

The Kindness of Strangers

By Janet Soo



On my last trip overseas I was impressed by simple acts of kindness.

I was travelling with a former work colleague. We each had manageable suitcases although not small. We were travelling with every season in mind - from the tropics in Singapore, variable weather in U.K. and the rather cool climate of Iceland.

On our journey from Exeter to Burton-on-Trent during school holidays we boarded an already overcrowded train and could not move into the 2nd class carriage. A young man suggested we move closer to the 1st class compartment. Even at this point I was feeling a little claustrophobic as more people boarded the train. An attendant appeared and told us there were 6 vacant seats in 1st class. I was a bit hesitant, but again the young man came to our aid and virtually pushed us both into the almost empty carriage. Needless to say our cases were left in the doorway.

We settled ourselves in the cool air-conditioned comfort of 1st class. A short time later a young woman came in pulling my case. I had seen her sitting on the carriage floor when we boarded the train. I tried to thank her for bringing my case to me, but she brushed that aside then went to collect my friend's case. Again it was difficult to thank her. I then realised she was a deaf mute so gave her the "thumbs up" sign! She responded with a big smile and I could only hope she had lip read my thanks.

On that same journey a young father with a baby in a rather big pram stopped to lift our cases out of the train.

The following day we were at an airport where a businessman (who travelled extensively for work), kindly walked with us to the check in area and also pointed out a place to get a decent coffee.

They are little acts of kindness, but all appreciated.

Reflection:

With the current COVID-19 pandemic we are hearing more and more stories of little acts of kindness. We pray this will continue long after the pandemic has ended.