
LOVE TOWARDS MEXICO

The good thing of traveling alone is that you feel like you're an adult, you have your own seat and you don't have an adult to tell you what rated R movie, you can't or can watch on the Airplane. But being super high in the sky is the scariest part, especially when it's your first time.

I was 8 years old when my mom asked me if I wanted to go and visit my family in Mexico. I'd never traveled to another country or seen my grandparents. I thought it was cool, all my friends had their grandparents here, and I didn't. Without thinking twice, I accepted her request. I was leaving for two months; but, there was a catch. My parents wouldn't be able to go with me.

You see both my parents were not born in the United States, they'd be able to go with me, but not come back with me. So I had to go alone, I had to sleep early, and go to the flight departing so early in the morning. I had all my stuff packed and ready, it was like everything had to be perfect. I couldn't sleep, I'm sure you've had that feeling too, where you're super excited for something, and couldn't sleep.

I was woken up by my mom at 5 in the morning, I was so excited I felt super energetic, you see how you wake up and stretch and your eyes are still a little shut, yeah that wasn't my case. I jumped up, my eyes were wide open. I got my clothes already in the heater, and got ready as fast as speedy Gonzales. It was a two hour drive to the airport. We had to go to New York's international airport, so I could have had a straight flight to Mexico City.

I felt like it was the most important day of my life, I had a strange feeling where I thought my life was going amazing. When it was time to go, it was kinda sad, we had a family friend who was going to take me all the way to the gate of my airplane. I hugged my mom and at that time my step-dad. I kinda cried, when I passed through security, I saw my mom cry and I felt alone. I walked alongside our family friend, I saw the multiple gates, and people sleeping and people eating. When I got to where my flight

was, a hostess checked my ticket and I was taken inside the airplane. I also said goodbye to the friend (sadly I forgot his name).

I was first in the plane, it felt weird, I sat down and the hostess told me that when we landed I had to stay in my seat and she'd come for me, she also gave me a pair of headphones. I was lucky that my parents got me a seat next to the window, I saw everything. All the other planes leave, and I just wondered how it felt to fly, I was gonna feel it in a couple of minutes.

I started to touch the screen in front of me and check out what it was, it had movies and music. I thought it was cool, I also had my 3DS so I felt like it was going to be a fun flight. They started to let the other passengers inside, I saw people pass by and put their bags on the top shelves. Then I saw a girl, stop right in front of the row of seats next to me, I was young and I thought she was cute, I was kinda shy, so I kinda looked outside. A lady came along with her, and they started to put their bags in the upper selve. The girl sat next to me and next to the girl sat her mom. I looked at them and the girl looked at me, I smiled and she smiled back. You could say I was a lady's man, just kidding. But it was cool having someone, I didn't talk much.

When it was time to take off, the screen right in front of me started to play a video, it started to talk about the airline, and safety measures, after it the pilot talked and explained the time, and the destination. If only Kevin from Home Alone would have taken his headphones to listen to the hostess talk, he probably wouldn't have gone to New York. But this wasn't my case, I was already going alone in the beginning. When the plane started to go fast to take flight, it was shaking a lot, and I got scared. I sure was holding on to my dear life. It started to go up and my body went up with it, I felt how I was going up and my heart was going down. I was getting scared, and the girl next to me must have seen that I was scared. But the feelings that they both gave me were anxiety, anxiety that I was flying, and anxiety that I was gonna act like a crybaby in front of someone like her, of course I was little and I worried about how people looked at me. She was like 12 or 14, I was 8. She grabbed my hand, and I looked at her, and she gave me a smile. In my mind I thought, " I got this chick now". But of course I was scared and started to cry, her mom looked at me and told me it was going to be fine. I started to think of my mom, they told me to watch a movie so I could feel better.

I don't really exactly remember what movies I watched but I was more calm. I also played Mario in my 3DS. They served me food, but very simple stuff. I couldn't get much because I didn't have money to have stuff, and I'm sure I needed a credit card. I had a conversation with a girl and her mom, about why I was going to Mexico, I also told her where I was from. Which probably wasn't such a good idea, "stranger danger", but these two looked nice for me. I wished I was older so I could have gotten some of their

information to be friends, but all I had was a 3DS, I couldn't even ask if she had a gamertag so we could have played sometime. What I found amazing was the sky, I could see the clouds, and the dark part of the sky.

When we were close to landing I saw cities and mountains, that's why I fell in love with Mexico. I felt like I was where I belonged, it was a true beauty seeing everything. The pilot gave us the sign to put our seatbelts on and we all did, I had trouble putting it on so the girl helped. When we were close to the ground, I clinched on to my seat once again, and once again the girl, seeing that I was in fear, grabbed onto my hand, and we landed.

I had to stay on my seat, while they grabbed their bags, once they got them all. We said goodbye, till this day, I'm kinda sad I can't remember their names. But I do hope they're doing good, it's a memory I'll always carry with me. Everyone was getting out of the plane, I looked around, and then looked out the window, to the distance stood to mountains, and it was all green. I took a deep breath and smiled.

The Hostess came and took me out of the plane, everyone was already gone. We walked to the place where they stamped my passport, I had crossed to MEXICO. They walked me to a big gate that opened and I saw a lot of people. I also wasn't the other kid there traveling alone, I saw other kids, and it felt kinda funny. My mom had shown me a picture of my grandma to know how she looked. I looked around to see if I could find her. After I heard someone scream my name, I looked to the side, and saw a woman just like my mom smiling straight at me. I knew it was her, I told the hostess and she took me to them. She gave me a big hug, I felt at home, it was my first time seeing her, and she looked like my mom, and she was so young which was more crazy.

Her and a friend of our family helped me with my stuff, we went to the parking lot, everything was in spanish. The parking lot was completely sealed, and I couldn't see outside, which I wanted so badly. We got to the car, and put my stuff in the trunk, the whole environment felt totally different. When we were going out the sun was like a flash bang, I saw light. As my eyes were adjusting to the light, I started to see the outside world. It was amazing, there was a big building, cars and motorcycles. This was my country, and I felt very proud to be there. I learned to be brave, and how to be by myself that day. Now when I go, I sit back in the airplane seat and enjoy myself.

ARTIST STATEMENT

Something I really took away from Trevor Noah's memoir was his sense of humor. I tried to incorporate humor into my memoir, I just hope it was somewhat funny for the reader. He had humor in his vignette and a part where you can see that is on page 107. He says "he had a cheeky smile with two big teeth". That shows the humor from his life, between him and his mom. As I've said before, I like Trevor Noah, I see his shows, and I'm aware that he is known for his comedy. So me being a person who likes humor, I got that from his books, and put that style in my, with my own life situations and thoughts. I did two, thoughts and humor. Trevor wrote down what he was thinking at that moment and he also wrote down some funny lines. I explained my Mexican- American culture, because many other kids have to go through that, where they must travel alone to see their other family members, it's a good feeling, but you wished you had your whole family together. But I also show that I wasn't the only one traveling alone, when I talked about the other kids. It explains a moment from my life, and it shows what I have to do everytime I go see my family in Mexico. I see this culture as both the Mexican culture and the Chicano culture. The Chicano culture because I'm from a Mexican family, but I was born in the United States. Not many Mexican Americans in Philadelphia consider themselves "chicanos" do to that it's only really said in movies or used more in the west where it first originated back in the 1960's. Lastly, it's the Mexican culture, because I couldn't talk a lot about my experience in

Mexico but I experience the Mexican culture, which is beautiful and I love going to Mexico, I truly feel at peace. But I hope y'all liked my story. Thank you.