

Ashley

It was the nearing the end of the seventh grade. I was just beginning to hear the stories about how much fun the past eight graders had on their trip to Washington DC. I wanted to go so bad!

“Mom, can I please go?” I begged. “I promise I’ll do whatever you ask me to forever! PLEASE!”

“Ashley, I don’t know. First of all this trip, it’s over a year away, and it’s really a lot of money. Can’t we talk about when it gets a little closer?” my mom responded.

I answered her quickly, “No Mom, see that’s why they want to figure out who is going to go now. They want everybody to have enough time to make the payments, and you don’t have to pay all of it at one time. Please Mom, I really want to go!”

“I don’t know yet,” my mom stated, “I’ll talk to Dad tonight. But that’s all I can promise for now.

The next day I got off of the bus and I walked into our house. I immediately went to talk to my mom about this amazing adventure I desperately wanted to go on.

“Mom, did you talk to Dad yet?” I asked.

My mom just looked at me and I could tell by the look in her eye that something was wrong. “I don’t think we’re going to be able to let you go. We talked about it and it seems like such a great opportunity. But Ashley, it just costs so much. We don’t have that kind of spare money right now to just spend like that. We would send you if we could. I’m sorry.”

“Are you serious?” I snapped back. “This sucks! I really wanted to go, but whatever I guess.”

Over the summer transitioning from seventh to eight grade I got over it, and eventually just forgot about the trip. School started and months past by, until it was December sixth, my birthday. I came home from school and looked around; there was nothing, no cake or anything. Now my mom goes completely nuts about holidays and birthdays and things like that; there is always something there when we get home. Whether it's a cake, gifts, balloons, or just the sweet smell of my favorite dinner in the oven, there's always something. My mom walked into the kitchen and she looked happy.

“Happy birthday honey; how was school?” my mom asked.

“Fine, um, are we doing anything tonight?”

My mom looked at me and chuckled, “Of course we are; you just wait.” She smiled at me her biggest smile. I gave her a weird, confused look and my sister Casey and I laughed at her.

Later that night we ate our dinner. Casey made me a birthday cake and my whole family sang Happy Birthday to me. Then we ate cake and after that my mom gave me an envelope. I looked to my mom and then to my dad cautiously. What was inside the envelope? I was really confused. I waited a minute and then looked around at my family again. They were all smiling at me sweetly and I could tell they were all anxious for me to open it. So I did.

“WHAT?!?!?” I screamed. Inside the envelope was a receipt for a plane ticket. I couldn't believe what I was seeing, what I was holding in my hands. “I thought I wasn't going!”

My whole family laughed at me. “Well now you are!” exclaimed my sister.

“Oh my god. I can't believe this. I can't believe you would trick me like this!”

“Well are you happy?” my dad asked.

“Yea I’m really happy, and really surprised! Wow! I’m actually going to Washington DC. I guess there’s just six months to go before I’m actually there!”

Finally the long six months passed and my long awaited trip was finally here! My parents took me to the airport and we said our goodbyes and they left. The group waited and finally we got on the plane. I was so nervous. The plane took off and we landed shortly in Detroit, Michigan. We needed to wait about an hour before we could get on our next flight. Eventually we got on the plane and took off. It was a bumpy, nauseating flight. We finally got to Washington DC! I was so excited, and yet completely nervous. My heart was beating so fast! As we walked off of the plane down the platform my stomach flip-flopped as I thought of all the exciting, new things scheduled for the next few days.

We got into the main area of the huge airport. There were so many people, all with some place to go. I found my group and we all called off our numbers loudly and fiercely so we would be heard. We headed for the doors. The bus wasn’t there yet so we all sat and waited while we trembled with excitement of what lied before us. I couldn’t believe I was actually there, actually in Washington DC. Then our big bus drove in and parked outside the doors. The pouring rain made everybody rush out the doors and put our massive amount of luggage into the bottom storage compartment. We all piled onto the wide bus and quickly found our seats. We looked out the windows that lined the entire bus and just looked out at the landscape. It was amazing already! The butterflies in my stomach were building up and I was ready for us to go. I was ready to start the adventure.

The bus started off and left a black poof of exhaust in the massive parking lot. We headed for the packed highway to pick up the other group of students. We picked them up and learned they were from the state of Washington. They talked with a peculiar yet interesting accent, but I'm sure they thought the same of us. Now we were headed for our next destination, The Holocaust Museum. We waited across the street for the fast traffic to allow us to cross. We walked in and sat in a friendly and comfortable waiting room. Then a guide came in and handed us a little book. Inside this book was a person, a person who had gone through the Holocaust. It told us a little bit about their families and their lives. They also told about which concentration camps they went through, and whether they survived through it or not. The museum was amazing. The exhibits made you really think about all the horrible things that these people went through. The last exhibit we went through was one about a little boy. It showed his house, it was more or less a shack. It was the main children's exhibit but it was by far the coolest one there. After we were finished in the Holocaust Museum we headed outside. We had about 10 long minutes to wait before the bus would come roaring through the street. We waited across the street and just admired the beautiful flowers along the building. The air smelled so fresh, like the beginning of spring. The bus came back and took us to all of our many destinations. It was an amazing experience to see the magical wonders of Washington DC. We went back to the hotel that night and basically bonded with the other school. We swam in the pool for a little while and then went back up to our room.

We woke up the next morning and visited many places. Then at lunchtime, we went to this taco restaurant. Those were the best tacos ever! We went throughout the rest of the day and by about 9:30 we were back at our hotel. The pool was already closed so

we just got to hang out in other rooms with our classmates. The next day we went to the George Washington Plantation. It was by far the hottest day out of the three. We dragged along the dirt pathways as we looked on at all the different things that were brought back from the past. Then we said our goodbyes to friends that we made in the other group and headed for the airport.

When we got to the airport and it started raining little tiny droplets. We found out about 10 minutes later that it was horrible weather in Detroit, and we had to wait until it was safe for our plane to take off. It seemed like we sat there forever but I think it was really only two or three hours. Finally the loudspeaker echoed throughout the airport. We would be leaving within 10 minutes! Hurrying, we all grabbed our luggage and got ready to go. It was a long flight, but it was fun! Once we got to Detroit we literally had to run to a subway like thing in the airport. Because of the time change, our flight was taking off about two minutes after we had just got there. Within minutes the subway had stopped and we all rushed out to get to the flight attendant so we could give her our tickets. We boarded the plane and took our seats. It took forever to finally get to the right take-off road, but then we were on our way home. Then I just fell asleep.

I woke up as the flight attendant said that we would be landing in a few minutes. I watched the ground get closer and closer and the tires screeched as we hit the ground. I was home. I walked down the long hallway and saw my mom, my sister, and a little girl that we were babysitting. I was sad that the trip was over, but once I got home I was so happy to be back in my own bed. I still can't believe that I went on this trip. It was one of the best experiences of my entire life and I won't ever forget it! Don't ever give up hope that you won't be able to do something, because you could get surprised in the end.