

VOICES

from the
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A celebration of writing done in
and around
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Center

Edited by Cassie Bausman & Darek
Benesh



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An Interview

Jooweon Park

Uncle Tom in his white T-shirt sits on the black chair in the empty classroom, and his long legs in jeans stretch out on the white floor to rest his thighs on the seat. His blue-gray eyes look down at me sitting in front of him—they seem a little indifferent as if they didn’t see me but something else far behind me. I ask this white-haired and white-faced custodian why everyone calls him Uncle Tom, the name borrowed from the famous anti-slavery novel in the nineteenth century, and he quietly tells me it is *because [he] was a soldier in Vietnam*.

I was in the infantry. As my face shows I am unfamiliar with the word, he repeats the word, infantry, and makes a walking-person figure with his right hand—his index finger and middle finger walk on the gray table beside me.

Then I was a machine gunner, he says. I tell him that I read some writings about the Vietnam War, and try to describe what I know about the VC tunnels.

I pulled out many bodies from the tunnels. I wonder if he went into them—his well-built body seems too large to get into the long and narrow, underground passages. He starts to tell me his story about his experience with the tunnels. He was ordered to remove some dead bodies from them.

I pulled out a body from a tunnel and threw it to the side. Then another body, and another. After the third one, a woman came out. He puts his hands up in the air, then he softly taps the left of his chest with his right fist. When he tells me that he “picked her up” and took her out of his mission area, he makes his arms like those of a groom lifting a bride. I see a slight smile on his face, but it disappears almost right away. He says he took out two more bodies from the next tunnel. Then he found a man—he puts his hands up in the air again and gestures that he carried the man to a safe place.

I moved to another tunnel, and a man came out with a grenade. I lowered my body when he threw it. Then I didn't give a shit. I killed him. Shot him in the head. He makes a gun with his right hand and shoots it in the air near his head. He says that, after killing the VC, he removed two more dead bodies from the

same tunnel and saw a woman and three children coming out from it.

I tell him that it is the first time I have heard about a soldier who saved Vietnamese civilians from the tunnels. I ask him about his life after he came back from the war.

I was depressed. He says he wasn't aware of his depression until recently. He was diagnosed with posttraumatic stress disorder four years ago.

It was difficult because I was suicidal. I still see the dead bodies and killings. He points at several spots in the air by my sides with his right hand, moving it right to left. His eyes are gazing somewhere in the middle of the air.

I ask some more questions about his family and his work, and I find he has been helping poor people with food and other house supplies. He tells me he and his *buddy* started to do this a few years after he had returned from the war. I become curious about the buddy. When I inquire who the buddy is, his right thumb lightly points upward on his lap. After some more

questions about his charitable work, he says he should get back to his work. I thank him for his answers and his help for others.

No. I am a bad man. His voice is clearer than before. I ask him why.

I killed so many people.

I tell him he was in a war, but wonder whether it is right for me to talk about how war consumes its voluntary and involuntary participants. When I say he was used in the war, he tells me he killed too many. He seems to be looking somewhere in the air over me. I try to say he was merely a soldier in the war, but he starts to rise from his seat. He makes a small groan when he stands on his feet, but he quietly leaves the classroom. When I exit the room, the hallway is in silence.

Encroachment By Peter Small

The windows of the shack
hold nothing
but black.

Weathered green
paint chips

frame their borders.

The once white boards
glisten grey
with imaginary rain.

Adobe orange drainpipes
lie stacked several high
against the wall.

Fresh green ivy
approaches
low to the ground.

An unbroken pane of glass
reflects the clouds
and tree branches.

Is this a site
of construction, abandonment
wilderness?

Who here
encroaches
on whose turf?

Does it matter, since
in the end, don't they always win
the colors?

In Her Own Bed
By Devin Van Dyke

I stepped outside the sliding glass door and glanced absently around the backyard of my Mom's house sprinkled with weeds, tall, parched and dead. Tears were streaming down my face no longer slowed by the presence of the others. We had all three been there as Mom slipped away. I, a close friend, and my little sister, had been sitting with her on her bed, my friend and I holding her hands, as her heart beat its last time.

