

AISHA HASSAN

I had just arrived in Iceland after a long overnight flight and I was absolutely exhausted because we all know how flights can be. They're always super uncomfortable, cold, and makes it just impossible to sleep. So, I was very tired by the time we arrived, but at the same time, I was so excited, I was going to be in this foreign country for the first time.

When I finally stepped off the plane and I saw outside and saw what the country actually looked like, it was astonishing, and so, like, eye-opening because, like, it just looked so different.

There was volcanic rock, all this different fauna I've never seen, and moss just absolutely everywhere. It looked as if you had stepped off of planet Earth and arrived on a different planet completely. I was just so amazed and so ecstatic to be there because it just looked so different and I felt like, 'wow the world really is so big and stuff like this exists' cause I had spent my whole life in Toronto, so I'd never seen what the rest of the world looked like.

We also had this really long day planned, where we were gonna go to a planetarium, and then we were gonna go to an energy plant, and we were gonna end it off with this big hike up a volcano.

Now, I myself was pretty scared but excited at the same time, just because I don't do the best when it comes to physical activity, I tend to fall a lot and I'm pretty clumsy. So, I was very scared I was gonna fall off the edge and I didn't really have too much courage to go up the side of the volcano, but my friends had really encouraged me to do so and with their help, I finally made it to the top of the volcano.

And when I did and I looked over, I just, it was like a moment of bliss and clarity where you see just, those houses that were so big before were now so small, and the people walking around at the bottom looked like little ants. I know they always say, 'oh, people look like ants from high up' but they really did look like ants and I had just felt as if I was part of a greater collective in that moment with all my friends, doing something I'd never done before and grabbing all this energy that I never would have experienced if I hadn't mustered up the strength to go up the volcano.

Anyway, it was so exciting and I was so, so, so, so happy to be trying something new and to succeed in something I'd never thought I could do.