we are his helpers and buy the gifts. I said for something like this, all that matters is what you believe in. She went away smiling. She also knows that she may not get many gifts for Christmas and

realizes that she gets things throughout the year. She also asks to donate toys to families that are less fortunate.”<sup>74</sup>

### **“Adults of Reddit, What are Some Christmas Gifts You Gave to Your Mom that They REALLY Liked?”**

1) RainWelsh wrote this:

“My mother saw this ring once years ago — white, yellow and red Clogau gold oak leaves, wound round into a ring. Really tiny, detailed leaves, gorgeous. She couldn’t afford it at the time, saved up for it, and when she went back it had been discontinued. This was about seven years ago.

“Last year she realised it was on sale again, and again couldn’t afford it herself. So me, my sister, and my brother-in-law clubbed together to get it for her. She shouted at us for spending so much on her, but she also cried like a baby and hasn’t taken it off since.”

2) nicomar1216 wrote, “I had a baby on my mom’s birthday one year.... That was a hit.”

3) nothingweasel wrote, “One time, when I was super broke and couldn’t afford to travel to where my parents were living, I made it happen. A friend was passing through my town and I hitched a ride, then used a complicated series of rides and couches from other friends to stay away from my parents’ house until my mom was at work and I’d had a chance to get a few hours of sleep. I knew when she went to lunch every day so about five minutes beforehand, a friend and I walked into my mom’s office to take her out

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<sup>74</sup> Source: PhilipLiptonSchrute, “[Serious] Financially struggling parents of Reddit who have children that still believe in Santa: How do you explain the differences in gifts that your children receive vs what some of their friends or classmates may get?” Reddit. AskReddit. 12 November 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y8nrha24>>.

to lunch. She bawled. We all cried. It was one of the best moments I've had with my mom. I miss her.”

4) awallpapergirl wrote this:

“My mother loves perfume. Sometimes not even to wear, she just likes having scents at hand. Smells that remind her of childhood, smells that remind her of sunny days.

“I work for a company that has a very large line of naturally sourced perfumes. Over the previous year I stockpiled every free type I got — solid perfumes, spray bottles, dropper bottles — and sent around thirty to her in one go. She was over the moon. I get messages nearly monthly about new aspects she noticed in their scent, or what she now associates them with.”<sup>75</sup>

### **“Teachers of Reddit, Who are Your Most Memorable Students?”**

1) totallytittastic wrote this:

“I was an ESL [English as a Second Language] teacher in Taiwan for three years. I had a class of nine-, 12- to 14-year-old boys. All were a little standoffish to me in the beginning and took a lot of coaxing and games to get them outta their shell. My last day one of the students whom I truly thought didn't give a f[\*\*]k about me or my leaving wrote me a letter. At the end he had obviously translated a well-known phrase from Chinese into English for me. It said, ‘There are no never-ending feasts.’ Perplexed, but grateful that he wrote something at all I went to the office to ask me boss what that meant ... my boss said the student

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<sup>75</sup> Source: illini, “Adults of reddit, what are some Christmas gifts you gave to your mom that they REALLY liked?” Reddit. AskReddit. 14 November 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y8c42mqh>>.



who wrote it must have the utmost respect for me. It said, 'All good things must come to an end.'

"I cried and made sure they all got candy before I left!"

2) mattyreaver162 wrote this:

"I was doing my teacher training in a performing arts college. Specifically working with the students on their vocal work / stage presence / confidence. I had one student who was terrified of singing in front of anyone other than me her family and a couple of other people. Performing in front of the hundred-plus who would show up to their first recitals was simply never going to happen.

"I tried a few techniques with her. A song she knows without thinking about it. A difficult one she has to concentrate to perform so she's less focused on the room. The breakthrough came with something that happened to me in college when I had the same thing.

"My tutor stood me facing a wall and had me perform. Over the course of the track, he brought in as many of the other students in the college he could find in the vicinity of the room I was in. After I finished, she'd he told me to turn round and I was presented with about 70-80 students, all standing and smiling at me.

"I did this with her [my student]. I managed to get everyone in that building into the room: students, other tutors, cleaners, and everything in between.

"She finishes and turned round. She saw them all and said sheepishly, 'How long have they been here?' I said, 'Some before you started, but everyone has heard you now.' She sat down on the floor and took a moment to think. Then she stood up told me to put the music in again and did it again. Facing everyone.

“When they’d all gone, she asked if I had a moment. She said, ‘Thank you,’ gave me a quick hug, and said she’s been looking at ways to get over her confidence issues for years. And I’d done it in an afternoon.

“She’s doing really well now. She didn’t pursue music, but she did pursue dance and she’s now in a ballet troupe and is doing shows all over the country while they train her to be world class. Everytime there’s a show in our home city, two tickets get sent to me. She’s a lovely young lady. I’m immensely proud of her.”<sup>76</sup>

### **“Redditors Working for Insurance Companies, What’s the Most Heartbreaking Claim You’ve Been Forced to Deny?”**

KYtransplatinFL wrote this:

“Not a claim but authorization for a four-year-old’s chemo due to nonpayment of premium. However, their premium had been paid.

“It was first year of the Affordable Care Act, aka Obamacare, and the company I worked for had rolled out a new computer platform for the marketplace insurances. Payment system stayed on old platform, but the two didn’t communicate for probably a good six months. If there was a problem, i.e. we could see a payment in system but it didn’t apply on main platform causing account to cancel, we were to ‘bucket’ it. However, I had issues bucketed for months with no resolution. When I had this case of this little girl, I said no more. My supervisor told me to bucket it. I disobeyed and started emailing people I’d seen on email chains (no clue of their position) and within two

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<sup>76</sup> Source: ActualMoon, “Teachers of reddit, who are your most memorable students?” Reddit. AskReddit. 14 November 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y71786ll>>.

hours I was called to my supervisor's office. He asked if I went above his head on this issue; figuring I was about to be fired, I said that yes, I had. He said, 'Good. I would have done same thing if I were you.'

"The little girl had her plan reinstated and chemo approved the same day."<sup>77</sup>

**“What’s the Most Profound Statement You’ve Heard that is Extremely Simple and Uncomplicated Yet Helped You the Most in Life?”**

1) Amplifiedsoul wrote this:

“My daughter was about two. She wanted me to play Barbie dolls with her. I said, ‘I don’t want to play Barbie. I’m a boy.’ Her response was very wise and profound for her age.

“‘You’re not a boy, you’re a daddy.’

“I now play many things with her and let her do my nails.”

2) DarthContinent wrote this:

“*Acknowledge, move on.*’

“From a McDonald’s TV ad of all places. Just a way to keep myself centered and not dwell on things not worth dwelling upon.”

3) DrProfessorElizabutt wrote, “Recently I heard someone say, ‘Exercise because you love your body, not because you hate your body.’ I’ve been exercising and eating healthy for a long time, but I definitely struggle with body

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<sup>77</sup> Source: SpenserTrilby, “Redditors working for insurance companies, what’s the most heartbreaking claim you’ve been forced to deny?” Reddit. AskReddit. 17 November 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yb4y38ez>>.

dysmorphia and hearing that kind of made me realize that I should change the way I think about things.”

4) I\_Can\_Not\_With\_You wrote,

“Never half-[\*]ss two things. Whole-[\*]ss one thing instead.”

5) arachno10 wrote, “Don’t fetishize your own sadness.”  
— Bojack Horseman.

6) Drew326 wrote, “Comparison is the thief of all joy.”<sup>78</sup>

### **“Who is Someone Everyone Seems to Hate, But is Actually a Really Good Person?”**

PaperIcarus wrote this:

“Pitbull.

“There was a contest some years ago, sponsored by Walmart, where Pitbull would come perform in whichever city got the most votes on Facebook. As a result of a prank, the winning city was Kodiak, Alaska, home to the most remote Walmart in the United States. Pitbull, being the stand-up guy that he is, was a good sport about the whole thing and flew up to Alaska to do the concert for a crowd of a few hundred people.”

Shawnglade commented, “Can confirm, I live in Kodiak and go to that Walmart nearly daily. It was a huge thing

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<sup>78</sup> Source: BlackEyedBroad, “What’s the most profound statement you’ve heard, that is extremely simple and uncomplicated yet helped you the most in life?” Reddit. AskReddit. 17 November 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/y72c3sbs>>.

here, and I actually can't believe he came and performed and whatnot. Instant Pitbull fan.”<sup>79</sup>

### **“What is the Most Badass Thing You Ever Did?”**

1) Zahhibb wrote this:

“When I was 15 years old, I pulled a dude off a train track and kept him from being run over by a train.

“There was me and a drunk dude late at night waiting for the train in my hometown, and I saw him stumbling around close to the tracks and then he just fell on the tracks. I shouted a few times to him if he was okay but there was no response or movement, and just a few seconds later I see in the distance a train is coming, though not a train that is going to stop at this station so it is coming real fast. I didn't really have a lot of time to think so I ran over, jumped down onto the tracks and, hauled the guy from the tracks maybe just three seconds before the train zoomed by.

“It was super scary and I still have some bad dreams about this, but I am also proud that I acted during that moment.”

Nom\_of\_your\_business commented:

“Glad you went for it, bud!

“I had something similar happen about the same age. We had a homeless dude buy up some Olympia [beer] for us. He was already pretty sauced up. Crossing the tracks with a train coming a bit away, he trips on one rail and lands face first into the second. Out cold! My buddies had to grab him and drag him off. Not such a close call, but if they would have stopped to think about it he would not have made it —

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<sup>79</sup> Source: LateRegistrationz, “Who is someone everyone seems to hate, but is actually a really good person?” Reddit. AskReddit. 20 November 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y92fk8kh>>.

the train was not going to stop in time. A couple other guys and I were up just far enough ahead that we wouldn't have been able to make it back in time. Glad those guys were bullsh[\*]tting with the guy or we all would have witnessed something terrible.”

