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The Life of Jose Perez Ramirez

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The Life of Jose Perez Ramirez

By Jose Perez Ramirez

My name is Jose Perez Ramirez, I am 16 years old. I was born in Visalia, Southern California. Visalia is very warm. When I was a baby my parents decided to move to Fortuna, in Northern California and I've lived here ever since with my parents and my younger siblings. I have no idea why they decided to move to Fortuna but they did. During my middle school years, I had friends that I saw no difference between us. One day I realized that some of my classmates were outstanding with their accomplishments and I was just an average student with nothing special.

So one day, I decided to study hard and not let my parents down. Being smart and getting recognized gave me some joy in what I was doing. I even started enjoying books after my teacher in my seventh grade year recommended a short and sweet book series called *Island* by Gordon Korman. I couldn't put down, like a reward rather than an assignment, it felt addictive. I usually get this kind of enjoyment from playing Mario with my friends. Usually when I read books I get bored easily and can only read for so much time, but with this one felt completely different. "Wow!" I couldn't believe how much I was actually enjoying reading a book. Even though I was enjoying reading, it felt as if I was still wasting my time on having fun.

I found a new world inside pieces of paper that changed my point of view of what reading was actually like and how reading isn't boring and doesn't have to be done only for class. I started increasing my test scores and my grades little by little. Around the same time when I was in sixth grade, people from Trio, a group that helps students learn about planning for the future, started coming to my school and asking the students what they wanted to be when they grow up. The students and I didn't have an answer.

I brought it up to my parents and my dad explained his feelings with frustration in his voice. "Ay hijo por eso te traigo al trabajo para que veas lo que significa trabajar cuando no tienes educación. Por eso necesitas estudiar." I know he just wants the best for my future and wants me to work hard so I don't end up in that scenario, but those words are stuck in my head till this day. I felt stressed by the pressure that was building on me by my parents. A year later, one of my teachers, with disappointment in his voice, discussed his concerns for the class. Even though we were all close to graduating

on to high school, we all acted as if we were in elementary school. He said if we acted in the world the way we acted now we would become failures. I was shocked with the realization that what he was saying was the truth. "I should think about my future," I thought to myself.

I suddenly realized I should start thinking about what I should do for the future. One day, half way into my high school life, when I was discussing my success in school my parents had a very serious discussion with me. My father tells me "no me siento bien," they told me that they were planning on moving back to México a year after I graduate. Ever since my Grandpa died my dad has been feeling more homesick as the days pass. Me dijo "Quiero despedirme de mi mamá cuando se vaya." They said it in a way that there was an expectation that I have to meet before that time comes. I should have a plan on what I should be. This news was so sudden to me; I don't feel prepared to take care of my siblings all on my own. I fear that I will fail and go nowhere in life.

After that talk I realized that I have a short time limit on deciding a career I should take and stick with. Succeeding in school isn't an option now, it'll determine my future. As of now I'm studying to become an accountant and I'm studying computer science for a backup plan. I chose this path because I'm interested in computer science though I don't know if that'll be my main plan because I am most skilled at mathematics. I chose these paths because they both include math which is my favorite subject and the most fascinating to me. I do still have fun studying since my classmates are competitive and we improve after getting a lower score than one another.