Nowadays, more and more youngsters devote their spare time to volunteer services. It has somehow become a trend as a lot of teachers encourage their students to help the needy and to open their hearts to the world around them. Volunteer service not only benefits the volunteers but also makes the world a better place for everyone. As a student, I also do volunteer work during summer and winter vacations in nearby hospitals or libraries. However, there is a particular place I want to go when I have the chance.

When I was seven years old, my father was assigned by his company to live in India for a while to expand the market there. Therefore, he took my mother and I also. Little did I know that this experience would change my life dramatically. I was too young to feel the inconvenience in India as, for a child, playing is all that mattered. I had a very delightful and heathly childhood there, running in the fields and playing cricket with my friends. But despite all these wonderful memories, I also noticed the unfair and injustice of the country when it comes to the Caste system. “All men are equal.” is a concept that was introduced to the world in the eighteenth century during the Enlightenment, but in the twenty-first century of India, people still have a strong sense of hierarchy. They don’t tolerate people from other castes; there were even tragical news such as a loving young couple got married but were both from different castes that were murdered by their families! People of India have been brainwashed for thousands of years, so the poor are always poor, whereas the rich are getting richer as the economics fly. This leads to a pathetic phenomenon as people who were “destined” to be beggars have to be beggars even if he or she has the brain of a brilliant engineer. As I’ve said earlier, I was too young and naive to realize all this deeply but thankfully, my father took me to a special place just before we left for Taiwan after five years of residence, and that had opened my eyes.

I remember it was a long trip, not because it was really far but it was so rural that the place lacked proper public transportation. Therefore, we got there by jeep and walked at least half an hour to get to the house. It was an orphanage. The master of the house is a kind old man and there were atleast fifty orphans. They were either my age or younger than me. I was shocked by the place they lived in as the rooms were small but had to accomodate so many people so they sometimes sleep “on” each other! According to the old man’s description, the house doesn’t have electricity and water facilities, so the orphans had to take turns to draw water from the well and they also had to work at times to earn their own living. They were really kind to me and eagerly showed me around the house. My family stayed there for two days and when we were about to leave, a little girl gave me a bouquet of wild flowers. I was deeply moved and thoughts ran through my mind that had never run before. I began to realize that I was a very lucky girl, I had parents who loved my dearly and could go to school to learn new knowleges whereas their lives are full of uncertainty as they had to leave once they reached adulthood. From then on, I’ve made up my mind to come back again someday to help people like them.

“It is more blessed to give than to receive.” Even though I am now a senior in high school and have to study very hard to get to my dream university. But I have never forgotten the promise I made to myself when I was little. I believe one day, I’ll go back to the country I’ve spent my childhood in, enjoy the familiar smell of hot air and fulfill my promise.