2) TheNoob950 wrote, “This was a year ago [2017]. I was at a giant flea market with my family. It was crowded as f[\*\*]k. Now, I have a little brother, he was nine at the time, and I was 17. We were walking along, and then suddenly I couldn't see him anymore. There was a path to our left and on gut instinct I sprinted down it, and I saw him being dragged along by this homeless-looking f[\*\*]ker. I grabbed his hand and pulled him from the homeless dude, and in one motion the guy swung around with a knife. Now, I'm not gonna lie and say I was ready or I wasn't scared or some other bullsh[\*]t. I very nearly shat my pants in fear. Here's the bad[\*]ss part. The guy brings the knife down to stab my little bro, and in the quickest reaction to anything I've ever had I block the knife with my forearm, or, more accurately, catch it with my forearm. The guy bolted and I didn't chase him. I still have the scar and the knife.”<sup>80</sup>

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<sup>80</sup> Source: KSidG, “What is the most badass thing you ever did?”  
Reddit. AskReddit. 20 November 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yde8r79d>>.

## Chapter 5: 81-100

### **“What is the Nicest Thing You’ve Done for Someone Anonymously?”**

1) HueyLewisAndtheShoes wrote this:

“I got someone fired once ...

“I was her manager and she wasn’t doing too well. Not for lack of trying, but we worked in sales and unfortunately she just wasn’t comfortable doing it.

“Over a couple of drinks one night, we had a real heart-to-heart about whether she was upset because she wanted to be better, or because she knew this wasn’t the right role for her.

“I told her there was no shame in realising it wasn’t right and that she needs to think about things.

“She comes back in after the weekend saying she’d mulled it over and wanted to quit. She was within her probation period so she had a no-notice period — quitting meant just leaving that day, end of job.

“In talking to my boss we agreed we would, instead, have a frank conversation with her about how we didn’t need her anymore and that we unfortunately had to make her role redundant. She walked out with a month’s pay.

“She doesn’t know that I convinced my boss this should happen and he got all the credit for it, but I didn’t care.”

2) crymson7 wrote this:

“One of my moments I think about often and hope the lady recovered financially.

“I was on my way home one day and had just left the office. I was coming up on my highway (Dallas North

Tollway back then was actually usable). I saw this lady standing in front of a guy's car and he was pushing the accelerator a bit, pushing her with his car.

"I immediately pulled in front of him to block him, for nothing else than to keep him from running her over. I then got out and asked what the heck was going on.

"She explained that he had hit her car and was trying to run away, and that he was drunk. I immediately called 911 and asked for the quickest response I could get from them.

"I then went and asked the guy what he was doing. He was almost unintelligible in his speaking, and I told him to just wait: The police will be along shortly and sort it all out.

"Less than five minutes later, a couple of Addison motorcycle cops showed up and asked what was going on. I explained how I had come upon the scene and what I did. The officer said, 'Wow, most people would have just kept on going. You go on, we've got this. Have a good day.'

"I responded in kind, and then offered the lady some words of encouragement and went home. I still have no idea who they all were, but that small bit of difference I hope I had in her life still makes me feel good to this day.

"I also hope that guy lost his limo license (it was a black towncar limo he was driving), got a hefty fine, paid to fix her car, and sobered up to make his life less crappy."

3) anotheroughtoday wrote this:

"I grew up watching my mom anonymously help people without anyone ever knowing. We were extremely poor but she would give to others because they had less. I remember her putting cash in envelopes for our older neighbors and she would put the envelopes in their mailboxes. She would do this while we survived on food stamps and our garden.



“She had a very heavy heart for single mothers in our community. I never had a Barbie doll and my brothers never had name-brand toys. But other kids would have a toy for Christmas.

“Mom does all of this while working horrible jobs. She has been with a company for over fifteen years and she makes less than \$15 an hour. She works 60-plus hours a week and always has time for her family. She gives without people ever finding out it was her. Hell, the only way I found out was because she wanted to teach me how to give. She continues to give, and I continue her legacy. I watch my son do this, and it swells my heart.

“My favorite mom-giving story: I moved away from my hometown immediately after high school. I visited every year and kept in touch with my best friend from middle school. She called me one day around Christmas crying. A stranger had put \$200 in her mail box. Her son was going to have Christmas! Found out, she had gotten laid off a few months ago and she was waitressing to pay her bills. All her savings went to fixing the car, and she had nothing left for Christmas. She knew her family didn’t have any extra money, so she didn’t tell them.”

4) HazelWeatherfield\_ wrote, “Years ago I worked for a mail-order catalogue that was really popular around Christmas time. This one old man called up to ask some questions about one of our gift baskets. He seemed really lonely, and kept me talking for a long time. When he gave me his address to receive a new catalogue, I saw that he lived at a nursing home. I just felt really sorry for him — he didn’t seem to have any family or friends. So I copied down his address and anonymously sent him a big box of chocolates, which I signed, ‘From your secret admirer’. :)”

5) [namecensored] wrote, “I helped a victim of human trafficking get to a shelter. Context: I am a medical student

and the city my school is in is a hub for human trafficking. I noticed a patient in the ER [Emergency Room] who had a pretty bad injury to her face was with a sketchy-looking guy who was not related to her. She wasn't my patient, but I brought my gut feeling up to her doctor who then made up some excuse to talk to the patient alone and got her help. I never talked to her myself, but I couldn't shake the vibe I got from looking at her and the man she was with."

6) humanhighlightreel32 wrote, "I gave a homeless man my coat the day before Thanksgiving last year. Ended up winning \$2,500 at a hockey game on New Year's Day (not that it matters, just figure I'd add it because I'm a firm believer in you get what you give). It's tradition now to bring an extra coat on the day before Thanksgiving when we go out."

7) pandar314 wrote this:

"I saw a young woman and her boyfriend begging at an intersection. It was raining, and she was lying on the ground, crying. He was holding a sign. I went to a nearby Walmart and bought her some warm clothes and gloves and a toque [knitted hat] as well as some feminine hygiene stuff. There was other stuff, but it was basically a winter survival package. I ended up giving her boyfriend an earful because he had the audacity to ask me for more money when I put over \$150 into the care package.

"I hope that young woman is okay. They begged at the same intersection for months, and then they just disappeared. I hope she was able to get away from that loser. He told me he felt she was safer with him than at one of the many women's shelters available in my city. Maybe he was right, but I find it hard to believe when she was crying on the ground in the rain and cold, wearing leggings and a small thin hoodie.

“I think about that night very often because there are a lot of people who suffer very close to us all the time. It can be very easy to ignore it or look past it, but we really shouldn't. You CAN help people around you, and you can do it without spending money like I did. I guess I just wish there was more compassion for strangers.”

8) genuinemahogany wrote, “I was bored one afternoon when I was living in Oakland. I was having a beer alone at a bar in a shady part of town. I decided I wanted to do something nice for someone. I told the bartender I was going to go to the bathroom. I got up from the bar and took out \$100 from the ATM [Automatic Teller Machine]. I went outside and saw what I assumed was a mother walking her young daughter down the street in a stroller. I ran towards them, said, ‘Excuse me, ma’am,’ she turned around a bit worried, I handed her the money, said, ‘Here’s 100 bucks,’ and jogged back to the bar to finish my drink.”

9) leavesofgrace wrote, “I was waiting in line behind a girl at my school who had to give back her breakfast because she didn't have enough money in her account. So I asked to buy the food for her and ran after the girl in the hallway. I almost lost her around a turn, but she did end up receiving it! One of the most sincere thank-yous I've heard.”

10) QuinteK25 wrote, “Two of my former students (sisters) work at a restaurant that I go to occasionally. I taught one of them last year and am currently teaching the other. They don't attend school virtually at all anymore (problems at home and they work to pay the bills). I saw them working when my wife and I were in. They were serving other

tables. I arranged for a sum of money to be delivered to them as an anonymous tip.”<sup>81</sup>

### **“What was the Nicest Thing You’ve Done Anonymously?”**

1) californiachickens wrote this:

“I was 17 and college acceptance letters were rolling out. I was lucky and got in early decision to my school, so I was coasting since December.

“When everything came out in March, it was a sh[\*]t show. Hardly anyone in my class got into where they wanted to go.

“One friend in particular didn’t get into any school and felt he had no choice but to enlist in the military. He was devastated.

“The day he got rejected from his last option, he was at a play rehearsal. I put a gift card to Starbucks on his windshield and wrote a note saying I still believed in him and that he deserved a little something to make him feel better.

“He tweeted about it and had absolutely no idea who did it. Still doesn’t know. Probably forgot about it.

“It was the least I could do. He’s had some mental health things come up and I’ve been moving all over since I graduated high school and we’ve lost touch. Hope he’s doing all right. I think I heard he just transferred into that last school, actually!”

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<sup>81</sup> Source: Thesupremediggy, “What is the nicest thing you’ve done for someone anonymously?” Reddit. AskReddit. 23 November 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yak47td8>>.

2) Accomplished\_Soil wrote, “My mother doesn’t have too much money, but every time she stops by she gives me some. When she’s not looking, I slip it into one of the inside corners of her purse. She usually ends up calling me all excited that she found money she didn’t know she had.”

3) findnamenotused wrote, “Someone on a forum I frequented years ago was going through a hard time and could not afford Christmas gifts for her kids. I bought her a \$300 Amazon gift card and had it delivered anonymously. She kept posting about how amazing it was that she could get gifts for them now, and pictures of all the stuff she got for them, and of them opening their presents and being so happy. It was really cool. To this day, she has no idea who sent her that, and neither do any of the other people who were on that forum.”

Asked about how findnamenotused found her shipping info, findnamenotused wrote, “All I needed was her email address, which was on her member registration for the site. (I was an admin at that time.)”

4) Yoinkie2013 wrote this:

“A few years ago I worked at a shipping store. An older man (70ish) came in to ship a package, which was just a white envelope full of something. He seems visibly upset and looking around and at his watch constantly. He was quite well physically for his age so my first reaction wasn’t that he was acting that way due to age/health but that something was actually wrong.

