

## An Awakening

I hear my alarm clock go off. Ughh, time to get up, it is way too early for this. Just another five minutes of sleep, I think to myself. I drift back to sleep in the warm comfort of my bed.

“Lisa!” my mother shouts. I jolt out of bed, it’s 6:55. “We’re leaving in 5 minutes, I hope you’re ready.” I hurriedly dress and grab my backpack and a doughnut. I dash through the rain and get into the car. My hair is messy and I feel annoyed. Why didn’t I get up earlier?

Waking up too late isn’t an anomaly either, for the past couple weeks I rarely get out of bed in time to do a proper morning routine. Maybe next time, I think. In reality tomorrow probably won’t be any different.

I quickly walk through school to history. The teacher is passing out tests. Oh no! I forgot we had a test today. I’ll just have to wing it. The test is harder than expected and I don’t know some of the answers. The teacher is absorbed in his laptop. I sneak a glance at the kid next to me’s paper. She has marked the A bubble, I thought it was A or C so I basically did it myself. That’s what I tell myself anyway.

A couple of classes later I have lunch. I join my friends and we sit at our usual table. As I’m walking to them I pass a girl who always sits alone. I kinda feel bad for her but what can I do? If I sat with her everyone would think I was a loser. I’m not going to risk everything for kid I don’t even know.

After school I’m babysitting for the Dubois family. As I’m walking up their long driveway I look around. Their house is pretty big and I’m jealous. I knock on the door and from inside I hear Mrs. Dubois shout, “Come in!” I enter, kicking my shoes off. “I’m in the den,” I hear her say. Walking in, I see huge mountains of stuff. “Don’t mind the mess,” she says “I’m cleaning out the attic. I’ll be here the whole time, just keep Chelsea out of my hair.”

“Okay, sounds good.” I go off to find Chelsea. The hours fly by and soon Mrs. Dubois comes to the basement where Chelsea and I are playing.

“I think I’m done sorting today, but I have so much more to do.”

“Bye Chelsea” I say as I go upstairs. As Mrs. Dubois is getting my pay, I absentmindedly pick up a little, wooden jewelry box. It’s pretty with flowers painted on the sides. “Oh you can have that if you want, I was going to give it away.”

“Are you sure?” I ask.

“Yeah, it was my grandmother’s but I just don’t have room for it.”

“Well thank you, it’s really pretty.”

At home I examine the jewelry box. I’m supposed to be doing my homework but I’ll just do it later. Inside the box the velvet lined drawers are empty. As I’m fiddling with them I notice a small lever. I gently press it and another drawer opens at the bottom. A

secret compartment, awesome! Inside the compartment I can't believe what I find, five one hundred dollar bills - \$500! Oh my god, I think. This is so lucky. I can buy so much. That night in bed I think about what I'm going to buy. I'll probably get some clothes, and I can get a new pair of shoes cause my dog ate one of mine. I excitedly mull over the possibilities.

The next day, Saturday, passes pretty uneventfully. I don't use the money because I'm worried Mrs. Dubois will somehow remember that there is money in the box. If I don't hear from her I plan on spending some of it Sunday after church school.

Before I know it I'm sitting in church school. I expect it to be boring, especially when I hear the topic, meditation. It's actually not too bad though and we get to learn all sorts of meditation, breathing, walking, even one where we do all these stretches. As I'm leaving I actually feel really peaceful and in the moment. It's not until I get home do I remember the money. Suddenly I'm not so excited to spend it, maybe I should just save it. No that doesn't feel right either. Maybe, I think tentatively I should give it back. What, no that would be crazy. Why would I do that? They're rich, they have enough money as it is, plus they gave it to me, it's mine. In my heart, though, I know what the right thing to do is.

As I'm riding my bike to their house I feel oddly at peace with the situation. When I arrive I knock at the door. Mrs. Dubois answers, "Hi Lisa, I wasn't expecting you here today." I tell her what happened. When I finish she looks stunned, "My grandmother must have been saving, thank you so much for returning the money. So many people would've just taken it. As a reward, I'll give you a hundred."

"You don't have to do that." I protest.

"No you deserve it." She says handing me a hundred.

"Thank you so much!" Later that day I spend some of it but I also save some. Although it's way less than \$500 it feels like I actually deserve it, instead of feeling like I stole it. I know I made the right decision. Something else changed too, in the way I lived my life. I think back to Friday, how I had procrastinated, cheated, and only thought about myself. Now I'm in the moment. As I look back at that decision I can say it probably changed my life for the better, all because I meditated and started seeing things clearly for the first time.