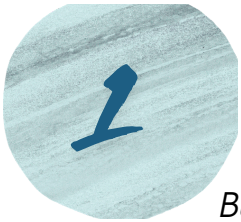


Diamond In The Rough



"So what we're looking at is, ... I was on my way to work, and I bumped into this man, um, who appears to be homeless, and he was digging into the trash. But my, like, point in taking this picture is to be able to portray the stigma that surrounds the idea of asking for help. ... Whereas, like, for example, like, people being perceived as weak. Whether, you know, asking for help could be perceived as weak or, for example, like, the idea that help isn't necessarily something that people may have the ability ... to ask for. ... Like, he was looking for food, so I helped him out. But it was also just the idea of, like, he, [] saw me, but he also didn't ask me for help. You know, I think there comes with a certain level of an idea of like, for example, that people are left to fend for themselves, like, they're in a position of homelessness or drug abuse. ... and within my picture, it was just the point of, like, for example, just the stigma of asking for help, and how people are convinced that it's not something that's achievable or acceptable. You know, a lot of people are quick to decline, for example, to help another person because it's not normalized anymore. ... it makes me feel a little bit distraught. I think [of] myself as a Hispanic male, um, even within, like, -- even within the community of being Hispanic, it's not necessarily normalized. Like, for example, to ask for help, especially as [] a man. You know? So seeing another Hispanic male, like, digging through the tra[sh], I think I can -- not necessarily relate to circumstances, but relate to the idea where the stigma lies. ... And, you know, men overall [...] are conditioned to be strong and independent and providing, and I feel like it's not necessarily normalized where, like, you know, men can also have moments of weakness and, you know, may also need to depend on others as well. So I think I may not be able to relate to circumstances, but I could definitely relate to the stigma of asking for help, and just like the circumstances made me feel a little bit distraught myself."