“I asked him who he was shipping to and he said his grandson in NYC, so I asked him the full name and he only gave me a first name and said didn’t know the last name. This was really weird and kind of threw up a red flag to me. Next when I asked him if he wanted insurance he said yes,

but when I asked him for a description of goods he said he changed his mind and didn't want to insure.

“We put his envelope into a box at his request and ship it. But for the next hour or so I just couldn't shake the odd transaction. So I went to the package and opened it up, and found over \$10k in cash inside the envelope. No one should be shipping money as there are much better and safer ways to ship it, and this package and his demeanor kind of led me to a conclusion. I called the police and told them that I thought this man was being scammed and gave them his info.

“An hour later a cop showed up and asked for the package. It turns out that the man spilled the beans when the police called him and said some man had called him and said his grandson was hurt and at a local hospital and needed to pay \$11,000 right away or they couldn't save his grandson. The man said he had called his grandson, but he didn't pick up so he panicked and did it. They told him the name and the address to which to send the money.

“Apparently this is a very common scam and they target older people and confuse them and say their family is at risk. Luckily the police were able to set up a sting op on the mailbox address we had and caught the guy who was scamming them.

“My boss wasn't too happy because technically we aren't supposed to open packages unless we smell something. But the story blew up and I got interviewed by a bunch of media and they even did a piece on how the scam works to raise awareness. So in the end it all worked out. I'm glad I was a bit nosey because I for sure saved that man an extremely large amount of money and we helped spread some awareness in the process.”

5) thewhitedeath wrote this:

“I saved a little girl from drowning years ago. She either got pulled out by the current in the ocean out just went out to far, but she was in trouble and going under. I swam out, grabbed her, and dragged her into shore. Her mother was freaking out and very grateful.

“This was a long time ago. I have no idea who they were. I thought about her the other day for the first time in a long time and wondered how she’s doing in life. She’s probably about 35 these days.”

eternellie commented, “This happened to me, too, except I was the little girl. In my case it was in a lake with an unexpected dip, and I panicked and went under. A young man came to my rescue, and I’m 31 now because of his kindness.”

6) haelesor wrote this:

“Almost 10 years ago, I had a co-worker/work friend who was struggling financially and was worried about even feeding her kids on Christmas, let alone getting presents for them.

“I anonymously signed her up for my local church’s Christmas help thing.

“She woke up Christmas morning to a big ol’ box of food and presents being delivered. She raved about it for weeks afterwards.”

7) tyrsbjorn wrote, “A few years ago I was picking out a Christmas tree. There was a pregnant girl and her mom looking too. I’d overheard some of their conversation. Apparently the girl’s bf [boyfriend] had dumped her because she ‘got fat.’ Her mom had taken her in but was on disability. No one would hire a pregnant girl so the three of them — there was a boy, too. I think he was the pregnant girl’s little brother — anyway, their mom figured they had

\$10 for a tree, or they wouldn't have one or two meals. But 'We will have a tree for that baby's first Christmas!' The mom was adamant. Well, the \$10 trees looked like road kill. I saw the girl oohing and ahing over one tree. Not too bad. Wasn't the best on the lot, but I'd looked at it myself. Anyway, I got my tree and told the attendant that I was also buying the tree she'd looked at. He gave a little smile and helped me put my tree on the car. As I was getting in the car, I saw them dragging this little Charlie Brown scrub thing and heard him say, 'Sorry, folks. That tree's been recalled.' I didn't hear the rest, but I heard the girl scream and saw the mom crying. The boy was jumping up and down. Good Christmas."<sup>82</sup>

### **“What’s the Best Compliment that You’ve Gotten that Made You Feel Warm Inside?”**

1) StayAwayFromMySon wrote, “A little girl at the kindergarten I worked at gave me a hug and said ‘Mmm, you smell good!’ I laughed and asked what I smell like. ‘Like home.’”

2) KLWK wrote this:

“Last night at my son’s parent-teacher conferences: ‘He’s a fantastic kid who has it all together. You should be very proud of the job you’ve done raising him.’

“I come from a very dysfunctional family, and hearing people tell me I’m breaking the cycle, that he’s doing fine even though he is my kid, makes me proud.”

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<sup>82</sup> Source: bingingwithbaggins, “What was the nicest thing you’ve done anonymously?” Reddit. AskReddit. 26 November 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ybefptq3>>.



3) Sylvi2021 wrote, “My husband bursting into tears when he saw me in my wedding dress was the only time in my life I’ve ever felt actually beautiful.”

4) stabbitytuesday wrote, “When I was waiting tables, a couple came in with what looked to be their granddaughter, and I got them all settled and took pretty good care of them since it was slow in the restaurant at the time. The man looked at his granddaughter and said, ‘You should want to be like her when you grow up.’ I beamed for the rest of my shift.”<sup>83</sup>

### **“Minimum Wage Workers, What is Something that is Against the Rules for Customers to Do, But You Aren’t Paid Enough to Actually Care?”**

BraveCell2 wrote, “I worked at an airline. The minimum change fee was \$75.00. At the time that amount of money would take me about ten hours to earn. Let me tell you how many ways I found to waive that fee: oh, what a great conversation about weather, so let me waive that fee for you, oh, your child is crying in the background, so let me waive that for you. I found any reason to waive that.”<sup>84</sup>

### **“Older Mall Santas, How has What Kids Ask for Changed Over the Years?”**

1) Emrannotkool wrote this:

“I help out as an elf every Christmas at my local charity grotto and it really depends on the kid. We get the ‘I want

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<sup>83</sup> Source: NegativeOption, “What’s the best compliment that you’ve gotten that made you feel warm inside?” Reddit. AskWomen. 29 November 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y9fl5fo2>>.

<sup>84</sup> Source: Scratchamap, “Minimum wage workers, what is something that is against the rules for customers to do but you aren’t paid enough to actually care?” Reddit. AskReddit. 1 December 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/yae8uycg>>.

an iPad and nothing else will work' and we get the 'I'd like just a dolly with brown hair!' We always try and help the parents by saying other cheaper presents like maybe a construction set or something, but you get the odd parent who's already bought little spoilt Jimmy an iPad anyway.

"Little story, we hand out presents to the kids after visiting Santa. We had one kid rip it open then dump it on the floor and ask for a better one. It was a small Lego set that most kids are happy to receive, but this kid demanded something better. We gave the Mum a 'that's all we got' look and she just left the gift behind promising the kid that they would go to ToysRUs to get a better one. However, the little girl afterwards asked if we could give it to her as her pal at school lost his dog recently and it would cheer him up. We gladly accepted and even rewrapped it.

"That's one of the worst things about being an elf: the ungrateful kids. But the kind kids really restore the cheer tenfold."

2) NavyDragons wrote, "This thread made me sad. Bringing back all the old horrible memories of growing up 'so I'm not cold' poor. I never believed in Santa. Now that I'm in a much better place as an adult, I should do something."

Theycallmedelicious commented, "Look into 'adopting' a family for Christmas. It's one of the most enriching, rewarding, and joyful deeds you can do during the holidays. Decades ago in a former life, I was a recipient of such a deed. It made Christmas absolutely unbelievable. Now, my wife and I return the favor and routinely grab several snowflakes off the local mall's giving tree to give back."

3) The\_Muse\_ wrote, “I recently attended my friend’s kid’s birthday party. Almost every ‘present’ he opened was a gift card. Was a pinch depressing.”

Cats-pajamas commented:

“Same thing happened a few weeks back. Eleven-year-old’s party. All gifts were gift cards in envelopes. Except one. The one I purchased. Which was a RC [Remote Control] offroader car. He wanted that thing out so badly. He was carrying on about his cool car.

“Whatever happened to gifts? So what if they are hit and miss?”<sup>85</sup>

### **What is Your Period Horror Story?**

Likebeach wrote this:

“Last month, my dad and I drove to Wales for the weekend to look at some castles. I hadn’t seen him in a while, and I was looking forward to it. We were staying in a campervan for the night.

“I generally prepare for all eventualities when I stay somewhere. I bring spares for everything but, with my period expected in nearly two weeks, figured I could get away with bringing two tampons.

“Safe to say I could not get away with bringing two tampons.

“It was dark and cold, and we were in the middle of nowhere. My dad couldn’t drive because he’d had a pint (or two) and the campervan was stuck, anyway.

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<sup>85</sup> Source: seanjenkins, “Older mall santas, how has what kids ask for changed over the years?” Reddit. AskReddit. 30November 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ybftnrd5>>.

“We went to the two local pubs looking for machines in the toilets — no luck. My dad apparently spoke to the owner while I was in there. He told us his wife had ‘passed it’ and that he couldn’t help me. He said the local petrol station was five miles away but was closed. I was freaking out at this point. I didn’t have any tampons left, and I was overwhelmed, uncomfortable, and embarrassed.

“I had a drink, because it felt like the right thing to do.

“The owner of the pub gave us some really awkward and disjointed directions to the only other place he could think of, which was a hotel/b&b [bed and breakfast]. He said that one of two women would answer the door and that they’d be able to help.

“We couldn’t remember his directions or couldn’t make sense of them, but we eventually figured out where it was. We knock on the door of this house, and an old man opens it. I try my best to explain the situation in a way that wasn’t weird and he told us to wait in the hallway, so we did. He goes, presumably, into the kitchen where his wife is sitting and all I hear is ‘Yes, I heard’. She comes back after five minutes with a pretty much full pack of pads, and I have never been more grateful for anything in my life. She apologised that it was all she had, but I smiled and nodded and said thank you more times than necessary.

“I was not expecting a late-night sanitary-product hunt with my dad. Weirdest quality time ever, but I think he handled it incredibly well and I’m glad that I will never have to do it again. Lesson learned — be more prepared.”

FullofTerror420 commented, “As mortifying as this experience must have been for you, it’s one of the most wholesome stories I’ve read. It seems everyone was willing to try and help, understanding what you were going through.”