She had wanted to die in her own bed. My brothers Rand and Korbin had flown from California to Washington, where she had been staying with our baby sister Mian, in order to bring her back to California and her home. That was the point at which her deteriorating health had become an issue that would beg their involvement. Until then, her combined physical illness and depression had been something my brothers had stayed away from, probably practicing wishful thinking. The last Moments of the life of a person that is dying from emphysema are not something that can be treated with wishes.

My brothers had stayed with her after their arrival until they were so exhausted they could barely drive to their

respective homes. The crisis of the impending death of the family's oldest living matriarch had drained them; they needed some rest in and within their own worlds. Korbin lived two hours away and Rand and I lived half an hour away. Rather than go back to Washington where her life was anchored, Mian had probably resigned herself to staying until our Mom's painful end, having been caught as un-aware of her state as the other brothers.

They had had a real eye-opener when the four of us communicated with one another on a conference call. The family had to concur with her wish to die in her own bed, in her house, at peace. My brothers' plan had been to fly to Washington, pick Mom up, and get her some oxygen in case she got worse, then drive straight to her house in California. I decided to stay in California and get everything ready there. It was 11:30 at night when the van carrying her pulled into the driveway; I rushed up and opened the sliding door, just as my oldest brother Korbin tried to warn me of her decrepit condition. I didn't care; I just reached in and scooped her frail, emaciated, near lifeless body up in my arms, walked through her front door, into her bedroom, and settled her gently in her bed. She was so light, fragile and ashen faced, I could

feel the brittle hardness of her bones through the miniscule amount of muscle her body's attempt at survival had left her.

I had carefully arranged the pillows in her bed so she would be almost sitting upright. After I laid her carefully, delicately, on her pile of pillows I asked my siblings about her glasses. I knew she could see well with the glasses and that without, she could not. I also knew that because of the acuity of her condition, she would want to see the world around her as she approached the end. As she lay there in her bed, her eyes were closed for now, and she might be going blind, but she was falling asleep, in relief at having made it home and from the 12 hour trek through three states.

Korbin, Rand and Mian had told me after I tucked Mom, or as all we kids called her, Boss, in bed, that she talked about my friend Bruce a whole lot on the way south in the van. I had brought Bruce with me to see her often in the past when I had come by to say "Hi," watch a movie, or talk. She had seen a lot of Bruce; his Mom had died years before, and he and I amicably observed how he had adopted my Mom, with her tacit approval. He had always been there for her and on her side in trying and talk me into watching something other than "Crimson Tide" on our virtually regular weekend visits. I

would always want to see the same exact movie; they tolerated my choice a lot, and that's how I know they loved me. Boss knew I loved her, too, because I used to go by her house regularly less than two months before this current crisis, around Christmas time, to fix her coffee and con her into getting out of bed.

Until this crisis in my life, the death of my Mom, I had been employed in health care. I had a lot of varying experiences, so I had a good idea of the kind of mental and physical environment Mom needed as long as she would allow help to be given her. I had carefully and meticulously applied my charisma and communication skills- doing my part in helping her feel empowered to ask for help when she needed it. It's surprising how hard it can be for someone, anyone, to ask for ever-increasing quantities of help; however, most people will need some kind of help as they age and naturally break down.

The glasses had been misplaced at some point in her journey, so we could see her vacant eyes as her gaze tried to see. It seemed important to us to come face to face with her, to see into her eyes, as if we could safely save some part of her, as if we could be with her as and see her as we knew her just two

months before. As I gazed at her worsening condition, I finally started to face reality myself; a part of me had clearly seen the signs of her death even as it approached. I was aware of the phases a person who is dying can go through- I had studied them in job training. She might have her eyes closed now, but before the end she would suddenly become very aware of her surroundings, maybe even see her gathered loved ones a final time.

Her glasses would not be important until some time the next afternoon as the physical effects of her deterioration meant that she would die within twenty minutes. As people are in the terminal throes of dying, they suddenly become hyper-aware, for a short period of time, of their surroundings, just like right after they're born. I, judging from my nurse's training, estimated she would most probably last at least twenty-four hours, but not a whole lot more.

