As we walked along the jagged pavement, I was staring at the starry night sky, marvelling at its beauty. As soon as I turned my back, the land seemed barren as if there were no signs of life in this theme park once known as the land full of joy. The thought of me getting lost in Disneyland Tokyo never occurred to me and when it did strike, a sense of gripping fear and anxiety struck me. I scurried along to find my parents and friends to no avail. I was flooded with thoughts of me being kidnapped and panicked for a bit.

I took a moment to regain my composure and tried to loosen up as I thought to myself that panicking would do me no good. I didn’t have a phone at the time so there wasn’t a way for me to communicate with my parents. I calmly approached a bulletin board with a map of the huge park. My biggest fear was that I’d never find them in a park with such an area. But I had an idea in which I factored my own safety as well as the viability of me finding my parents. It was nearing the closing hours and people were adamant to leave the land full of wonders. That’s when I realized that there was only 1 exit and so long as I held that choke point, I would eventually see them. I decided to pitch up on one of the sides where security guards manning the exit stations could see me but I could overlook everyone exiting. It was tough to not be able to communicate with others due to the language barrier but I eventually got over it and was just praying at that point hoping that my parents hadn’t left.

When I saw my parents approach the gleaming gate towards the exit, it felt like all form of anxiety and fear had vanished and I breathed a sigh of relief. I bolted as fast as possible to them and saw their uneasy faces. They looked extremely worried and the same can be said for my friends. We finally reunited and I can’t tell you how much joy I felt after that. I crashed on my bed that night and could only ponder on what would’ve happened if I couldn’t critically think.

Hi Marc,

Though the prompt is not stated here, I think that your story would work well with prompt 2 (***The lessons we take from obstacles we encounter can be fundamental to later success. Recount a time when you faced a challenge, setback, or failure. How did it affect you, and what did you learn from the experience?).***

You have selected probably the most popular prompt, one that holds relevance for the majority of applicants. It is likely that everyone has encountered challenging obstacles, just like your story. To stand out from the rest of the applicants, it is crucial to highlight your unique perspective on the world and demonstrate your ability to handle such adversities when crafting your personal statement.

Since getting lost is a common occurrence that almost everyone has experienced, it is crucial that your story is modified so that you can provide admissions officers with an authentic glimpse into your distinctive viewpoint.

Universities are interested in observing your maturity, resilience, and thoughtfulness through your personal narrative. Your story should showcase how you confronted a particular obstacle and, instead of giving up, responded with a creative and dignified solution. I feel that this part is not yet clear in your essay. From what I read, you tried to calm down and wait for them at the exit? This is a logical approach, and thus it is even more imperative that you put a fun/thrilling/exciting twist in your story to make it more unique and personal.

It is important to embrace vulnerability in your personal statement, openly revealing your anxiety and fears. Additionally, as indicated in the prompt, elaborate on the lessons you learned from the experience and the enduring impact it has had on your life. This is another part that is yet to be explored in your essay.

I highly suggest following this outline: context, obstacle, reaction, result.

1. In the intro, ensure that you provide sufficient background information and context for better understanding. I’ve left specific side comments and also examples on how you can better revise this part.

## **Clearly define the obstacle. Please see side comments as well on how to best build up the rising panic and anxiety.**

1. Show your reaction in details: You’ve provided some details, but to make your narrative stand out further, I’d advise you to read the comments to elevate the language and coherence of the story.

## What valuable lessons did you learn? Moreover, highlight how you are currently

## implementing these insights in your life or future goals. This part is still missing in your narrative, and it is imperative that you include the answer to this question in your essay. Highlight the specific lessons you learned from navigating through this adversity. Did it teach you the importance of perseverance, adaptability, or self-reliance? Did it reveal newfound strengths or qualities within yourself? Explore how the experience shaped your outlook on life, your values, or your aspirations.

Best of luck!

Melinda