Likebleach responded, “Definitely. Everyone was so genuinely lovely and I am so, so glad. People can be great.”<sup>86</sup>

### **“Do You have Any ‘Good’ Rejection Stories?”**

1) GamordanStormrider wrote, “I had absolutely nothing in common with this guy online. Like, he liked kung fu movies and medical dramas. He asked me out after a bit (every single dude seems to, regardless of whether or not you’re polar opposites) and I was just like, ‘You seem cool, but I don’t think we have much in common, so sorry, but no’. Dude took it like a champ, and he was like, ‘Cool, thanks for letting me know, too many people just ghost. Good luck finding what you want’. And that struck me as just so mature.”

2) –Poot—wrote, “A guy I dated in college for about four months broke up with me because he felt he had enough on his plate with graduation, finding a job, etc. It hurt for about an hour, and then I realized that was the most rational reason I’d ever been ‘rejected’ over. I grew a lot from that experience in the sense that I realized relationships don’t always end in anger and drama.”

OddScallion commented, “Yeah, I got rejected for that once, too! It hurts but it’s super reasonable.”

3) katie-did not wrote, “I had a few times on dating sites where I told a guy ‘Thanks for messaging me, you seem very nice but I’m not interested, good luck with your

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<sup>86</sup> Source: hanhan\_371, “What is your period horror story?” Reddit. AskWomen. 2 December 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y9jk7rho>>.

search!’ and they’d answer with a ‘Thanks for replying, good luck to you, too!’”<sup>87</sup>

### **“What have You Seen in Life that has Awed You the Most?”**

SteveOSS1987 wrote this:

“Until last week, easily Yosemite. It completely changed my perspective of the scale of this world.

“But then I went to my wife’s ultrasound last week, and saw my daughter kicking around in there. It’s hard to imagine that after 30+ years of life, these feelings of love were sitting below the surface, more than I thought possible, ready to be placed upon this unborn little girl. I’ve been on a cloud since.”

Dogsordiamonds commented, “And when the baby’s born you’re going to look around the world and be like, ‘Was this all here before?’ Because everything has a different tint. It’s like being gifted glasses that allow you to see ultraviolet light and you put them on and wonder how so much beauty could’ve been there all along without you knowing. (Also, congrats!)”<sup>88</sup>

### **“Teachers of Reddit, Who are Some Students that You will Never Forget?”**

1) choirdudematt wrote this:

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<sup>87</sup> Source: Aeiexgjhyoun\_III, “Do you have any ‘good’ rejection stories?” Reddit. AskWomen. 4 December 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/yamz4krm>>.

<sup>88</sup> Source: jenro, “What have you seen in life that has awed you the most?” Reddit. AskReddit. 4 December 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/yc4dh4nz>>.

“About 10 years ago, I traveled to northern Russia with a church group to have a summer camp for kids where we would be teaching music. One of the instruments I taught was recorder. We bought about 20 cheap plastic ones that would be easy to transport and we were planning to just give them to the kids (sorry to the parents!).

“One girl, Sveta, who was probably 11 or 12 years old at the time, was so happy that she would get to keep her recorder that she cried. She told us that she always wanted one, but her parents couldn’t afford it. I was moved by her story and I gave her mine, which was a slightly less cheap plastic one, but it had a hard case and came with a fingering chart.

“A few days after the camp, several of the kids came to the church that was hosting us to see us again. Sveta found me and wanted to show me what she had been up to. She had made her own manuscript paper, copied one of the songs that the violinists had learned at the camp, used the fingering chart that came with her recorder to learn the notes she didn’t yet know how to play, and taught herself to play the whole song on recorder. I couldn’t believe it — this song was a lot harder than anything I had taught because we had only about 10 days at camp (and the kids who brought their own violins to camp were way more advanced than the kids who were given a free recorder at camp).

“When we were leaving, the kids came to the airport to see us off. Sveta handed me a card, and inside she had written a note in English thanking me for the recorder and saying that I was the best music teacher she ever had.

“I will never forget Sveta.”

2) nepalesesou wrote this:

“Behavioral Specialist here.

“I get a call in my office one day. ‘Mr. L, you are needed in the gymnasium. There has been a report of physical aggression.’

“So I go down and investigate, it happens like this:

“Kids are playing basketball.

“Small kid falls down and tries to get up.

“Larger boy on team pushes him back to the ground.

“Small kid tries to get up three times, and the large boy won’t let him get up.

“Random boy comes out of nowhere and lands a left hook across the large boy’s face, dropping him to the ground.

“Random boy proceeds to mount the large boy and slap his face back and forth four times.

“He gets up from the large bloody boy with a smile on his face. He walks over and sits on the bench.

“I walk up and ask him what the story was.

He says, ‘What I did was wrong and the consequences for it are probably pretty bad, but you know what ... it was worth it.’

“Love that kid to death.”

dootthehootpoot commented, “Chaotic good.”

SirRogers commented, “Chaotic great.”

3) SpiffySpacemanSpiff wrote this:

“So a year or so back I was an adjunct at a law school — I taught basics in Estate Planning.



“Most folks were younger, just taking the course to keep their numbers up, and because it was historically (and really was) a bit of a cakewalk.

“So I would go in and do my thing, and really just keep an informal classroom where I could just answer questions, etc.

“AND THEN THERE WAS GREG.

“Greg was probably in his late sixties — having decided to go back to school after retiring from a union job that had an incentive from the employer to pay for grad school.

“Greg gave a sh[\*]t about every topic, read every assignment, asked for pointers constantly.

“Greg was the best. I miss him.”

LegalAction commented, “Non-traditional students are fantastic. I had an older guy, Ben, in an introduction history class. Apparently he had made a fortune in software. Giant house, cars as toys, ridiculous wine collection — then he had a breakdown and walked away from all of it to get a humanities degree (which, as a history teacher, is kinda validating, with all the STEM pressure out there). He was dark, foul-mouthed, cynical, no patience for the 18-year-olds, and did the f[\*\*]king work, did it well, and helped the other students in the most no-nonsense way. ‘What do you mean you don’t understand that passage? Look....’ Made my life incredibly easy and kept me entertained.”

SolanGoose commented, “I went to an art college and one of my sculpture classes had Doctor Dave, who was also in his 60s iirc [If I Recall Correctly]. He started as a vet, decided to switch to people, became my city’s leading cardiologist, got bored and started sheep farming, then also decided to get a BFA [Bachelor of Fine Arts degree]. He drew your blood for you if you had a project you wanted to

use it in, could hang out with anyone, and is the reason three instructors and a whole class played ‘hide the skinned sheep head’ from a set of VIPs inspecting the campus.”

TrueRusher commented:

“Sounds like my 11th grade English teacher.

“This man was a fireman, a carpenter, a manager at every level for like every business you can think of, a newspaper editor, a journalist, a photographer, and many other things I can’t remember. He was always telling us his stories from his different jobs. Oh, and he was in the military at some point.

“He just got bored and decided to teach American literature to a bunch of unappreciative teenagers for the f[\*\*]k of it. But man did he know sh[\*]t about American literature. He apparently used to comb through books in abandoned buildings and found all sorts of interesting and highly valuable books. And a hobby of his was seeing the houses, birthplaces, death places, and resting places of all the famous poets and authors. I don’t know how he did it, but he taught many lit lessons using Google Maps. Like who does that? He did. And he did it well.

“His tests were always open textbook (and we only had like three tests) because he knew tests were bullsh[\*]t and that’s not how you learn. You gotta learn how to find the information on your own and then use it. That’s how the world works.

“And he taught us iambic pentameter by making us use it and share it with each other. I still have the poem I wrote for that lesson, and I still remember him telling me about how good I was. And he had that warmth in his eyes that showed you he was truly proud without him ever saying it.

“He was probably the greatest literature teacher I’ve ever had and ever will have.”

4) Eastw00d86 wrote, “I teach college. My first semester teaching I was barely 24, fresh out of my Master’s program, never taught a class in my life. Much of what I teach about involved history of American wars, and I always want to avoid either being the ‘war is so awesome!’ guy or the ‘war is the most terrible awful thing and we should be ashamed we ever fight anything’ guy. I want to strike a balance to let students feel what things are like in warfare as much as they can without glorifying it. One guy in my class was a multiple Iraq-toured Army vet with a TBI [Traumatic Brain Injury?]. Great student, very knowledgeable and vocal in class. At the end of the semester, he walked up after the final and gave me one of his berets with his unit insignia on it. I loved teaching already, but that definitely cemented that I was in the right profession.”<sup>89</sup>

### **“What are the Best Life Hacks for Poor People?”**

1) Lying\_T-Rex wrote this:

“PLEASE tell your doctor if your medications are too expensive.

“My parents worked themselves to the bone and we ate like sh[\*]t to help pay for medicine for me and my sister (hemophilia, we needed medicine to help clot during our periods) ... they never complained and just worked — my mom didn’t want anyone to know we were poor. There were cheaper alternatives! They could have saved thousands of dollars.

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<sup>89</sup> Source: rulingshadows, “Teachers of Reddit, who are some students that you will never forget?” Reddit. AskReddit. 3 December 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y9crmohc>>.

“I’m a family doctor now, and I make it a point to talk about medication costs and ask at all of my follow-ups if things are affordable. We don’t know what your copay is and it’s not always easy to tell what will be covered on your plan. PLEASE let us know if something is too much; this is what we are here for!”

2) Minnesota\_Nice\_87 wrote this:

“I’ve been homeless often. I used to just walk into the YMCA and shower every day.

“Also, LIBRARIES! OMG, Libraries kept my ‘sanity’ while being repeatedly homeless due to mental illness.

“The entertainment value, the ability to get several jobs that got me un-homeless, the hand sanitizer.”

Thaswhaimtalkinbout commented: “Public libraries saved my life when I was a kid. Sh[\*]t homelife so I spent all my free time at library reading books the librarians recommended. I was depressed as f[\*\*]k, but those librarians helped me through the worst years of my life.”<sup>90</sup>

### **“What’s Been the Most Memorable Christmas Gift You’ve Ever Received?”**

UsedToBeOnFire wrote this:

“A dress.