I was forced into negotiating with my family during the conference call about the definition, in Mom's eyes, of the meaning of the words, "In my own bed." To the collective body of Mom's offspring, she wasn't coherent enough to clarify what she meant or we, her children, didn't take the time or have the sense to inquire from her, the source, what she

meant. This was the kind of an issue that seems black and white on the surface: either she meant it literally, in her own bed she last slept in at her house, or perhaps figuratively, as I assumed the rest of the family seemed to have thought. There was talk of renting a hospital bed, of hiring nurses to be there when we, her nuclear family, were forced by circumstances, to visit from our former lives with work, children, and in my case, college. I believe I was able to appeal to their common sense as I advocated for her and her own actual bed. I'll never be sure if the rest of the family would have actually arranged for a full size hospital bed in her living room, where she Bruce and I, had so happily spent time together.

I stood there beside her bed, after having put her there, feeling as though I could keep her alive, as I knew her in life, even though a part of me knew that an end was inevitable. Her house quieted as Rand and Korbin went to their respective homes. I can't remember how Korbin got home that night, I had a patient to be a nurse for, the most important patient I would ever have. My thoughts raced back in time to a job I had accepted through a registry earlier that year. I was hired to be with a dying man as he died the slow gruesome death AIDS can bring. I spent an eight hour shift in his house, he with

barely the strength to breathe, me, present, attentive and supportive. I lit a candle during my shift and let it burn as we sat together in silence.

I was guarding her, protecting her in death. A vigil of waiting had begun. I curled up on the bottom of her bed and listened to her gently forced, labored breathing. I didn't want to lay on her for fear I might quicken her demise, but I wanted to be as close to her as a grown child could get. From a medical standpoint, she had had a very tiring day, and what she needed most now that she was in her own bed was as good a night's rest as she was physically capable of.

My little sister, Mian, wasn't holding her hand at the last Moment. She had been with Mom at her own house in Washington. Mian became a de facto nurse post haste, caring for Mom during the highest point of acceleration of her deterioration, the phase where the body starts to consume itself for survival and every breath is life. It became an emergency to bring her back, because at some point during the sure progression to life's halt, a prolonged semi-conscious, near vegetative state of body and mind can exist, and if your relative does not want to be in the hospital, then the family has to be ready to provide care in-home.

My whole family had been involved in her last few days in a way they hadn't been involved for quite a number of years. Mian had been caring for her at her home in Washington State. I had been helping to care for her through the holidays and at Christmas. Mom required more and more time as the holidays progressed, and I had already decided that if she was going to have a prolonged home-bound convalescence, then I would need help from my family.

I had done a great job through Thanksgiving in keeping her unspoken communication to myself: If I couldn't muster the internal emotional strength and energy to facilitate talking to my older brother's wife about how close Mom and I knew she was to actually dying, I didn't want anyone else to worry about it. Mom and I both knew she was going to die. We had had time to adjust, but the rest of the family would not. I had hoped the requisite relationships between her and my other siblings would eventually evolve, as I had patiently spent as much time as possible with her in the previous six months. But Mom's other children, and the whole rest of the extended family, were not able to be close to her, and because of this they got blind-sided by fate. I alone was there to watch as she carefully tied up the loose ends of her life as she finished

slowly wasting away. By the time Christmas rolled around, I was willing to chase the ridiculous idea that if I could just spend enough time keeping her healthy, shuffling her between visits with her children and grandchildren, then maybe this whole slow deterioration of her body would just stop.

I wasn't buying the argument that she would be in a better place. She was my Mom, the one, the only, the venerable keeper of the world I knew as my own. That world had been changing very fast lately; I just wanted it to slow down and gain more time for her and me to forge a better connection to the mostly absent family. I wasn't really comfortable with the jokes I made with her about what the two of us would do if she ran out of money. I had been self-supporting, and I knew one of her biggest fears in life now was that the meager amount of money she had saved would not be enough to keep her comfortable till the end. I had made jokes to the effect that we could live together in my apartment and I would charge family members a small fee for getting to come over and visit.

She might be going to a better place, but I would be stuck here in the wake of her demise trying to help my family understand why they were so in the dark about her condition.

It wasn't that I set out to be a momma's boy, it just worked out that I cared about people and had spent several years in the health care profession. Mom had been able to stay close to me because my education had familiarized me with the depression that got hold of her when her dreams of a white picket fence didn't materialize. It was my professional experience in how to experience mental illness that had enabled her and I to get, and to remain, close.

