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A typical street scene in Calcutta, The city wakes to the sounds, smells, and color of a new day.

CHAPTER 3

Arrival in India

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WORDS OF MOTHER TERESA rang in my head as I prepared to fly to India. She had said that Western societies had the spiritually poorest of the poor. While they might not have the most physically poor, rich nations produced spiritually poor people. It was also her position that while one might offer food and shelter to the truly poor, it was a difficult task to take away the anger, bitterness, and loneliness those people feel.

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On August 22, 1995, I was on a Lufthansa plane bound for India. Before I left Atlanta, the Sisters from the AIDS home gave me gifts to deliver to Mother Teresa. One of the gifts was a box of Godiva chocolates — one of her few indulgences.

During my ten-hour layover in the Frankfurt airport, I had a couple of petty arguments with women who worked in the terminal. The first was with a sales clerk who impatiently cleared the counter of face creams because I didn't make my selection quick enough. Another argument was with a Lufthansa employee who wouldn't let me sit in an area that was cordoned off, even though at the time there were no other seats available in the terminal. I reacted with hostility to these women when I perceived their individual aggressive behaviors.

When I boarded the plane for Bombay, within minutes of our departure, an Indian man dressed in blue jeans and a blazer left his seat and sat next to me. He looked at me and greeted me with a familiar look. Without hesitation he remarked, "You had a very bad week. It was very hot where you were." He was right. I had been trying to move and pack in temperatures that were over 100 degrees Fahrenheit in Georgia.

Never taking a pause he continued, "Your prayers saved your father. It could have been yes, or it could have been *no*." I was caught completely off guard and

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