“It wasn’t particularly expensive or super fancy, but I was out shopping with two guy friends and kinda paused by a window and said I thought it was really pretty. They then teamed up to conspire with my roommate to get my dress

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<sup>90</sup> Source: Jade-o-potato, “What are the best life hacks for poor people?” Reddit. AskReddit. 7 December 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/ya9hq7ly>>.

size, went out and bought it, and gave it to me for Christmas.

“It still fits :)”

EveGiggle commented, “Awww, that’s so sweet when people really make the effort and you always have it to remember them by.”

2) little\_honey\_bee wrote, “One of my closest friends mentioned in passing that she had broken her favorite coffee cup. I scoured eBay for a few weeks until I found the exact cup. She says it’s the best gift she’s ever received.”

3) mildasf[\*\*]k wrote, “My first Christmas in foster care (13 years old), a not very close friend’s mom showed up at my foster home with just a sh[\*]t ton of presents. All kinds of sh[\*]t: a blow dryer, clothes, candy, snacks, art supplies, makeup, books. It was probably the nicest thing anyone has ever done for me, and I needed the reminder. Thanks.”

4) socalsocial wrote this:

“I was in first year of college, poor as hell. I rented a room from a very nice family. At dinner, I told them how I can’t afford a padlock till my next paycheck, and therefore I can’t use the locker at the gym.

“Needless to say, for Christmas, they got me a really nice padlock and a gift card for a local grocery store just so I could stock up on food.

“I still treat them like my own family 10 years later.”

5) KetoTeacher 12 wrote, “I teach at a severely low-income school. Many of my students come from homeless shelters, experience drug-addicted family members, incarcerated family members, etc. As it is the holiday season, I know that my students won’t have much but am trying to do little

things here and there. Today, I was the one brought to tears. One of my students came in with a huge gift box wrapped in beautiful paper. This student's parents don't know how to read, one is incarcerated for drugs, and they struggle with money. The student places the box on my desk and says, 'I've been saving my money since August to get you the perfect Christmas gift. Thank you for teaching me.' Inside was an 1850 piece [?] bullet journal kit complete with pens, markers, tapes, journal, etc. I had to excuse myself to go cry. This student has nothing but wanted to make sure I felt loved on Christmas."

NOLA Educator commented:

"As a fellow teacher, I just know you're doing an awesome job and making a huge difference in those kids' lives.

"The other day, one of my kids wrote me a happy birthday letter and it was so sweet. I told her I was going to put it in my safe and save it forever. Her eyes lit up, and she was smiling the rest of class when I told her that."

6) Slimjuggalo2002 wrote, "One year I got an orange from my aunt. She was bawling as she gave it to us. She usually had gifts bought by August, wrapped and everything. However, that year she just couldn't afford it. Definitely the most memorable, teaching me a great lesson. RIP Aunt Durena."

El\_le\_va\_tor commented, "My mom didn't have much growing up, and she said finding an orange in her stocking on Christmas morning was a huge treat. She makes sure to put an orange in each of our stockings every Christmas and it's always my favourite part."

6) 2beagles wrote this:

"The Christmas I was three years old, I woke up very early to little barks outside. My mom was walking our two new

beagle puppies, who woke up at dawn and spoiled the surprise. I still remember the romping puppy bodies and licky tongues all over me and my sister while we laughed. Love at first sight. Those dogs were one of the great joys of my life — playmates of my childhood, soft bellies to rest my head on when I was sick, warm floppy ears to wipe tears on while I went through the terrors of adolescence....

“They lived 15 years, until I was a freshman in college, and we lost them just a couple of days apart from each other. We remember them fondly and often. Best present I ever got.”

7) Lizgrump wrote this:

“For Christmas my partner gave me a variety pack of beer. Each bottle had a custom label describing a night in, and came with supplies. For example:

“‘Korean revenge film night’ with Ramen and mochi ice cream, ‘video game night’ with Mountain Dew and Doritos, ‘trash TV night’ with a face mask and nail polish  
....

“It was really sweet having him pick out things that I like to do, and acknowledging that I decompress best by having a night in to myself every week.”

8) moridin82 wrote, “I had been laid off right before Thanksgiving and was still looking for a job through the holidays. We were scraping by, but in no way were we going to be able to do anything for the holidays. One day, while I was at home, I hear the doorbell ring. Figured it was the mailman. Take my time getting to the door. Open it and there was a massive pile of presents on the porch. Based on the gifts, it was definitely several of our friends who put it together but they did it anonymously. I can never ever repay them for that. I sat down and bawled my eyes out.”

9) ASTER6 wrote, “When I was four years old (1999), my mother got me a copy of Journey’s *Greatest Hits* for Christmas. Sadly, my mother is no longer with me and the CD broke in 2012. In 2013 my stepmom got me another copy of Journey’s *Greatest Hits* for Christmas and it made my heart feel good.”<sup>91</sup>

### **“Is There a Stranger You’ve Never Forgotten About? What was It About Them?”**

1) billpapapa wrote this:

“I was flying home from a business trip and my flight got canceled for weather reasons. There were direct flights that didn’t have to pass through the weather, but I wasn’t on one of those.

“I went to the flight desk and tried to reschedule; it was my son’s birthday the next day, either his first or second. So I was begging with the woman at the desk to help me get home for it. They told me I was likely not even to get a flight home THE NEXT DAY and I was going to miss it entirely because of demand, etc.

“I was begging, I was offering to pay more (didn’t matter, all booked), have them switch me to a different airline (no other airlines from this airport can get you there — not sure I believed that), offered to do two or three hops overnight whatever it took. She just kept steamrolling me.

“A guy in the line heard me, stepped up, said he was whoever he was and would give me his ticket on the next direct flight. He was some VIP and listening to the conversation was like night and day. The second they

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<sup>91</sup> Source: njohns43, “What’s been the most memorable Christmas gift you’ve ever received?” Reddit. askReddit. 8 December 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/y8n5m2yu>>.



stonewalled him he just told them to get the manager, and then they basically did whatever he said.

“I tried to thank him and he wouldn’t take anything from me. He just told me he knew what it was like when he had young kids and I should enjoy it while I can.

“It was one of the greatest things anyone ever did for me.”

2) aVenatOr wrote, “I ran out of money in the city at around 2am, age 18. I was just starting the long, long walk home when I met a couple in their 30s. They asked what I was doing, I told them, and they took me to a super cool underground bar and introduced me to their friends. They bought me drinks through the night, the lady danced with me a few times, and when the sun came up they bought me breakfast. I asked how I could thank them and they said ‘just pay it forward one day’. One of the most memorable nights of my life, and definitely changed me as a person.”

Pork\_Chap asked, “Have you ever paid it forward?”

aVenatOr replied, “I try. A few weeks ago I was in a nightclub hooking up with a girl who turned out to be quite a bit drunker than I realised. We sat down for a bit and she started falling asleep and I realised I was now her babysitter. Shortly after that a bouncer told me to get her out of there, and I couldn’t just ditch her so I called an Uber to her house, which ended up being \$75 away. I rode with her and kept asking her stupid questions to keep her awake, made sure she got in safe, and then took the same Uber back to the club for another \$75. I’m pretty hard up for cash, so it was painful but sometimes you gotta do the right thing.”

Pork\_Chap commented, “Respect. You’re one of the good guys.”

3) Back2Bach wrote this:

“After my grandmother died, I went to the cemetery with some of her favorite flowers on the day that would’ve been her birthday.

“As I arranged the flowers at the grave, a kindly lady stopped by and remarked about their beauty.

“She noticed from the engraved monument that it was my grandmother’s birthday, and said, ‘If I were your grandmother, I’d be proud to have a grandson like you.’

“She just left at that point, and I stood there amazed that someone would care enough to go out of their way to share something so special — so comforting — with a stranger.”

4) Tootsnboots wrote, “When I was about five years old, I was at a restaurant with my family and they had one of those claw prize machine games. My mom gave me a dollar to play and I was fixated on a little teddy bear stuffed animal prize. Naturally I was horrible at the game and had to walk away defeated. I returned to the dinner table and had we had our dinner. Apparently in that time an old man went up to the machine and kept playing for that teddy bear until he got it. He walked over with the prize and handed it to me. It was such a kind gesture. However, at the time I was freaked out a man I didn’t know was trying to hand me something. My mom ended up taking it from him and gave it to me in the car because all I did was just stare at him and sit frozen like a statue. Kids can be [\*]ssh[\*]les. I hope he somehow knew how much I did end up appreciating the bear. I still think about it 25 years later and cringe at my reaction.”

5) patchworkgreen wrote this:

“I boarded a plane for a four-hour flight and found my seat in the center of the very back row. There was a girl in her twenties sitting in the aisle seat and the window seat was empty. I was hoping against hope that the window seat

would stay vacant, but no, soon enough a guy with a backpack needed to climb over us. Everyone settled and the plane started moving. The guy hadn't said anything and neither had I, normal airplane etiquette. I don't think we had even looked at each other.

“When you are in the center seat of a crowded airplane, it's difficult to make sure you aren't invading your companion's space, especially when you can't even recline the seat. I'm trying to decide if I get the armrest or not when the guy looks at me and smiles. Surprised, I smile back. We both look away. Slowly, gently, he lifts his arm and places it on the armrest, over mine, where I'm almost snuggled under his shoulder, then puts his hand in mine. As if we were old companions, old lovers, completely at ease with each other.

“Frozen in shock, a thousand thoughts race through my mind. He sighs. A relaxed sigh. I thought, why not? Why not be comfortable? Why not have contact with another human? I relaxed as well.

“For the entire flight we held hands off and on. There was nothing sexual about it. It felt completely natural and in some ways, a little amazing.

“When the flight landed, he turned to me and smiled again. I smiled back. I think I was a little bit in love. That was it. We never spoke and had looked at each other only twice, and I've never forgotten him. To this day I wish him well.”<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Source: feathersandinks, “Is there a stranger you've never forgotten about, what was it about them?” Reddit. AskReddit. 9 December 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ycyog17a>>.