During the last year of her life, I had been walking the tightrope as the son who cared enough to be close to the matriarch but who also knew the most about losing her. I also knew that the rest of the family would very much like a better understanding of what her life was. She would pass on, completing a cycle of life that she and I were prepared for, because we had remained close. To the rest of the family, the event of her passing would be viewed as something that came as a thief in the night.

When He Gets Weary: A Revision

By Raquel Baker

Anthony's arms flex outward. It's 5 a.m. The sky releases a violent exhaustion. The CT scanner cackles a warning. Anthony lies on his back. The cackling of the scanner dislodges his dream. Of screams. Ripe. Like plums. There's a pounding in his head.

* * *

What is the last thing he remembered? It wasn't firecrackers. Or the outline of bodies in dark relief against a steep mountainside. Or a Humvee. Or smoke rising from a narrow rutted trail. Or his Commander's last words. This might be dangerous, he said. He remembered going to sleep. Breathless. Counting the days until his departure from Afghanistan to a base in Italy. But plans change. Like presidents. He sat above it all. In the air. From a U.S. Black Hawk he watched. Where was that second chopper? His own chopper quiet. Except for the soft cooing of a sergeant. Don't stop fighting! We're almost

home. You're gonna make it. You're gonna make it. And the hiss. Of a rocket. And a thick thudding. Chopper blades slicing air. Broken. He fell from the sky. After that moment he can't remember. But from before he remembered movies. "Born on the Fourth of July." "Casualties of War." "Black Hawk Down." And words. This matter is not of trust not bullets but. The last thing he remembered. A mullah's words. That was it.

* * *

Anthony lies flat on his back. Strapped in. A mechanical hum cuts the stillness. Like a chopper's blade. Time slows. Into degraded motion. Inside the CT scanner radiation bursts. Hits his ears. His eyes. His brain. His body. Absorbs x-rays. The beams follow a spiral path around his mouth. Is the image they create even Anthony at all?

* * *

RPG! Anthony pressed his tongue against the roof of his mouth. Inside, the cockpit erupted. A constellation of green and red. Blinking lights. Be advised. I'm hit. Cannot hold position.

Say again. Cannot hold position. Can you hear me? In his head he counted the days until his tour would have ended. Then the ground tried to get in. To stuff its mouth with sky. His body. A ripe plum. He shuddered. The crash was just a moment. That came to life. Was someone knocking? The metallic sound of the motion of the airframe interrupted. Was someone trying to get in?

* * *

Anthony thinks it's always 3:39 a.m. He wonders if he will ever stop falling out of the sky. The ground is everywhere it is not supposed to be. In his belly button. Underneath his fingernails. Behind his knees. Maybe this time. He won't make it back.

* * *

The gentle way his skin gave in. The softness just underneath his uniform. His shoulder straps barely hit the top of his thighs. The force of gravity struck him. Tried to take everything in. He popped open his shoulder strap. Pushed open the side glass of the cockpit. The monitor lights did not flash. The flight deck was no longer whining. He leaned outside. The ground was brushed purple and red like a plum. Soft like goose down.

Necessary. Like air.

* * *

Anthony is used to waiting. He floats inside the scanner. In the sky. He thinks about Merville. Of his girlfriend Michelle. In his mind her face is framed by a window pane. The center of a stained-glass flower. She is fragrant. In bloom. Blooming. Before his eyes. She is opening the back door. Anthony? What are you doing out there? I just wanted you to come out here. And see the moon. I start my fifth tour tomorrow. His face is smiling. Michelle is silent. Unbelieving. Just like a scene in a movie. Her lips. Ripe as plums.

* * *

Stay with me pilot! A crack above his right ear and then the sky dropped out from under him. He remembered the long letters he wrote to her. Things he couldn't say to her in Iowa. Baby, we gotta leave Merville. Let's move to Las Vegas. Let's get married in the Mojave Desert. Just you me and God. I can't wait to hold you and sleep next to you in the middle of the desert. The tail rotor spun uncontrollably. Detached from its steel axis. Code blue! Code blue! The chaplain's fingertips against his forehead. His voice barely audible over the sound of

machines. Blessed be the name of our lord. Anthony's eyes opened. The chaplain's eyes were emerald blue. His hair brown. He smelled of dusk. Of magnolia. And traveler's joy. And unwashed beard. He was smiling. He seemed far away. Imaginary. As if Anthony were watching a movie with no sound.

