

02/15/10 - "Thank You"



A few months ago I found myself boarding an airplane with my three children. It was the end of a very, very long day of travel to get home after a vacation. My children were antsy and I was ready to sleep in my own bed.

We found our seats and the flight attendant, who I noticed was Hispanic, came over with a big smile and said "Hi" to my children. He asked me if my children were adopted. I gave my usual answer of "Yes, I'm an adoptive mother." I'm used to this question as my Hispanic children don't match my fair complexion and blonde hair.

He then asked if they were biologically related and I replied that they weren't. Again, this is a common question I receive. Usually I get annoyed by these adoption questions but on this day when my stress level was through the roof I was happy to answer this man. Possibly it was due to his nice demeanor or his genuine interest in my family.

Later when the attendants were walking down the aisle to check that everyone's seat belts were buckled, this flight attendant stopped at my row and leaned over. He pointed back and forth to my three children and said, "I don't know if anyone has told you this lately?" Here we go, I thought. I'm going to hear "You are an amazing person." or "These children are so lucky."

These two comments I hear often. I don't think that I am an amazing person for adopting, as all I wanted to be was a mom like most every woman. And I think I, not my children, am lucky. I am lucky enough to have been in the right place at the right

time to receive these children into my family. If I had not been there, they would have ended up in someone else's family. Who wouldn't have wanted a healthy newborn babies?

As I could feel my body tensing up with annoyance, the flight attendant continued, "...thank you." I was stunned. Never have I heard this from a stranger regarding my adoptions. My eyes instantly got watery as I said, "Thank you for saying that." Then he quickly moved on down the airplane aisle.

I'm not sure what made him say those words. Maybe he was thanking me because he didn't think people are open to adopting Hispanic children. Maybe he knows children who were not adopted into families. Maybe he has the knowledge of the complicated adoption process and was grateful I stuck through it.

I'll never know why he said "Thank you" to me but I am very happy that he did. On my toughest days of motherhood, I recall this stranger speaking these kind words to me and it makes me smile. I am thankful for my children and being their mother. And I am thankful that this flight attendant went out of his way to thank me for being an adoptive family.

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