## **“What’s Your ‘Sugar Mama’ Story?”**

1) A\_Ron24 wrote this:

“I met a 30-year-old widow on Xbox when I was 19. She said she played Xbox to pass the day because she was financially set for life when her husband passed and wanted to make some Xbox friends. We start playing more and more until I couldn’t keep up because my controller and headset broke. She asked for my address and after a week, I got a brand-new controller and headset. I couldn’t thank her enough and asked what I could do in return, to which she replied to just keep playing with her.

“Over the next few years, she occasionally buys me new games when they came out and even a few Collectors Editions if I wanted them. Eventually, we drifted apart because I couldn’t find time play with my school and work schedule.

“I still miss her and occasionally try and find her online again but can’t remember her gamertag or Facebook. She will always be one of my best gaming buddies I’ve ever had.”

2) SICJFC wrote this:

“I was really drunk at a party. I was about to leave, and I was pretty hungry. This girl I was talking to on Tinder lived like two streets over. I can’t believe she actually did it.

“She left Pop-Tarts out on the front porch for me.”<sup>93</sup>

## **“What’s the Best Christmas Present You’ve Received?”**

1) MoveToPluto wrote this:

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<sup>93</sup> Source: Songbird420, “What Your ‘Sugar Mama’ Story?” Reddit. AskReddit. 16 December 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y7ccvzuj>>.

“I was seven years old in ICU [Intensive Care Unit] with pneumonia. It was horrible timing because Christmas was that week.

“The nurses brought in a massive television with a Nintendo GameCube hooked up to it. The only game I played was Mario Sunshine the entire time I was in the hospital.

“I love that game so much! It was so colorful and just super exciting to play since I didn’t even know the game existed. It is still my favorite Mario game ever made, but I’m biased.

“Well, I made it out of the hospital just a few days before Christmas and on Christmas Day we went to my auntie’s house. We started opening gifts and they got me my very own GameCube but it didn’t appear I had any games for it. They tricked me and hid the other gift they bought. It was Mario Sunshine.

“I’d never ever had tears of joy, but when I opened these gifts I couldn’t help but cry. I was so surprised and so happy! I’ve still never experienced the same emotions I had in that day.”

markrichtsspraytan commented, “When I was a kid, I saved up money and bought a PlayStation 2. I had only three games for it, but I had fun with it for a few years. Then I left it at home in college and nobody used it. When it came time to move for grad school approximately five years ago, my dad asked me to get rid of it since it was just taking up space in his house. I decided to donate it to the Children’s Hospital that had saved my life when I was a teenager. Reading your story reminded me of that — I know it’s not the newest technology, but I hope it can give some joy to bored kids.”

2) pghdtdencol wrote, “When I was a little girl (five or six years old) I was obsessed with ballerinas. My dad got me tickets to a professional performance of the *Nutcracker*. It was just him and me. I still remember feeling so grown up when we had dinner beforehand in a grown-up restaurant. The ballet was beautiful. It was just a wonderful day.”

slutforslurpees commented, “I’ve been a dancer for 13 years now with my studio, and our annual *Nutcracker* is my favorite performance for this exact reason. My dad took me to the *Nutcracker* every year as a daddy-daughter date when I was young, and I always love thinking about girls in the audience who are there with their dads and creating memories they’ll treasure forever. It’s a good feeling to be a part of that.”

TurtleTucker commented, “I started going to the ballet by myself a few years ago, and it always sets the perfect holiday mood. I’ll also say that it’s super awkward being the adult male in an audience of star-struck little girls.”

3) Cutebandicoot wrote this:

“I don’t even know if it’s the ‘best’ present but just one of those I’ll never forget.

“My dad and I have an extremely distant relationship. He was never an affectionate or emotional person. All birthdays, celebrations, events, etc. went to my mom to organize. It was just simply not a task he was involved in. He didn’t give gifts or engage in the theatrics of any of it and I can’t blame him — he is an immigrant, lived a very hard life, and culturally speaking, this is just how it was for him. One Christmas, I was probably like 10 or 11, I noticed among all the other presents I had from my mom and other family, there was an actual present from my dad addressed to me. I opened it and it was like this child’s picture book, not a baby book, but definitely aimed for about age 7-8 and

way too young for me. It was just shocking to me that he would first of all, care about getting me a present at all and secondly, choose this child's book out of all the things he could gotten. I realized, at 10 years old, that my dad genuinely had no idea what to get me, but wanted to get me SOMETHING. He only knew that I loved to read and read books all day long, so he got me a book, even though he had no idea what level reading I was on.

“Maybe that is not a very good story or makes him seem bad, but it will always stick with me. He is such a non-sentimental and stoic person, I can't imagine him going to a bookstore, choosing this very cutesy, colorful book with me in mind, and actually giving it to me as a gift, but he did. He wanted to give me something, in his awkward way, and tried his best.”

Vegemite4ever commented, “That's really, really lovely.”

ladybadcrumble commented:

“My dad is like this, too, but not an immigrant. I feared him growing up and we never really talked much, just got in arguments and misunderstandings. I know he cares, but I don't think I've ever heard him say ‘I love you’ to anyone.

I remember a few years back I was in school while working full-time. I wasn't eligible for tuition reimbursement from work (I had spent a few years as a co-op), but my boss had promised that he had worked things out. At the last possible moment when tuition was due, my boss revealed that it hadn't worked out and I decided to ask my parents to borrow money.

“It was so hard to ask for money. My mom really drew it out and insisted that I wait and wait and wait to bring it up with my dad. I was already so embarrassed, didn't know how to ask, about to cry at the drop of a hat. I ended up

going to my car without saying goodbye, just feeling emotional and childish.

“It was raining hard, and I just remember looking up at the rearview to see my dad running after the car and shouting my name. I slammed on the brakes and got out and he hugged me while it all poured out of me. That I felt lost and I didn’t know what I was going to do and that I didn’t want to waste another year of my life because I missed out on classes that I needed to graduate. He handed me his coat and told me to go back inside, that it was going to be okay. I realized he wasn’t wearing shoes as I headed back towards the house.

“It’s not my finest moment, but thinking of that always makes me emotional. Sometimes I’m upset that I feel so deprived of a connection with my dad that this is what I cling to, but it’s the only part of my adult life that let me know he cares. Sometimes I feel like it’s weird that a father and a daughter get along so poorly. My younger sisters don’t have the same problem. I think sometimes we’re too similar in personality to get along, that we see the things we dislike about ourselves in each other too strongly.

“I ended up not needing to borrow the money after all, was able to work out a payment plan with the bursar. I vented all this to you because I feel like you might understand. I can never be really mad at my dad because I know he can’t be something that he doesn’t know how to be. It means so much to see when he tries, but it kind of hurts, too.”

4) beneath\_the\_wheel wrote this:

“Conversation with my uncle, Christmas Day 2001:

“Uncle: So have you seen *Lord of the Rings* yet?

“12-year-old me: No, what’s *Lord of the Rings*?



“Uncle: Oh, dude, you absolutely have to see it. I’m taking you to the theater to see it tomorrow, done deal.

“And that’s where my Tolkien obsession began.”

5) garbage-human420 wrote this:

“My family was abusive, and poor. Growing up I always kind of hated Christmas time, because it just sort of highlighted how sh[\*]tty my own life was.

“Well, one year after I moved away to college, I was scheduled to work Christmas Day, since I was a Resident Advisor. A student who had been evicted from housing for selling hard drugs came after me and attacked me. The school told me I should leave campus until the police caught the kid. I didn’t have anywhere to go, so I called my best friend. She and her dad drove all the way to my school on Christmas Eve to get me.

“When I woke up, I discovered that my friend’s mom had somehow conjured up a full stocking and a couple small gifts. It was the most amazing gift because I had never had a good Christmas, and then her mom just went so above and beyond to make me feel loved.”

Cawatxcamt commented, “One year, my buddy invited all his friends who couldn’t make it home for Christmas to come to his parents’ house. So eight of us caravanned there on Christmas Eve and we watched movies and hung out with his super-cool family. None of us expected gifts because they were being so nice already to house and feed us. But in the morning, we came out to find his mom had filled stockings for each of us and we all had one present to open under the tree. Good times and great people that year. Sincerely one of my best holidays ever.”

6) neverw1ll wrote this:

“My mom passed from cancer this year; she had been stage 4 for 11 years and passed at 55 years old, so pretty young.

Last year Christmas was really emotional as things were taking a turn for the worse.

“My mom made me a large shadow box with ticket stubs she had saved from every concert we went to since I was a kid (both big fans of music). Mr. Dressup, Pearl Jam, White Stripes, etc. Not only had she saved these over the years, she went online and got postcards, buttons, and patches from the specific tour dates we attended to go with the stubs.

The moment I unwrapped it, and realised what it was, I burst into tears and cried for a good while. It was a very heavy moment and one of the best gifts I’ve ever been given.”<sup>94</sup>

### **“What’s the Kindest Thing a Friend has Done for You?”**

1) this\_isnotanexit wrote, “In high school I was frequently kicked out of my home for a couple of days because my mom doesn’t have her emotions in check and my best friend and her parents always let me stay at their house. And her mom packed me lunch. But on the days I actually lived at home my best friend’s mom packed her two lunches to make sure I got something to eat. They’re good people, and I really see them as family.”

2) imaseacow wrote, “Not the absolute kindest but in college they used to have banana chocolate chip muffins at breakfast like once every two months, and banana

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<sup>94</sup> Source: jez\_crossland, “What’s the best Christmas present you’ve received?” Reddit. AskReddit. 19 December 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ycppbgjl>>.

chocolate chip muffins are my absolute fave [favorite], but I am not a morning person so the dining halls would always be closed by the time I got down (they closed at 9 am iirc [If I Recall Correctly], so they could reopen at 11 for lunch). I had a friend who, if she saw there were banana chocolate chip muffins, would take one for me and leave it outside my dorm door. Used to make me smile. Like my own lil muffin elf.”

3) meowmeowmrowmeows wrote, “A friend once left several bags and coolers full of groceries outside my apartment door with no prompting or request. They did this anonymously, with no expectation of reciprocation, because they knew money was tight. This is easily the kindest thing anyone has ever done for me.”

