

Written by By Richard Kontz
Friday, 21 September 2018 08:40



Concluding the seven-part series by Richard F. Kontz on a Vietnam Vet he met while running the Bread of Life Christian Bookstore in 2011 through mid-2015.

After part six, I never wrote part seven until five years later. I guess it was too hard to finally write about what happened.

One morning as I was driving to work around 7 am in the morning, I saw Don walking up the street I was driving on so I pulled over and rolled down my window and said, "Hey Don what's up?"

He came over and when I got a close look at him; he had fat lip and a black eye. One lens on his glasses was cracked. I asked him if he was okay. He said yeah, I am okay. I asked if he wanted to get something to eat and he said sure.

As he got in the truck he said, "I know I look bad."

After we got to a local restaurant and got our order, Don ate very slowly because of his lip. He said it hurts to eat but I need to eat. Then he began to tell me what happened.

He said he was attacked a few days before by three teenagers. He said they were harassing him after he had gone to the bank to cash his disability check. He said they jumped him and

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beat him up and took his backpack, which had his wallet in it.

He looked at me with “sad eyes” and said, “In my younger days I would have took them all down. But, now look at me I can’t even defend myself anymore, I just don’t have it anymore.”

I said, “Don, don’t go there – you are still a man, a good man, a strong man of God.”

He said, “Thanks Rich, I know.”

I then said, “What are you going to do now?”

He said, “I have to get my Driver’s ID – that is where I was going. I decided I need to leave this place and I contacted a place in Louisiana that has a street program. I told them about my past working with street ministries and they said they could use me. So, I am going. I already have my bus ticket but I need an ‘ID.’ They told me I have to get there by next week.

He said, “I want to get to the Vehicle department early so I can be first in line.”

So, we finished eating and I told him I would drive him down there so he could be first in line.

On the way to the MVD, I asked him if he had any money. He said “No.”

When we got to the MVD, I gave him \$40 [that’s all I had in my wallet]. As I dropped Don off he shook my hand and he looked me in the eye and said, “Thanks for everything Rich – you’re the best friend I ever had.”

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Then he got out of the truck and headed into the building to get his “ID.”

I never saw Don again.

Now that I finally wrote the end of Ron’s story, it makes me very sad. I have to admit it made me cry. I hate what happened to him. Especially, seeing him like that – being beat up by three punks – feeling like he was no longer able to take care of himself.

But, I am happy he still had a plan – a plan to go work in street ministries somewhere else – another fresh start. I do wish I knew how it turned out. I guess I have been hoping all this time and waiting to hear from him. Maybe, just maybe one day out of the blue he will contact me. Then I can write the final “happy ending.”

Written by Richard F. Kontz. If you wish to comment, I can be reached at rmkontz@q.com

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