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Personal Narrative Final Draft

The Eye Opener

The cloudy, chilly, and dull afternoon in Mexico City, Mexico, turned out to be one of the moments I would remember forever. From the chaotic airport to a coach bus full of sleepy people heading to Puebla from Mexico City, I was in awe with what I'd been witnessing. As we zoomed passed the roads, I saw people littering, people wearing ripped clothing, and I saw small homeless camps with children in them. But, as I saw it more and more, I started to question myself by thinking, *Do I actually appreciate the things I have?* It took me a while to answer that question in my head. Once I got the answer, I was thinking that I've been this girl who has always said "thank you" and never actually meant it when I got something.

I wished I could do something, but I was there on the bus with luxuries that others wished they could afford. I was feeling restrained while I just sat there and watched. There were parts where we passed nice monuments, but I didn't even pay attention to them because I was overwhelmed with what I'd seen earlier. All I was focused on was those people and how I wished they had the life I am fortunate to have. My heart started to beat faster and harder every time we would pass a site where there was extreme poverty. I shed a tear or two in the process of seeing it all. This trip was supposed to be a happy trip because I was going to see family I hadn't seen in a while. My visit with my family was supposed to be happy and full of joy. Instead, I was sad and sorry the whole ride to Puebla. In that moment, I wished that I had a magical wand, so I could grant those people a house, a job, and the basic necessities. But, I had to live in reality knowing that no such things exist.

When we were an hour into the bus ride, it started to rain hard. When I thought I could just forget about those poor people, there I was again thinking about them. With barely any shelter, they had to face the rage of mother nature with a heavy downpour. Thankfully, it didn't last too long, but I was sure it affected them in some way. *If only... If only I could do something.* That thought followed me throughout my whole trip in Mexico. There were worse things I saw there. I saw many people beg for food or money on the streets. Basically giving cries for help. I

could almost hear the whimpers of the children and the desperation of the parents trying so hard to provide for their family. There I was, with a full stomach and money to buy souvenirs or anything I wanted, feeling bad that I had these luxuries when they didn't even have a full stomach. I could smell the burning of rubber as we walked along the sidewalks as we headed to the center of the town where there was lots of activities happening. As I was walking, I tried so hard not to be sad and have a gloomy face, but that was almost impossible. People were selling humble items they made, like blankets, cheese, food, curtains, etc. I saw children playing soccer with a dilapidated ball, but their facial expressions were joyous. They were having fun and happy, even though the ball was old and bad looking. I couldn't help but smile at the fact that they enjoyed their only fun.

After many times going to Mexico, I've seen worse and worse. From poverty to unpleasant living conditions. Seeing that has made me be more thankful for the things I have. This has changed me because now when I get something I am appreciative, but I also think about the people who can't enjoy these luxuries. I'm no longer selfish and only thinking about myself. This taught me that not everyone has the simplest of things, like a home, shelter, food, and money to support themselves with. I'm more appreciative for what I receive and am no longer the selfish person I once was.