

DEAR READER,

2-17-19

HEY! I HOPE EVERYONE IS DOING GREAT. BUT IF NOT, THAT YOU ARE AWARE OF THE STRENGTH INSIDE OF YOU AND THAT YOU REMAIN STRONG ENOUGH TO ENDURE....

I LEFT OFF WHEN I WAS AROUND 10 YEARS OLD. AROUND THAT AGE I WAS LIVING IN THE COUNTRY CLUB APARTMENT COMPLEX. THE NAME CHANGED TO THE ARBORS AT SOME POINT & I THEN CHANGED BACK. IN THOSE DAYS IT WAS MY OLDEST YOUNGER BROTHER & ME. WE'D GO TO THE PARK OR SEE WHAT REPTILES WERE LIVING IN THE WOODS... -- I'D STUFF, OR WE'D HANG OUT WITH FRIENDS. I HAD FOUR FRIENDS AT THAT TIME. NO ONE KNEW WHAT WENT ON BEHIND THE DOOR OF OUR HOME. WHEN I WAS OVERSIDE I WAS FREE. NO YELLING, NO GETTING BEATEN, JUST ENDLESS FREEDOM.

THERE WAS THIS OLD LADY THAT LIVED IN THE APARTMENT BEHIND MINE. I WOULD WAIT FOR HER TO COME HOME WHENEVER I SAW THAT HER CAR WAS GONE. SHE WAS ALWAYS AN ANGEL TO ME, AND SHE'D ALWAYS NEED HELP CARRYING GROCERIES. AFTER I'D HELP HER WITH HER GROCERIES, OR WHAT NOT, SHE'D GIVE ME A PIECE OF CANDY & OFFER ME SOME JUICE. APPLE JUICE EVERYTIME. I'D JUST & SHE'D TALK TO ME ABOUT THINGS IN HER LIFE. SHE'D GO ON & ON ABOUT STUFF THAT I HAD NO IDEA ABOUT BUT I LISTENED INTENTLY. I THINK SHE JUST ENJOYED

HAVING SOMEONE TO TALK TO. SHE WAS NORTH OF 80 YEARS OLD. SHE'D SOMETIMES RENT MOVIES FOR ME TO WATCH. "HOME ALONE", "TEENAGE MUTANT NINJA TURTLES" MOVIES FOR KIDS... OR ADULTS REALLY. I'D SEE HER 2 OR 3 TIMES A WEEK. I MET HER OWN KIDS ONCE OR TWICE. SHE IS A MEMORY OF MY PAST I'M HAPPY TO HAVE. SHE WAS THE SWEETEST PERSON.

O.K. I HAVE A FEW MEMORIES OF CHAS SOME PERIOD TO SHARE. LIKE MY FIRST LIFE OR DEATH EXPERIENCE. I WAS ALMOST KILLED BY...
... A DORGO! YEAH, CHAS'S REGAT. A DORGO CHAS. SO WAS THE FIRST TIME I SAW SUPERMAN TOO...
SO WAS MY AFTER SCHOOL SNACK. USUALLY MY BRO & I GOT A PACK OF RAMEN NOODLES TO SPLC. BUT SOMETIMES, LIKE ON THIS DAY, WE GOT A SANDWICH & SOME CHIPS. WE DEVOUR OUR SNACK SO WE COULD GO OUT & PLAY. I'M EATING, OR INHALING, MY FOOD & A PIECE OF DORGO GOT STUCK IN MY THROAT. MY SISTER, WHO WAS ABOVE 14 AT THE TIME, DOESN'T KNOW WHAT TO DO. I WAS ON THE FLOOR OF OUR KITCHEN CHOKING. MY SISTER GOT ON THE PHONE & CALLED FOR HELP. SHE OPENED THE FRONT DOOR & STARED INTO THE WOODS. I WAS FACING THE SAME WAY & COULD SEE INTO THE WOODS AS WELL. I WAS BECOMING FAINT

AND I SAW A FLASH OF RED...? IN THE WOODS
 I SAW ANOTHER FLASH OF RED. AND ANOTHER. IT
 WAS MOVING FAST. SUPERFAST. MY SEWER WAS
 WADING SO SOON. I THOUGHT, "SUPERMAN'S CAPE
 IS RED!" AFTER A FEW MORE LIGHTENING QUICK
 FLASHES HE CAME FLYING OUT OF THE WOODS!
 NO, NOT SUPERMAN... I'M MY OLDER BROTHER. HE
 RAN SO FAST I THOUGHT HE WAS FLYING. HE SNATCHED
 ME UP AND DID THE HEIMLICH MANEUVER & OUT
 POPPED THE DORSO.

YOU KNOW, FOR A LONG TIME I SPECULATED/
 WONDERED IF HE WAS A SUPERHERO... THE MIND OF A
 SMALL CHILD. HA! I DON'T HAVE A RELATIONSHIP WITH
 MY OLDER BROTHER. AND HAVEN'T SINCE I WAS A
 CHILD. BUT I HAVE NO BAD MEMORIES OF HIM AT ALL.
 HE WAS A GOOD OLDER BROTHER BUT, OF COURSE, HAD HIS
 OWN LIFE & WAS GONE ALMOST ALL THE TIME. HANGING
 WITH HIS FRIENDS, WORKING ON HIS CAR... HE HAD
 THIS UUGLY STATION WAGON... BUT YOU
 COULD HEAR THE SYSTEM HE INSTALLED IN SO
 THUMPING A MILE AWAY.

ANYWAY... AFTER HE SAVED ME FROM THAT
 KILLER CHOP... 5 MINUTES LATER MY BROTHER
 & I WERE OUTSIDE GOING ABOUT OUR DAY.

THIS WAS A GOOD MEMORY TOO. I'M THANKFUL
 FOR MY GOOD MEMORIES. I HAVE SO MANY
 BAD ONES THAT I CAN GET A LITTLE

DIFFICULT TO SEE THEM... REMEMBER THEM.
I THINK A LOT OF PEOPLE DO THAT. IF NOT ALL
OF US. THINGS CAN GO SO WRONG IN OUR
LIVES THAT IT'S ALL WE FOCUS ON. STRESSING
HOW TO FIX THIS OR THAT OR FEELING ANGRY
OR SAD OVER SOMETHING THAT CAN'T BE FIXED...
BECAUSE IT'S IN THE PAST.

WHY SHOULD WE RUIN OUR PRESENT DAY,
OR ANY OF THE DAYS IN OUR FUTURE, BECAUSE OF
OUR PAST? WE SHOULDN'T. THE PAST SHOULDN'T HAVE
THAT KIND OF CONTROL OVER OUR FUTURE. THE
PAST IS MEANT FOR LEARNING. THAT'S WHAT LIFE
IS. WE LEARN, WE LIVE, AND HOPEFULLY WE
ALL LEARN TO LOVE & LOVE.

IF THERE'S SOMETHING IN MY PAST THAT
MAKES ME ANGRY OR SAD, I DON'T FOCUS ON
IT. I KNOW HOW I CAN GET SO I KNOW IT
WON'T HELP ME ANY.

I WANT TO BE HAPPY... DON'T YOU?
STOP THINKING ABOUT THE BAD THINGS
IN YOUR PAST & WATCH HOW MUCH HAPPIER
YOU'LL BE IN YOUR FUTURE.

UNTIL NEXT TIME.