* * *

Anthony whispers. Is somebody out there? He is alive. He hears. A knocking. There is no answer. Michelle holds him in her arms. Squeezes. When did you get back? His duffle bag at his feet. He follows her to her bedroom. His smile. A curvature. On the surface of his face. The scanner records his brain. On photographic film. Projects primal black and white images to screen. Just like a movie.

* * *

On her couch. Her face. A smile. Her face. Her tits. Her lips. Her thighs. He bit down hard. On that moment. It was medevaced, cradled in a bucket of ice, rushed to the hospital, and sown back on to the next one. He grunted came, pushing

* * *

against the inside of his brain. He bit. Her tongue. Her nipples. Everywhere. She pulled him on top of her. He remembered her picture in his right pocket. He was in by straps. He patted the outside of his pocket. Remembered the numbers in her mailing address. 110. 51039. Other memories Groaned. Gurgled. Blood escaped from his lungs. He bit harder. He wanted. To gain. Control.

* * *

Inside the scanner, Anthony is held in by straps. Propped against pillows. He moves through the center of a circular machine. Is scanned. In his mind he replays his third date with Michelle. Silently. At the back door, her nipples etch a sharp line in her t-shirt. She is smiling. Would she answer the door for him when he got back home? Did she even exist when he wasn't there? I hope I'm not disturbing you. His voice fills the darkness of her kitchen. As he crosses the room, he steps in a plate of wet cat food. Hops on one foot past her. Balances against the kitchen doorway. She pulls a rag from the oven's chrome handle. Bends over. Wipes off his shoe.

* *

Are you hurt? His face. A smile. An IV pushed it way into him. Blood dripped from his chest onto the floor. On his back. He wrapped his fingers around her picture. Brought it down on top of him. His legs splayed on the stretcher. He strained his neck upward. Lifted his hips. Upward. Warmth on all sides. But no movement. His stomach muscles pulled tight. But it settled in. Settled into him. Interrupted his motion. Pulled its nails down his chest. Stared into his eyes. Traced a red chalk line around his body. Grabbed his wrists and upturned his heart in his chest. Captain, can you hear me? He opened his mouth. Hold his wrists! Hold his wrists! He was running toward the sound of that voice. Was he getting closer? Or farther away?

* * *

Anthony moves his head in a backward motion. As if he is trying to do or say something. Waits for another moment to strike. Lies on a bed at Andrews Air Force Base. In Maryland his right eye moves. So slightly. He lives in a moment. In Iowa. He follows Michelle to her bed. She leans into him. He strokes her back. She is laughing. He kisses her fingertips. The skin on her neck. Her back. His right eye seems to be tracking something. So slightly.

* * *

The Black Hawk stopped on its right side. An explosion of ground absorbed it. Anthony's stomach muscles. The muscles inside. Tight. A medic pulled him up and away. The motherfuckers got him! He yelled over his right shoulder. They settled into a cup-shaped hole behind the tail boom. The ground came to life. Smashed. And spilled Anthony. Toppled him over. The medic cut open his shirt. Wiped him up. Folded him tight. His stomach muscles and the muscles inside pulled tight. The world flashed at three different speeds. Himself. The ground. The sky. Someone turned the speed lever. To the left. To the right.

* * *

Anthony's heart beats. Quickly. Slower. Slow. His eyes do not react to light. In his mind Michelle's face is smiling. He pulls her closer to the bed with his breathing. So quiet. She is laughing. She straddles him. Her stomach muscles. And the muscles inside. Pull tight. He grabs for the scruff of her neck. Pulls himself into her. Kisses her. And another. They fall back. Onto the bed. Wanting. More.

* * *

Anthony enforced the law. Justice blindfolded. Her face smiling. Anthony was shot down. He was a body of glass. A body of glass. He wanted. More. Life. Not like wanting was in the movies. One dimensional. Rehearsed. How can anyone express this wanting. Anthony's wanting. In a movie?

* * *

Anthony breathes because of machines. His bed is beaded in layers of sweat. The sweat washes him away. Stop! Stop it! He pulls harder. Tries to keep himself wrapped. In his skin. A smile.

* * *

We'll try to get you out. Are you OK? Roger. Going in hard! 64 is going down. We're getting RPG fire. We have casualties. Over. Roger that. Be advised we are taking heavy fire. God damn it! Stop! Stop! He told himself it was O.K. He would be O.K. His left eye looked up. All that flashing. He couldn't understand. It was so festive. Like a party.

