

# ***Beautiful Day***

*by*

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Cast of Characters

LINDA:

Middle-aged

JACK:

65

Place  
Park

Time  
Day

Setting: An outdoor park bench.

At Rise: Jack and Linda are two strangers which have become heavily invested in conversation. They sit side by side facing one another.

JACK: I don't really worry too much about what other people think. It holds me back. Whenever I worried about what others thought, it crippled me.

LINDA: I wish it were that easy for me.

JACK: It takes practice and time.

LINDA: I don't think I will ever manage it. I'm constantly reminded of...

JACK: What?

LINDA: Things from my past...

JACK: From your childhood?

LINDA: And more...

JACK: Oh.

LINDA: Look at me. Go on and take a good look. Do you see me? I'm a woman. Not a man. My whole life I've been told that I look like a man. I don't believe I ever received a compliment regarding my "looks" as a woman.

I think we all have a crutch to bare in life. We each have a pain that we need to co-exist with. For me, it's my looks.

I wrote a letter today and sent it out to that television show that does make-overs. You know the show, "Beautiful Day". Well, I wrote a passionate letter to those folks with the hopes of getting a make-over.

All I ask is to look and feel beautiful for one day. Sure, I know those books that talk about, "if you're beautiful on the inside, you are beautiful on the outside". My friends and family tell me similar notions. But honestly, let's face it...I'm an ugly duckling.

Oh, I've tried just about everything under the sun that I could possibly get my hands on. You name virtually any damn woman's care product and I either tried it or read about it. Nothing seems to make me feel like a beautiful woman.

Some days I look at those women in movies like Julia Roberts or Audrey Hepburn...just real classy women. Beautiful women. I sometimes wish I were them.

If I could be beautiful on the outside for a day, that would be my dream come true. Just for one day...to see what it feels like. To be able to look into a mirror and like what I see. To be able to get compliments and date men for a change.

LINDA (cont'd): That would be my beautiful day.

JACK: In the end, it really comes down to what's inside. You can spend a lot of wasted time worrying about the way you look, but it won't serve you any better in the end. That's the problem these days, too many are worried about the wrong things and I don't blame you, not your fault but there isn't enough living being done...life is short.

LINDA: It doesn't count for these days, you are judged on-

JACK: You have two choices in life. On one hand you have---

LINDA: Oh Jack, do me a favor and---I don't want to come off rude...but, please, don't try and convince me of a certain way of thinking or the 'right' way to think. I'm too long in the tooth to reconsider those ideas. It's just me and the truth of me and I think I just have to cope with who I am.

JACK: But that's just it? Why cope? Why allow yourself to just go on coping with life? Why settle, Linda?

LINDA: I don't think life *can* be more.

JACK: It is more. We only just met thirty minutes ago and look at how amazing our conversation has been so far. We've talked about the universe, politics, literature, battle of the sexes, our favorite and worst television shows and now *this*...

LINDA: Well---

JACK: And it's been great, for me...hasn't it for you?

LINDA: It has.

JACK: That's why life isn't something you just cope with. It might sound a little cliché but it remains true that we never know what tomorrow brings or the next minute, the next second even. I can't tell you how time can play its magic on us. Today is one of its examples, I was just walking along this path, one that I take all of the time and I had my mind on something, that when I first sat down I didn't even notice you, but there was that harsh gust of wind and it caused me to look up and I then saw you, sitting here by yourself and next thing I know, we were talking.

LINDA: Why did you even talk to me?

JACK: Your posture.

LINDA: What's wrong with my posture?

JACK: No, no, it was the way in which you were sitting. It was so heavy, like the world was falling on your shoulders. And I had to know more because I didn't like the feeling I got when I glanced at you. I felt compelled to know more about you because I didn't want to see you hurting.

LINDA: But you don't even know me, Jack.

JACK: I can't explain it but there was something about your presence that made me take notice of you and want to make sure you were okay...I don't know.

LINDA: You are very sweet. It's good to know there are a few decent men there left in the world.

JACK: No, that's not it, Linda. I don't just go around approaching anybody. There's something unique, different, intriguing about you. That counts for something, right?

LINDA: Does it?

JACK: Perhaps you are a warmhearted and thoughtful person, perhaps you care a lot about the world and other people. I can see that but I can also see someone who is a thinker....someone who knows how to think deeply. Believe it or not, it's a rare quality and too often taken for granted. I think you've put too many people before yourself, am I right? Just like today, you made my lonely day a special one because you cared enough to take the time to talk to me but there is a lot more to you that maybe you don't yet see. I can't tell you how many times a simple conversation with a stranger comes off awkward and weird, they are disconnected from life, from living. They are the types that go about their days in a hurry, no time to think, no time to concentrate. You, I can tell, you're not that kind. I oftentimes wonder if an honest and meaningful conversation with strangers even exists anymore these days. With you, everything seems natural and that's a nice quality to have as a person.

LINDA: Thank you, Jack...I didn't expect that.

JACK: That's why you can't settle. You made my day shine, just a bit to snap me out of my own personal funk and that proves my theory correct. You cannot take this life for granted and settle. You can't cope because you just may serve a greater purpose than yourself. There are bigger things at play than looks. That's artificial. It's nice, but it isn't the substance of existence. All that goes away, disappears, vanishing into nothingness and all that remains is what you are.

(beat) Trust me, I hate when others preach to me but I really, well, I want you to know that I haven't had a conversation this refreshing since I could remember.

LINDA: I understand what you're saying, Jack. I've always thought that I didn't fit in with the crowd but you're saying that's a good thing...and I understand that.

JACK: Don't neglect who you are Linda. Don't get bogged down with the thoughts of what others think, it'll be a waste of everything that is so beautiful. And you've time, a lot more time than me in this life...mine is running out fast.

LINDA: But surely you have time, you seem to be more alive than many...

JACK: And that is why I know you're a thinker. You aren't like the rest of em', that's for sure.

LINDA: Can I have your number?

JACK: My phone number?

LINDA: I've never done this but yes, if it's okay with you Jack, I would like to have your phone number. Perhaps we can meet again sometime.

JACK: Here, (fishing around in his pocket) here's my card, I'm a writer. You can call me and reach me at anytime on that number.

LINDA: A writer?

JACK: Well, freelance, at least until something opens up again.

LINDA: I'm going to call you.

JACK: I would like that, Linda.

LINDA: Would you?

JACK: Of course.

LINDA: I wouldn't be bothering you, would I?

JACK: No, not you.

LINDA: I'm going to be heading back home now. I won't forget all those things you said.

JACK: I know.

LINDA: And I thank you for it. A strange feeling has come over me, I wish we met a little earlier in life. Isn't that a strange thing to say to a stranger?

JACK stands up and extends his hand.

JACK: Well, we aren't strangers anymore, are we?

LINDA: Thanks...I'll try calling you.

LINDA walks off. Jack sits back down on the bench and watches LINDA walk off into the sunset.

JACK: (*to himself*) I hope I'll still be here, Linda.

END OF PLAY