The Canvas of My Life

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Nominated By

#poetry, activism, politics, father

*“I was flung into this world with a variation of paint,*

*Dripping with the vibrant colors of my mother’s hopes,*

*And my father’s dreams”*

I watched as the waves of Lake Ontario pushed and pulled at the creeping surface.

I sat on the grass, hugging my oversized sweater tighter and tighter as the wind blew unforgiving.

My cheeks stained with his memory, I flustered as I began talking,

“It’s been fifteen years. Fifteen years…”

*“As I began my painting I heard the sudden booming crack of a thunderous whip*

*And I look up to see a vast gap quickly run down the half of my canvas.*

*Then came the black”*

I remember the screaming, and the crying on that day. However, most of all, I remember you. And the faint memory in my head of you holding my hands, and pushing me on the swings of Sunset Park. Memories flash in my brain of the nights you helped me sleep, and tied my shoes.

I knew you were never coming back home that day, I was only three.

I was silent for months. Taking in all the changes around me slowly, as the bitterness of reality creeped in more and more. I wrote, read, and repeated. I wrote to escape reality, I read to try and forget you. Thinking that it would possibly heal my wounds. It never did.

I will have to live for the rest of my life knowing that you are now burned into history, as well as myself. Being one of thousands of children that were left stripped away from a parent too soon, that day.

You were on the 101st floor in the North Tower when the first plane hit on September 11, 2001, you were working. And now, I can never forget.

*“Next I painted the warmth and comfort of the sunrise*

*And the hope of the yellow,*

*As I brushed the comforting colors onto the rest of my canvas,*

*Each step I climbed up to continue my painting I couldn’t help my eyes to wander back to you”*

Forgetting you was impossible. So instead, I started writing, organizing, and creating for you. I wrote of my blistering love for you. I organized events for activists to spread information and support. Your activism, sparked my lifetime love. Wanting to change the world, for the benefit of the people. This is what I want to do for the rest of my life. Politics, not just for you and me. But for the benefit of people, in one aspect, never to become me. A life shattered by hate.

*“I walked towards the front of his painting for the first time in a long time,*

*And I lifted my hand over his burnt, charcoal dipped canvas.*

*With each swift wipe of my hand,*

*The darkness vanished…*

*I painted a new image of him,*

*And then I walk back to finish the rest of my canvas”*

I close my eyes and tilt my head up towards the sun. The warmth enveloping me with what seemed like love. “I promise you. I will never stop fighting for you. And most importantly, I will never stop fighting for the people…”

I felt the tears spill under my eyes, my breath growing shaky.

“I love you, dad. And I always will.”

I got up from where I was sitting, and walked back to my room.

Leaving you by the lakeside, so you can watch and see how far I’ve come.

Credits:

Poetry Excerpts

Author: Genesis Vasquez

Title: “The Canvas of My Life”

Photo Credits:

Oswego, NY: Lake Ontario, Oswego, NY

Picture by Jamie. City-Data.com

<http://www.city-data.com/picfilesc/picc55128.php>

**Lake Ontario After Sunset**

By [twelker74](http://www.shutterbug.com/galleries-user/102292). Shutterbug.

<http://www.shutterbug.com/content/lake-ontario-after-sunset#x213OboBTkXPMhfx.97>

Sunset Park in Brooklyn

Photo by Allegra Abramo*.* Rich Playground, Poor Playground.

<http://richpoorplay.journalism.cuny.edu/2013/12/10/sunset-park/>

Writing by Hand

The Week Staff.

<http://api.theweek.com/sites/default/files/styles/tw_image_9_4/public/25576_article_full.jpg?itok=bE3HAkE-&resize=1260x560>

Reading

Idzie Desmarais.

<http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-eDmEgRYjwIg/SWFBL7JrDmI/AAAAAAAAArk/taMNX6648S4/s1600/IMG_0512.JPG>

Oswego Lake

Unknown

<https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/1e/7d/59/1e7d597c2ee75f0f7f38262917943878.jpg>

The Highline

<https://www.nycgovparks.org/parks/the-high-line>

Highline Teen Artivist’s Summit

Cosmica.

<http://www.colectivacosmica.com/blog/high-line-teens-artivism-summit/>

Artivist Teen Summit

iAmWetpaint.

<http://www.thehighline.org/blog/2016/08/09/artivist-teen-night-party-with-a-purpose>

Power to the People

By ACFF.

<http://acff.deviantart.com/art/Power-to-the-People-154152000>

Politics

<http://www.writerbeat.com/images/14226/Politics-and-language.jpg>