* * *

6:00 a.m. Anthony exists. In a dream. He is sleeping. Inside walls. We have the whole beautiful world, Michelle. Anyway, I

want you to see the moon. I want to see it with you before I deploy. The cicadas. So loud. OK. But if I come out there you gotta do something for me. I will. On her mattress. Her face looking up at him. He thinks he can change the world. She thinks if she rides her bike more he won't have to go back to that god forsaken country. If rural and inner city recreational drug users and celebrities and adult children of alcoholics and medical professionals and traumatized veterans who had been ripped apart and put together again and needed daily relief were no longer prescribed Oxycodone. She pulls his arm. Don't go! You aren't one of those brainwashed peaceniks are you? No. It's just. I don't want you to go again. Anthony. Yeah. Get back soon!

* * *

The sky was dark. It was a moment of grace. A moment of beauty. Like in a movie. Nine minutes in he fell. From the sky. Spread out. From the cockpit. Shrapnel blasted past his ear. Eyeballed him. Continued its wandering. A jolt took him down. The ground took him in. Blood filled his brain.

* * *

Anthony breathes in. Does not react when ice cold water is shot

into his ears. A machine yanks air from his chest. Fills it up again. He feels himself in the bed. His dying is so quiet. It disentangles him from the bed clothes. It doesn't kick. Or twist. Or roll him on his tummy. To get one more look. At the ground. Anthony doesn't get up. He can't. His heart can only whisper. It's too quiet inside the clamoring white hospital walls. Too quiet. It has to go. It will not last the night.

* * *

The ground came to his skin. Bared its teeth. Don't panic. The ground was rough and rougher. Keep your wits about you so you can get away. Get home. The ground arched his back. Moaned for him. Are you hurt?

* * *

Anthony thinks of his last night. With Michelle. Her lips. His tongue inside her. A metallic click notes that his heart has stopped. Within its wet lining. He isn't breathing in. He isn't. Breathing. The arctic of his eyes. The sharp lines of his chin. He body isn't. Stiff. Inside her.

* * *

He was disoriented. Reds. And greens. And blues. Flashed. Over the canvas of "little America" in Helmand. Rifles wailed. Machine guns exploded. Fires seethed red against desert sand. Grenades. Climaxed. Outside. In a remote Afghanistan valley. Rockets rushed. Over his head. Gases escaped. Upward. Into the atmosphere. Cases contracted. Released their frictional grips on chamber walls. Brass expelled from a rusting chrome-lined barrel penetrated. Expanded. Fragmented. Tumbled into skin.

* * *

Anthony is comatose. Though he receives prayers. Thoughts. And gratitude. His brain starts to bleed. Blood mixes with cerebrospinal fluid. He rests peacefully. Michelle's legs twist under her covers. She turns. Throws her head into her pillow. Falling motion. Falling. Crumpling. Into sleep. She curls up against the wall. Grabs another pillow. Protects her face with her forearm and the palm of her hand. She tosses. And turns. She leaves her engagement ring on a chain. Around her neck. A letter on her bedside table ends P.S. I do this so you can sleep safe at night. Love A.

* * *

An orgy of motion. Anthony's head jerked back and forth.
The air frame teetered. Cover me! Captain! Can you hear me?
Get him out of there! Anthony didn't move. Or smile.
He was weary. Pressed into the seat. The airframe teetered.
On not existing anymore. Anthony filled up the desert.
Over-preyed.

* * *

Anthony leaves without saying goodbye. Passes away
under clean white sheets. An outpouring of support and
love does not save him. Even in kindergarten Anthony
wants to fly. Fully. Outrageously. Like a storm.

The Dream Act By Briana Garcia

The Development, Relief and Education for Alien Minors Act, also known as *The Dream Act*, is a bill that gives undocumented students a chance to go to college. This is great for illegal students but what about students who are legal? My essay will focus on how the Dream Act affects legal students, their families, and the government.

It is already hard to get into college. Students have to work hard by getting good grades, being involved in activities, etc., and have to compete with other students to get into their dream school. All schools can only bring in so many students due to financial aid, capability, and grades. Now this is with legal students. Imagine hundreds of more students trying to get into the same school. This becomes an issue. Some students would lose motivation to even apply or go to school because schools would be that much harder to get into. That is just one problem legal students have to face. If you get into college now you also have to worry about getting into a specific program that interests you. That is when the whole process starts all over again. A student has to compete with others for a spot in the program.

