

What's it Like in Your Town?

Once there was an old and very wise man. Every day he would sit outside a gas station in his rocking chair and wait to greet motorists as they passed through his small town. On this day, his granddaughter knelt down at the foot of his chair and slowly passed the time with him.

As they sat and watched the people come and go, a tall man who surely had to be a tourist-since they knew everyone in the town-began looking around as if he were checking out the area for a place to live. The stranger walked up and asked, "So what kind of town is this we're in?" The older gentleman slowly turned to the man and replied, "Well, what kind of town are you from?" The tourist said, "in the town I am from everyone is very critical of each other. The neighbors all gossip about everyone and it's a real negative place to live. I'm sure glad to be leaving. It is not a very cheerful place." The man in the chair looked at the stranger and said, "You know, that's just how this town is."

An hour or so later a family that was also passing through stopped for gas. The car slowly turned in and rolled up to a stop in front of where the older gentleman and his granddaughter were sitting. The mother jumped out with two small children and asked where the restrooms were. The man in the chair pointed to a small, bent-up sign that was barely hanging by one nail on the side of the door. The father stepped out of the car and also asked the man, "Is this town a pretty good place to live?" The man in the chair replied, "What about the town you are from? How is it? The father looked at him and said, "Well, in the town I'm from everyone is very close and always willing to lend their neighbor a helping hand. There's always a hello and thank you everywhere you go. I really hate to leave. I feel almost like we are leaving family." The older gentleman turned to the father and gave him a warm smile. "You know, that's a lot like this small town." Then the family returned to the car, said their thank yous, waved goodbye and drove away.

After the family was in the distance, the granddaughter looked up at her grandfather and asked, "Grandpa, how come when the first man came into our town you told him it was a terrible place to live and when the family came into town you told them it was a wonderful place to live?" The grandfather lovingly looked down at his granddaughter's wondering blue eyes and said, "No matter where you move, you take your own attitude with you and that's what makes it terrible or wonderful."

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