

### **The Most Important Hispanic Woman in My Life**

My mother taught me how to read. She would come home after 13 hour shifts, walk 2 miles to our broken down studio apartment and read to me from second hand books she would buy. Her hands, cracked from so much washing, would follow every word on the page until I could repeat them with ease. Tired eyes raking over the foreign words, she would go over every line like a prayer. During this life molding experience, my mother could not speak or write a word of English on her own. But she knew I had to.

My mother brought my sister and I from Mexico to seek life saving surgery for me. With a hip deformity that prevented me from walking, my mother had left her beloved land to assure I would not die in the ramshackled local hospital where it was easier to put me down than it would be to raise me. While on her passage, my grandmother died. But with a heavy heart, my mom continued onward, knowing it was the only way we could survive. In the face of these extraordinary challenges, my mom has mourned in grace and strengthened in love. And by constantly encouraging my siblings and I to use education to escape the cycle of poverty that being undocumented has given us, my mother continues to foster life and hope on barren land.

With so much courage to hope and so much endurance in the face of challenges, my mother has always inspired me with her ability to stay positive even when I could not. In my junior year of highschool, my mother was diagnosed with a malignant tumour and underwent chemotherapy sessions. During that year, I was inconsolable. It was an unfortunate bonding period where we would take the bus together down to her hospital. Every visit would end in their lounge that overlooked the lake. I would ask my mom how she could bear so much and my mother would smile. She would drift asleep while I read her articles from the magazines that decorated the room. By the grace of God, my mother recovered and my love for reading grew from those cold days accompanying her.

In her endurance, I have been able to continue a path of education that was borne in her care and that has survived from the hardship she has suffered in. I think back to those times she stayed up reading books to me, going off the shows and alien conversations that engulfed her, and I am in awe of how I would be nothing without them. By teaching me to read, my mother set me up for the life I have held. I graduated from high school. I pursued a community college degrees off my academic achievement. Now, I aim to continue my education at college so that I may become what she was - a life changing teacher and so that she may see the great things that have blossomed from her love.