4) ifoundxaway wrote this:

“I was alone while pregnant. When a friend found out, he decided he would document my pregnancy by taking pictures every month or two. He is a photographer. I was horribly depressed, but always cheered up when he and his wife came into town to take pics. I wasn’t able to make one of those pregnancy memory books but now I have great pictures. And before I had my son they came and helped me clean my house. His wife threw me a baby shower. They were the only people I had; I wished they lived closer.

“When I was super broke and it was Halloween, they gave me some money to take my son to the nice pumpkin patch that has cool rides.

“And then this year I got married. Guess who my photographer was? My friend. He took beautiful pictures, for free. It was kinda a destination wedding and he wouldn’t even let me pay for his hotel room.

“I can’t figure out how I even deserve any of this.”

5) Guzz15 wrote, “During my final year of college, I was really struggling with my Master degree’s final dissertation. I lived in a hostel that didn’t serve food so everyday I had to go out for food and most importantly, for tea. One day while I had to prepare a presentation and a rough draft and prepare for an exam, I also needed to get some printouts and I was too swamped to go out myself so I called a friend. He was a junior but a really good friend and after I asked him if he could get those printouts for me and get them to me he said yes. I was so happy with just that because he had to go out of his way to do this. Twenty minutes later he called me down (girls’ hostel, no entry for guys) to give me my printouts and lo and behold, he got me TWO CUPS OF TEA. And left a little note on it to motivate me. The thoughtfulness of this act that must have been nothing for him, but it left a huge impact on me. And I’ll always be really glad to have made such a good friend, even if life happened and we don’t get to catch up as often. Thank you, Keegan.”

6) realisticsyrup wrote, “She gave up her job. Staff in our department were being cut by 50%. There were two people in our location. She volunteered for lay-off because 1) I had a family to look after; 2) she had another part-time job; and 3) she said that the job was part of my identity and she didn’t want to take that from me. I will always be grateful to her.”<sup>95</sup>

### **“What’s the Kindest/ Most Beautiful Thing You’ve Overheard About Yourself by Accident?”**

1) pmaptic4acompliment wrote, “I was joking around with some acquaintances at a party. and somebody got me with a

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<sup>95</sup> Source: sleepugger, “What’s the kindest thing a friend had done for you?” Reddit. AskReddit. 21 December 2018  
<<https://tinyurl.com/yapjwfaz>>.

really funny joke. I started giggling like a madman, and I heard a girl on the other end of the room turn to my sister and say, 'I just love his laugh, It's so happy!' and she responded 'I know!' That still makes me smile when I remember."

2) Kloc34 wrote, "Years ago I went undercover in my dad's high school trades class after school hours, I hung out with some of his students (I was 19 but could easily have passed for one of his students), they then proceeded to tell me that his class was their favorite and he was their favorite teacher. My old man was happy to hear it and happy with my 21 Jump Street skills."

3) El\_patronus wrote, "I am a guy and used to be a waiter while a student. It was a quiet shift, and while I was busy cleaning up I overheard some of the waitresses say that I have a cute butt — at that time I was a self-conscious and shy guy trying not to act it, so it meant a lot to me!"

4) someone\_FIN wrote this:

"I was with two friends at a bar, one of whom I've known for half my life and one I met more recently. While I was at the bar ordering a drink, the newer friend said to the other:

"'You know, [my name] is such a great judge of character. I know that anyone who he calls a friend is someone I can always get along with.'

"And then they spent like five minutes (long line at the bar) discussing all the things they like about me."

5) OneFaraday wrote this:

"Once, at a drive through, I was given an extra \$20 bill change by accident. I gave it back to the clerk, and as I drove away I heard her turn to her co-worker and say, 'What an honest guy!'

“Then I heard her co-worker say, ‘Yeah — he was really hot, too!’

“I blushed so hard the whole way home with my greasy cheeseburger.”

4rsmit commented, “That will last you longer than the extra \$20 ... and it gives the rest of us hope, since there is at least one hot honest guy out there!”<sup>96</sup>

### **“Formerly Homeless of Reddit, How Do You Tell If a Beggar is Legitimate or Just a Scammer?”**

UnfairCanary wrote this:

“Currently homeless of Reddit, but I don’t panhandle. The only people I know who panhandle are addicts, and I am not throwing shade on my fellow poormericans. I’m lucky that I don’t smoke or drink. I get why people do.

“You can have clean clothes — I have them — and be homeless. One thing to look for? The shoes. If they’re season inappropriate, the likelihood of homelessness goes way up.

For example, my husband hurt me pretty badly in the middle of this year and I became homeless trying to leave him. I was able to get all new clothes — I had only what was on my back — but my sneakers with a hole in them and little bloodstains on them are the only shoes I own. My feet are big for a woman, so there weren’t any winter boot donations that would fit me (the men took all the men boots, and I don’t blame them for that).

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<sup>96</sup> Source: El\_patronus, “What’s the most kind/beautiful thing you’ve overheard about yourself by accident?” Reddit. AskReddit. 25 December 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/ycmvsgjy>>.

“So, yeah, the shoes are a big hint. They’re one of the last things donated, especially in climates like mine where you absolutely need the appropriate protection.

“Another sign of homelessness? Weird T-shirts from corporate events, or clothing that is baggy or too tight in the same set of clothing (I might get a shirt in size 6, and pants in size 10, and have to handle that somehow). Belts are very rare in donations, so we don’t have many if any. An ersatz belt (like string or a CAT5 cable or something) is a pretty good sign.

“Edit: While we might want money to buy winter boots or keep the internet on, food and items to keep warm are highest on the list. For women, you’d be shocked how short basic menstrual supplies are. Also, portable hand warmers are cheap for a giant box and one in each glove can keep a person going all day.

“Edit 2: You guys have made me cry tonight, in a good way. Reddit got me snow shoes [shoes appropriate for winter? She lives in Minnesota] and socks and stuff! So don’t worry about me, but if you want to help out others I’d recommend some of the items I listed above. If you’re female and in the US, your old business clothes, handbags, whatever can go to Dress for Success for a tax write off. I like that charity a lot. They provide resume help and a computer lab to look for jobs and whatnot.”<sup>97</sup>

### **“What’s Something Nice that Happened During Your Holiday that Made You Smile?”**

1) Lovveen wrote, “It may sound really small, but my dad apologized to me. He has never done it before, ever. He

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<sup>97</sup> Source: PleasantlyLemonFresh, “Formerly homeless of reddit, how do you tell if a begger is legitimate or just a scammer?” Reddit. AskReddit. 27 December 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y7sx7ba2>>.

said something really mean, and all my life it's always been us kids (my mom doesn't allow him to do this to her) letting things that he said go, just to keep the peace. I no longer live at home so I just said no more and haven't spoken to or seen him for over two months now. He came to my house the day before Christmas and apologized, actually said I'm sorry and he went into detail about what he was sorry about. It wasn't just me. He went to my siblings separately and apologized for past things he said and I didn't know until I spoke to them. My dad's the most hardheaded person and I don't know what changed but for him to do that — yeah, that was just the best present. I missed him and hopefully, he keeps this up.”

2) alleria31 wrote this:

“My SO [Significant Other] is from India and comes from a emotionally and physically abusive household. He loves my dad, he thinks he's a really cool guy and although he's never said it, I know it's because he sees the way my dad and I are together and I think he longs for that. My dad is my best friend, my biggest cheerleader, and he never gave up on me when I was doing sh[\*]tty things in active addiction. So, last time we were all together before Christmas, we were leaving and my dad shook my SO's hand. We got in the car and he's like 'One day I'll get a hug.' Christmas came; he had a great time celebrating his 2nd Christmas. We were leaving and my dad went to shake his hand, and then stretched his other hand out to give him a hug. My boyfriend made a little squeal (he now regrets that noise) and they hugged for like 30 seconds. It's like I could feel the happiness radiating off of them. We got back in the car, and my SO got really quiet and whispered, 'My dad has never hugged me ... not my entire life.' I actually started crying, told him I was proud of him daily and that I loved him. He cried and thanked me for letting him into my family. It brings me great joy that he now has my family to



love him, I know it won't make up for the 23 years of loneliness, but this is a good start to a happy future! [...]

“TLDR: Best gift for my SO was a hug from my Dad!”

3) Safromra wrote this:

“I was having a really sh[\*]t day at work today, we were busier than expected and understaffed, and I was working alongside a manager for whom I don't have a lot of respect. It was also super hot in the store and when I get hot I get soooooo bothered, lol [laughing out loud], so not really ideal

“But I was cashing out this lady, and said my standard ‘Hey, how are you?’ and she looked at me and she said, ‘I am so great! Isn't it a beautiful day? Did you have a good Christmas?’

“Now half the time I say ‘hello’ I don't even get a nod in response so I was already like ... wow!

“And she said she's in town to visit family for Christmas, she's leaving tomorrow to have the new year with her friends. But she just kept saying. ‘Isn't it such a beautiful day? Isn't this a great way to end the year?’

“And honestly it isn't every day you come across such a genuinely grateful person who shares their joy so openly; it really reminds me of the type of person I want to be and the mentality I strive to have. I really hang on to these little blessings when times get tough, you know? Because today was overcast and windy, but it was a beautiful day because she thought so and shared it with me.”

4) sometimesiamdead wrote this:

“One of my siblings recently came out as trans. My younger brother has developed some serious right-wing views, including some pretty hateful views of women and

LGBTQ [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer] persons. My dad is slow to handle change.

“So this holiday had the potential to be very volatile and full of anger.

“And it wasn’t. Everyone was amazing. So loving and accepting. My little bro was even supportive of my sibling! It was so neat to see my sibling and little bro building Lego together with my son.

“Baby steps.”

5) ejly wrote, “I had a guest for Christmas Eve dinner who has just finished chemotherapy, and her taste for food has been very poor during the treatment. I made a side-dish of soft-boiled potatoes, and she ate a lot of them and was so happy there was a food option available that tasted good for her.”<sup>98</sup>

### **“What is the Most ‘Chaotic Good’ Thing You’ve Seen Someone Do?”**

1) trunks111 wrote this:

“So my Freshman year of college at the beginning of the year we started a group chat for our floor.

