



Things I'll Never Say

My high school vice-principal asked me to attend an event they had put together to try to convince wealthy professionals to sponsor more students. I was in my second year of college and they wanted me to talk about my dreams and ambitions, the challenges, and how the school had contributed to my achievements. But there were two things she asked me not to speak of: politics and my immigration status.

It was a lovely evening of gourmet food and valet parking. Round tables covered in white, silk tablecloths (adorned at the center with tall glasses filled with water, stones, a sunken orchid, and a floating candle) were nicely placed in the patio. The soft lighting of the lamps and the warm glow of the moonlight illuminated the evening. Waiters paced back and forth filling our glasses with wine and apple cider. The splendor of it all seemed almost surreal.

I sat at a table next to my 11th grade Physics teacher. He had also taught me conceptual physics my freshman year; it was his first year as a teacher so he considers me one of his babies. Across from us, sat an elderly man and his beautiful young wife. We conversed about finance and technology, about his travels and expensive cars, as if he and I were no different. I was beginning to feel comfortable. But then, he turned to my teacher and asked what the school's policy was regarding undocumented students. My teacher looked at me, reassuringly, and I looked down. With carefully chosen words, he told him that there was none. The old man turned to me and said: I would not want to sponsor aliens that will take away from opportunities that students like you deserve. I smiled and nodded in agreement, but the heavy sensation in my chest did not go away; that same feeling I get when I swim underwater and try to hold my breath for too long. There are things I'll never say.

About the Author

Ingrid is one of E4FC's 2010 Interns. She emigrated from Guatemala with her family when she was nine years old. This fall she will be completing her senior year at Stanford University where she will be majoring in Management Science and Engineering. At Stanford, Ingrid has become an active member in numerous school organizations, including MEChA, the Stanford Society of Chicano/ Latino Engineers and Scientists, Ballet Folklorico de Stanford, El Guiding Concilio of Stanford, and the Central American Student Association at Stanford. In the future, Ingrid hopes to pursue an MBA and become an entrepreneur of socially responsible technology businesses.

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