With this act, more students will go to college which then equals more students wanting to get into the same programs that you are competing for.

This act would also impact the parents of these students. Some parents will have to pay more for their student's college because there will be less chances of the legal student getting scholarships and less financial aid because more students will need money to go to school and most parents would not like to pay more for college. Like a man who named himself T commented in *The New York Times* "I do understand that many illegals did not have a choice. However, it is hard

enough for LEGAL college students to get loans/financial aid/scholarships without illegals getting mixed in. If you are not a legal citizen, why should you have access to government money/aid? Loans do have to be paid back, but if we start giving illegals scholarship money, it means that some legal students will not be able to go to school due to the lack of funds"(1). Not all legal students' parents have enough money to pay about 40,000 dollars for their student to go to college every year. *The New York Times* also said that "The legislation allows illegal immigrants who graduate from high schools in California to apply to the state's public universities as residents, granting them a reduced tuition rate"(1). This would not only be unfair to the parents of the legal students, but to the student as well. Just because they are illegal, they should not have the right to pay less in tuition. The parents of legal

students pay taxes and put money into the American economy and should have more of a right to pay less in tuition than illegal students.

The government would actually lose money by passing this bill. Most illegal students come from low income families, which mean if they have the opportunity to get financial aid, they will take it. The government does not have a great deal of money to spend, and by passing this bill, some of the money they do have will be spent on illegal students, rather than on the legal students. So if this bill passes, the government would have to ask itself where it can get more money to send more students to school.

Who would have thought a bill would affect so many people? I, as a legal student, like any other legal student, would not like to see my parents stress to pay my college tuition fee. I, myself, am almost pulling my hair out because I am trying so hard to get into a program. This *Dream Act* would have a more negative impact than a positive one. Like former Colorado congressman Tom Tancredo said” the bill should be renamed the NIGHTMARE” (2).

Works Cited

- 1)Ruiz, Rebecca R. "Dream Act Becomes Law in California - NYTimes.com." *College Admissions Advice - The Choice Blog - NYTimes.com*. New York Times, 10 Nov. 2011. Web. 16 Nov. 2011. <<http://thechoice.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/10/10/dream-act/>>.
- 2)McFadyen, Jennifer. "Opposition to the DREAM Act Legislation - DREAM Act Opposition." *Immigration Issues*. About.com, 2011. Web. 16 Nov. 2011.
<http://immigration.about.com/od/immigrationlawandpolicy/a/Oppose_DREAMAct.htm>

On the Sphere

by Kaylee Williams

This view is spectacular.
Angles of nothing, of everything,
three-hundred-and-sixty blinks
before the eye
chooses its own effect.
Of everything.
Colors bleeding from an
internal wound;
an indescribable
moment cast
and mounted
like my late cat,
Mr. Snuggles.

Untitled

By Doris Haynes

Grandpa was a Blacksmith
he worked out of an old shack
that sat behind the house at the
edge of the woods. He drank
moonshine as he hammered metal into
shapes of hooks, chains, and locks.

Uncle Willie would go out and hunt meat
for supper. He'd bring back a deer
and hang it from one of Grandpa's hooks.
Then he'd slit the deer's throat until all of
its life had been drained. He'd skin the deer,
slicing it into steaks until nothing was left
but a carcass.

Untitled

By Taylor Pedersen

Golden Bell

Coppered

Rusted

Loved

Touch Me

Musky Dew

Settle Me

Brown Leaves

Cling On

I Can

Not Share

With You

Who Is

Golden Bell,

Golden Pillar,

or,

Golden Prison

Behind Bars

Vines

And Leaves

Creep

Yellow

Bus I

Once

Waited

For,

On the

Curb

Every

Weekday

Morning

You

Came

7:

45.

Then

Never again

Here you are

Lost in leaves

As I was

Lost

On that

Curb

Are you

Waiting?

Maliced Curio

Finger your intricacies

Lumped on moss

Colored by me

Me, man

Lovely fade

Licked by leaves

A contrast painted

Behind

If only Me

Man

Had such

Design

Sensibilities