

# FaithBIT



## Transformed through Unconditional Love

Reflection by Kim Rathjen

This is my friend, Elva. Our friendship has developed over the last 3 years. We have been together about 4 hours total during that time. Elva lives in Lomas de San Isidro, a marginalized community in an abandoned quarry outside of Mexico City. Her house is a few doors down from the AMEXTRA center. I know the way. As she unlocks the gate and guides me down the hill and behind the first house, her greeting is always the same, “Welcome to my humble house. I don’t have much, but you are always welcome here.” Her home is made from bare cinder block bricks and other scrap items. Inside is a huge oven that her husband uses when he bakes bread to sell and a table with 4 chairs. She offers horchata – a sweet, creamy rice drink with cinnamon – feeds me bread, chicken, rice, tortillas. We talk (usually through an interpreter) about family, the community, her work with the herbal soaps, teas and tinctures she makes and sells. Elva will most likely never come to my home. I think I would be embarrassed to have her – my wealth and abundance a stark contrast to her life.



**“My only role in this relationship is that I show up. I, the one who has so much, receive more than I deserve from my friend, who has very little”**

**- Kim Rathjen**

Ours is a lopsided relationship. One the Giver, one the Receiver. Much like my relationship with Jesus. Elva has chosen me to be her friend. She lavishes me with food and friendship. My only role in this relationship is that I show up. I, the one who has so much, receive more than I deserve from my friend, who has very little. This kind of love is transformational, and I am changed because of it. I call Lomas de San Isidro “My Happy Place”. It is because of the people I know there who give me more than I can ever give back.



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