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Revelation

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She heard a tired voice
through the phone; it said
“Mom died.”

She cried.

Her warm smile awaiting birth
now a pale expression.
Cancer won the battle;
there was no regression.

The news tragic yet expected—
induced birth,
one by calamity directed.

She could not attend the funeral—
a legal document missing,
a baby needing kissing,
and two other girls
needing mother’s blessing.

Time aged, and so did She.
The girls now in college.
A mother of three
lacking proper knowledge,
She struggles.

The burden of education She cannot understand.
How is it a burden when we’re on free land?
“Mother,” says Her girl, “you cannot comprehend
the debt, the long hours of work and study,
the grades, the work that doesn’t end”

She sits in the quiet house.
She hears Her girl’s words.
Time passes.
Eventually they’re only murmurs,
but to Her girl
the words are ever-present

The girl is like a fruit in preserve—
always present
but slowly changing form.

The girl has lost her patience.
She questions why Her sweet fruit is now a bitter cherry,
not knowing Her girl is nothing but a fruit sliced thin,
one of which She only receives the bitter end.
The girl, not consciously distributed,
her sweetest parts to education contributed,
and She asks why?
Her girl, with tired eyes replies,
“This is all for you.”

She cries.

She knows it's true.

She sleeps while Her girl studies.
She wakes to find papers scattered
and the door half open.

Her girl, no longer flattered,
flooded by expectations,
leaves aside complications,
focuses on respiration,
but lungs cannot find air;
ribs sharp as knives,
fearing death
Her girl panic denies.

A flash—
then back to normal.

A crash—
but not very formal.

Her girl, with tired eyes,
carves words into her skull.
Knowledge invades her mind like a scent;
still, She cannot understand

the tired eyes,
the broken sighs,
the sleepless nights.

The girl's grandfather dies.
Once more
the mother cannot go.
Her girl now sees
the fight inside.
Guilt resounds like thunder;
silence crashes.

They both will not understand
the tar pits they each swam through,
hoping to lend a better hand.