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English Composition I (ENG 100)

Professor Mangini

Formal Assignment #2: Narrative Project, Draft # 2

Due Date: 11:59 pm on Sunday, March 1.

Memphis Drags

“What do you think about us going to Memphis for the “Pump Gas Drags?”

My girlfriend replied, “Um, sure. That’s a really long trip. How are we going to do this? Trailer the car I guess?”

I said, “Yep, how else are we going to get it there, load it on a plane?”

She replied, “Ok smart ass. I guess your parents would go too? I mean I guess they would definitely want to go. How are they going to feel about it?”

I replied, “Well, I’ll have to talk to them about it. I don’t think I’ll be chosen by Hot Rod Magazine to go, so it’s probably not going to pan out.”

A little while later, I went to my Parents house, and I spoke to Mom and Pop about it. They were on board with the idea. My Mom was excited to go, it was somewhere she hadn’t been. My Dad was thinking like me, and said, “You won’t get invited to go.”

I filled out the application and had my girlfriend email it to Hot Rod along with pictures of my Chevelle. I really didn’t hold out much hope that I’d ever hear back from them, so I just went on about my life.

On a steamy early summer like evening in May, I'm sitting in my car, in the staging lanes fire suit on, helmet in hand, seat belts tightened to the point I can barely move, my seat hugging me to keep me secure in the car. Looking through the windshield watching the cars ahead of me pulling into the water box to do their burnouts, smoke filling the air like fog in the early morning. Waiting for my chance to roll into the burnout box, and make my pass down the drag strip. While watching and waiting I was reminded of how the trip to Memphis came about.

One morning, while I was at work, my girlfriend texted me while I was at work. The text read, “call me as soon as you can.” I called her and what followed was a huge shock.

My girlfriend, in an excited but quiet voice, said, “DUDE, WE’RE GOING TO MEMPHIS!”

I wasn’t sure if what I thought I heard was in fact what she said.

In my state of shock, I asked, “Seriously? No way!”

My Girlfriend replied, “I’m dead serious Bill. I’ll read you the email.”

As my girlfriend read me the email, I was still in disbelief. She’s reading off deadlines for submitting this and that, and of course there’s a deadline to accept the invitation. When I hung up with my girlfriend I said to my friend, “I am one of the 75 people who were picked to race in the Pump Gas Drags at Memphis Motor Sports Park.” As the words are coming out of my mouth, I still couldn’t believe what I was saying.

Getting approval from my Girlfriend and parents to go was the easy part, the hard part was yet to come. Getting time off from work was going to be the part that I was going to have to work a lot harder to achieve the desired result. There wasn’t anything anyone could do to help me, I had to do this on my own, for the most part. After a few moments of speculation with a couple people I worked with about the outcome, it was time to ask the question. So off I went!

“Well no time like the present” I said to myself as I made my way into the plant managers office and asked, “I need to know if I can get an advance on my vacation time and if not then I need to take a leave of absence for four days in May. I’ve been invited to go to Memphis, Tennessee to participate in Hot Rod Magazine’s Pump Gas Drags.”

Being the asshole that he was he responded with, “Company policy is to not advance vacation time, and as far as a leave of absence is concerned it has to be approved.”

I responded with, “This is a once in a life time opportunity I probably won’t ever get this chance again, all the bullshit reasons all the rest of the people in here come up with to get time off, and you’re going to give me a hard time asking about asking for time off for something like this, fuck you I’ll go over your head!”

And with that I went to talk to the head of Human Resources and see if she would give me the time off. When I arrived at her office door, she looked like she was buried in a sea of paper. I made my presence known by knocking on the door jamb to her office, and proceeded to tell her what the situation was and what asshole had told me. She responded with, "I will talk to him and let you know in a day or two, what the decision is.", and for some reason I was okay with that.

A little while later, the maintenance man and I sitting in the maintenance shop, talking at break time, down the aisle I see the plant manager approaching us. I said the maintenance man, "Here comes asshole, if he comes over here and tells me they're not going to give me the time off I asked for I'm going to cuss his ass out!"

Plant manager begins with "I'm going to settle this issue right now because I'm tired of hearing about it." And proceeds to tell us that company is going to advance me four days' vacation and this is a one-time deal and that I had to up to H.R. and sign a document outlining what the company doing for me and why they were doing it. Along with our Union President I headed up to H.R. to sign, Which, we did that same day.