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Before I left home I told myself I was going to be as open minded as possible. When we got to Nairobi I didn't feel like I was in another country yet. I felt like I was just in another little California town. After we left the airport we went to have breakfast and I can't lie I was expecting the restaurant to have Kenyan food but I was wrong. It was very American. That made me realize that I was being stereotypical. After breakfast we went to feed the giraffes and see orphaned elephants. It was fun but I still didn't feel like I was halfway across the world. Later, we went to our accommodation for the night.

I was in awe when we got to the eco camp lodge. We stayed in really nice tents that and it was really beautiful. The next day we were driving to Mpala and then it hit me as we were driving through the other cities. I was surprised at how nice everyone is. They knew right away that we were visitors. People were waving and smiling at us as we drove by, I saw kids all by themselves herding animals, and people were selling corn in the middle of the road. It was very different from what I see on a daily basis at home in California. There are no stoplights or skyscrapers but I felt at ease.

My favorite part so far was our stay in Mpala. We got to assist with research projects and learn about different species. The one I liked the most was the African Queen butterfly. It is related to the Monarch butterfly but the female contains a bacteria that kills the males so the female population is near 99% and the male population is about 1%. Also when the male is born it is born infertile so all the male butterfly that were ready to mate had to spend a few days on a specific plant named *Helitropium indica* in order to mate successfully. It was very intriguing. Mpala in all was so beautiful. The dirt roads were very bumpy but animals were everywhere! It made me so happy to see the animals in the wild. It was literally a breath of fresh air. Our tents were also nice and comfortable. I was around the bonfire looking out and I can see the elephants and monkeys, it was so quiet. I never experienced that level of peace before. I wish we could have stayed there longer! It was great. I don't really have a least favorite part yet since it's still early in our trip. We got to Ileret a couple of days ago and I'm looking forward to all the things we are going to do!