



Who Really Sees Me?

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What do I say to the faces that see me?
Who really SEES me?
I may be funny, nice, relatable, smart?
But when the average face sees me do they see me in whole or in part?
Sure, no one can “see” your personality, education, or credentials at first glance.
But when the average face sees me do they give me that chance?
What do I say to the PharmD classmate who told me
my presence was merely to meet a quota?
Only to discover that compared to my scholastic achievements,
his was an iota
That’s not to demean the classmate, simply to state facts as they appear
To admit his comment made me question the space I occupied
Noting a similar amount of black and brown faces in each graduating year
Why is that?
What do I say to the patient that assumes my student is the pharmacist
And I’m the support staff?
What do they see that pushes that conclusion?
I try to brush it off with a joke and a laugh
But still I wonder..
What do I say to the faces that see me?
Who really SEES me?
Do they assume the best of me? That I’m a hard worker, lover of people, servant leader, lover of God?
Or do they allow their bias to take root and think, a Black pharmacist, how odd?
Sure, there are other black pharmacists, more than you can count
But when you look out into our community, I’m sure you can talley that amount
Why is that?
Not just pharmacists, but all healthcare providers
Why is that?
Not just health care providers but teachers and lawyers
Why is that?
Not just teachers and lawyers, but most positions of power
Why is that?
So many questions. Aloud and in my mind
Some may seem subtle, but none are benign
To wonder if my natural hair is “professional” or am I being too assertive
I don’t want to be labelled the “angry Black woman” they’ve all “heard” of
But why can’t I be angry?

From Greensboro, NC.

People who look like me are being killed at the hands of protectors!
People who look like me are dying at a higher rate in this pandemic!
Why is that?
We could go on all day and ask the same questions each time
But at what point do we look at ourselves, our community, our nation
And say, these questions...they're mine
Not for the government to figure out or some organization over there
But each individual, each perspective, each heir
Heirs to the throne of the democracy we were promised to be the Land of the Free
But that Land of the Free...is it free for me?
Or do the Black Lives have to continue to pay the price for the country they built
Where we have to stay silent in fear of White guilt?
I'm a Black woman and have endured my share
I know this is uncomfortable, but the work begins there (in your heart and mind)
What do I say to the faces that see me?
Who really SEES me?
Ask yourself, do you think all these thoughts with just one stare?

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