“We had a public bathroom/shower area. I noticed people weren’t flushing their sh[\*]t down. So I started taking photos and sending them every time it happened. My RA [Resident Assistant] was pissed, but people started flushing their sh[\*]t.”

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<sup>98</sup> Source: Meikami, “I had a bad Christmas and want to start cheering up for the new year. What’s something nice that happened during your holiday that made you smile?” Reddit. AskWomen. 29 December 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y86qehga>>.

2) wiliestarcher wrote, “Not me but my old boss told me about how he dealt with an extremely toxic server at the Old Spaghetti Factory where he used to work. Apparently she was extremely abusive to the kitchen staff and would yell at them whenever things got stressful. My ex-boss, the devious f[\*\*]k that he was, started putting half a pound of butter in her spaghetti each time she ordered one. Since this was the Old Spaghetti Factory, she would often order that. She then gained over 30 lbs over three months and apparently quit. Not sure I agree with the methods but d[\*]mn did I find that hilarious!”

3) Jedi\_Buzz\_jerker asked, “I think I’m starting to get the idea from previous posts, but just to be sure, what is chaotic good?”

P-p-please answered, “They’re a good person but break the rules.”

USBattleSteed answered, “Follows objectively good morals regardless of rules they may break. Good example is Batman.”

Osi425 answered, “The opposite of chaotic is lawful. Chaotic good is like a small child on a mission to make someone smile.”

4) ca\_raa wrote, “That Brazilian drug dealer who kidnapped a doctor and forced him to give people vaccines for free.”<sup>99</sup>

**“Just When I was About to Give Up on Humanity...”**

RancidRoger wrote this:

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<sup>99</sup> Source: Littykathax, “What is the most ‘Chaotic Good’ thing you’ve seen someone do?” Reddit. AskReddit. 29 December 2018 <<https://tinyurl.com/y9oa3flf>>.

“I had a tire that wobbled badly after hitting a curb. After some thought, I figured it best to go ahead and swap it with the spare. Upon opening the trunk and lifting the liner, my heart sank into my stomach seeing the round space where it goes empty! I had just bought the car used from an individual, and I looked it over in-depth but somehow overlooked this important detail.

“As I’m mulling over my limited options, a man parks nearby and goes into a store. Noticing his car is the same foreign brand as mine (which parts are hard to find for), I approached him telling of my situation briefly and wondered if he could recommend a place I might find a wheel the following day. He mentioned some places, but they were not close enough. ‘Online’ was how he got what he needed for his car.

“I thanked him and had turned to walk back to my car when he says, ‘Hold on,’ and he has his spare in hand. ‘Take it, it’s yours.’ Surprised, I asked, ‘What if you need it?’ He said, ‘I’m close to home, I have two other vehicles, and you need it more than I do!’”

“If only more of us were like this guy.”<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>100</sup> RancidRoger, “Just when I was about to give up on humanity...”  
Reddit. RandomActsofKindness. December 2018  
<https://tinyurl.com/yck4zwxv>>.

## **APPENDIX A: FAIR USE**

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I assume these things:

Everyone wants Good Samaritans to get credit for their good deeds, and this book about Good Samaritans is a good way to do that.

People who post on Imgur and Reddit or write letters to the editors want to share their information with the world.

Credit must be given where credit is due. I definitely try to do this.

I must not make money from this book.

Light editing is OK for Imgur posts, Reddit posts, and letters to the editor. I see nothing wrong with correcting an obvious misspelling.

## **APPENDIX B: SOME BOOKS BY DAVID BRUCE**

### **Retellings of a Classic Work of Literature**

*Ben Jonson's The Alchemist: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Bartholomew Fair: A Retelling*

*Ben Jonson's Volpone, or the Fox: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's Complete Plays: Retellings*

*Christopher Marlowe's Dido, Queen of Carthage: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's Doctor Faustus: Retellings of the 1604 A-Text and of the 1616 B-Text*

*Christopher Marlowe's Edward II: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's The Massacre at Paris: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's The Rich Jew of Malta: A Retelling*

*Christopher Marlowe's Tamburlaine, Parts 1 and 2: Retellings*

*Dante's Inferno: A Retelling in Prose*

*Dante's Purgatory: A Retelling in Prose*

*Dante's Paradise: A Retelling in Prose*

*Dante's Divine Comedy: A Retelling in Prose*

*The Famous Victories of Henry V: A Retelling*

*From the Iliad to the Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose of Quintus of Smyrna's Posthomerica*

*The History of King Leir: A Retelling*

*Homer's Iliad: A Retelling in Prose*

*Homer's Odyssey: A Retelling in Prose*

*Jason and the Argonauts: A Retelling in Prose of Apollonius of Rhodes' Argonautica*

*John Ford's The Broken Heart: A Retelling*

*John Ford's 'Tis Pity She's a Whore: A Retelling*

*King Edward III: A Retelling*

*Robert Greene's Friar Bacon and Friar Bungay: A Retelling*

*Tarlton's Jests: A Retelling*

*The Trojan War and Its Aftermath: Four Ancient Epic Poems*

*Virgil's Aeneid: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 5 Late Romances: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 10 Histories: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 11 Tragedies: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 12 Comedies: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 38 Plays: Retellings in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 2 Henry IV, aka Henry IV, Part 2: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 1 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 1: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 2 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 2: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's 3 Henry VI, aka Henry VI, Part 3: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's All's Well that Ends Well: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's As You Like It: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Comedy of Errors: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Coriolanus: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Cymbeline: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Hamlet: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Henry V: A Retelling in Prose*



*William Shakespeare's Henry VIII: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Julius Caesar: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's King John: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's King Lear: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Love's Labor's Lost: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Macbeth: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Measure for Measure: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Merchant of Venice: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Merry Wives of Windsor: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Much Ado About Nothing: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Othello: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Pericles, Prince of Tyre: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Richard II: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Richard III: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Taming of the Shrew: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Tempest: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Timon of Athens: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Titus Andronicus: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Troilus and Cressida: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's Twelfth Night: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Two Gentlemen of Verona: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Two Noble Kinsmen: A Retelling in Prose*

*William Shakespeare's The Winter's Tale: A Retelling in Prose*

### **Children's Biography**

*Nadia Comaneci: Perfect Ten*

### **Personal Finance**

*How to Manage Your Money: A Guide for the Non-Rich*

### **Anecdote Collections**

*250 Anecdotes About Opera*

*250 Anecdotes About Religion*

*250 Anecdotes About Religion: Volume 2*

*250 Music Anecdotes*

*Be a Work of Art: 250 Anecdotes and Stories*

*The Coolest People in Art: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Coolest People in the Arts: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Coolest People in Books: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Coolest People in Comedy: 250 Anecdotes*

*Create, Then Take a Break: 250 Anecdotes*

*Don't Fear the Reaper: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Art: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Books: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Books, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Books, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Comedy: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Dance: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Families: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Families, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Families, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Families, Volume 4: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Families, Volume 5: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Families, Volume 6: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Movies: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Music: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Music, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Music, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Neighborhoods: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Relationships: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Sports: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Sports, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Television and Radio: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People in Theater: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People Who Live Life: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Funniest People Who Live Life, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds, Volume 1: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Kindest People Who Do Good Deeds, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*

*Maximum Cool: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People in Movies: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People in Politics and History: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People in Politics and History, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People in Politics and History, Volume 3: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People in Religion: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People in Sports: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People Who Live Life: 250 Anecdotes*

*The Most Interesting People Who Live Life, Volume 2: 250 Anecdotes*

*Reality is Fabulous: 250 Anecdotes and Stories*

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*Virgil's Aeneid: A Discussion Guide*

*Virgil's "The Fall of Troy": A Discussion Guide*

*Voltaire's Candide: A Discussion Guide*

*William Shakespeare's 1 Henry IV: A Discussion Guide*

*William Shakespeare's Macbeth: A Discussion Guide*

*William Shakespeare's A Midsummer Night's Dream: A Discussion Guide*

*William Shakespeare's Romeo and Juliet: A Discussion Guide*

*William Sleator's Oddballs: A Discussion Guide*

## APPENDIX C: ABOUT THE AUTHOR

It was a dark and stormy night. Suddenly a cry rang out, and on a hot summer night in 1954, Josephine, wife of Carl Bruce, gave birth to a boy — me. Unfortunately, this young married couple allowed Reuben Saturday, Josephine’s brother, to name their first-born. Reuben, aka “The Joker,” decided that Bruce was a nice name, so he decided to name me Bruce Bruce. I have gone by my middle name — David — ever since.

Being named Bruce David Bruce hasn’t been all bad. Bank tellers remember me very quickly, so I don’t often have to show an ID. It can be fun in charades, also. When I was a counselor as a teenager at Camp Echoing Hills in Warsaw, Ohio, a fellow counselor gave the signs for “sounds like” and “two words,” then she pointed to a bruise on her leg twice. Bruise Bruise? Oh yeah, Bruce Bruce is the answer!

Uncle Reuben, by the way, gave me a haircut when I was in kindergarten. He cut my hair short and shaved a small bald spot on the back of my head. My mother wouldn’t let me go to school until the bald spot grew out again.

Of all my brothers and sisters (six in all), I am the only transplant to Athens, Ohio. I was born in Newark, Ohio, and have lived all around Southeastern Ohio. However, I moved to Athens to go to Ohio University and have never left.

At Ohio U, I never could make up my mind whether to major in English or Philosophy, so I got a bachelor’s degree with a double major in both areas, then I added a Master of Arts degree in English and a Master of Arts degree in Philosophy. Yes, I have my MAMA degree.

Currently, and for a long time to come (I eat fruits and veggies), I am spending my retirement writing books such as *Nadia Comaneci: Perfect 10*, *The Funniest People in Dance*, *Homer’s Iliad: A Retelling in Prose*, and *William Shakespeare’s Othello: A Retelling in Prose*.

