

Velisia Candra

English 100

Formal Assignment #1: Narrative Project Draft 2

October 29, 2018

Stars Within the Shadow of the Moon

“No way!” he yells. His face is turning red with anger at the disobedience of his daughter’s words.

Velisia stares into her father’s eyes but the fire burning in his glare shocks her. Velisia looks to her mother for support. The room is dark with shadows dancing from the single lamp in the room. Her mother can see she was looking for help to make her case, but she turns and sits down in the seat behind the father. Her expression become a perfect poker face, the stoic expression shows no hint of disagreement with the father. She appears to blend in with the shadow of the father. She will never speak out against the father. Velisia knows well, it is not common place for a woman to argue in her culture at this time. Velisia feels her hope fades as she realizes she is all alone in trying to make her case.

“Wait, but why?” she replies.

This conversation all started from the news she received at school this morning. Earlier that day, the sky is dark and cloudy. Velisia hears the thunder rumbling with anger. She is at her school and people chattering and mumbling some words that she can’t catch. Velisia walks to her home room and reports her name to the teacher. The teacher hands her an envelope. She opens the envelope and sees the report provided by the school says that she passed all the exams and finished her final year at high school. She is so happy, and that means she can go to her favorite college with her friends. Velisia leaves her homeroom and she looks around. She can see some of

her classmates from different homerooms screaming and shouting with excitement. They must have received the same news as her. In the other corner, Velisia sees a group of friends huddling together, and one of them in the center covers her face with her hands and sounds sad. She guesses some friends received terrible news. Velisia grabs her bag and rushes back home. She can't wait to show the news to her parents, especially her dad.

It is dark in the evening, and the air feels heavy as though rain is approaching by the time she reaches her front door.

“I want to attend Tarumanagara University and pursue my engineering degree.” Velisia says to her father, her eyes wide open with excitement.

But the response she receives completely surprises her.

“You are not becoming an engineering. That school will trap you for years and years before you could even get a job. I want you to find a job in administrative office management such as a secretary, or you can take a cooking school. You should be doing a normal job women can do, but NOT engineering.” he exclaims.

“Those school don't take forever and you can get a job right away after you graduate.” he adds.

“A woman has certain responsibilities. After high school, they work for a little bit, get married, have children, and stay home to take care of the family.” he lectures.

I can't believe the words that I hear. His perception about what I can or can't do just because I am a woman shocks me. This is insane and shocking in this age of equality. I try to grasp for any sense in his words,

“But, why didn’t you stop me and say anything when I was on the 12th grade, so I didn’t have to waste my time to take all of this science classes and put so much effort into my studies.” Velisia says.

“You know if you don’t want me to go to the engineering school, I could have taken language classes instead.” she adds.

Velisia is completely blindsided, like a rollercoaster coming to an unfinished track, her emotions derail in a spectacular crash. Her heart breaks into pieces. Velisia run into her bedroom and slams her door as hard as she can, and she locks her door. Her heart pumps quickly and she feels the pit of her stomach filling with the anger and sadness from the conversation with her father. Her eyes fill with tears. Velisia bit her lip harder to muffle the sounds of her crying. She doesn’t want her father hear her crying. Suddenly, she feels that she hates him so much.

It’s all gone and Velisia feels her great dreams fade away. All the memories of talking about getting accepted into the same school where her friends are going. Her heart is sinking. She promises to herself that she won’t go to college at all, if her father still does not allow her to get her engineering degree. Her mind wanders, carrying her away with the weight of his words. She tries to sleep so she can forget, but she can’t stop replaying the events of today in her mind. Velisia feels so tired, but she can’t sleep. Her thoughts begin to drift.

“Knock, knock, knock,” there is a knock at the door. She ignores it and waits for the silence to return. It comes again and this time it is louder, “bang, bang, bang.”

Velisia covers her head with her pillow and pretends like she sleeping. She hopes staying still will numb her heart and induce her body into a state unfeeling stone. Louder, “bang, bang, bang.”

Velisia jumps out of bed. She hates the door. Nothing good can come from outside her room. As she recites these words in her heads, she realizes her feet are already carrying her across the room, closer to the pounding that threatens her sanctum. She feels each hit deepening the pit in her stomach, making her sick. She is betrayed, her body pulls her broken mind like a parent dragging a resisting child by the arm. She can't stop her hands as she reaches for the door knob. Velisia opens the door and she sees her father's face.

"Yes, what's up," she says.

Velisia peers outside a little bit from behind the door. She doesn't want to let him come inside the room.

"Can I come inside?" he asks.

Velisia opens her door wider and she throws herself onto the bed. Her father grabs a chair and places it next to her bed. Then he starts to talk,

"I don't want to make you upset and I think you are misunderstanding what I want for you. Do you realize how much money you need to attend the school that you like? We don't have enough money to put you into that school," he explains.

"I have a surprise for you!" he adds.

A pause follows his words. Velisia gets up from her bed and leans up against the wall next to her bed. She is still upset with their recent discussion, so she pretends that she has no interest at all in the news. But she listens intently to hear what he might say.

"You have a job! My sister, your aunt is offering you to work at her office as an administrative assistant as soon as possible. One of her employee will be taking maternity leave soon." he explains.

Velisia quickly stares into his eyes, showing increasing interest in the conversation. She knows that getting a job without a degree is increasingly more impossible especially now. She thinks quietly, this is a good opportunity for her. Her mind is wandering, as she imagines a new life with a job and what sort of money is she going to make.

“With this job and the money you could earn, you will be able to go to your favorite college and you will have my support too.” her father adds the words.

She feel the foundation of her strength come back, filling her limbs with life once again. It feels as if someone is pulling her up to save her from drowning in the empty abyss. She can see her future and dreams once again come back into focus. But she still does not want to show the excitement to her father or that she wants the job. She pretends that she still wants to get her engineering degree with his support. Velisia remains quiet and doesn't want to say anything.

Her dad stands up from the chair and walks to the window, opening it. Velisia feels the breeze coming in through the window. She sees the yellow roses outside her window attracting her gaze. The whole room permeates with the strong peaceful smell of the roses. It looks the rain had stopped, and the clouds are clearing up a bit. Even though the night is approaching, she could see the sun's glow glistening off the moon. It is as if the moon is growing in size and the brilliant pale light dances through every seam in the clouds, unable to be deterred or held back. Her dad turns his body towards her and she can see the wrinkles in his expression that outline a tormented mix of pride and sorrow. Suddenly, Velisia feels so bad. She should be thankful to her dad with the new surprise. She should have understood earlier just how hard he works every day to provide for the family. She should have known that he only wants her to be happy. She is too shy to admit her feelings to him at this moment in time. Her dad came towards her, touches her head and simply says,

“You will be alright!” Then he leaves her side and walks out of her bedroom.

Velisia looks out the window. It is dark, but she can still see the lights from the stars and moon as they cross the sky. She tries to find the moon that had shown its face not so long ago. Slowly but surely she realizes there is no moon to be found, but the stars almost seems to be staring back in its place. Velisia winks her eyes back to the stars and starts to think, maybe in life we need to settle for the stars. They seem so much further away but there are so many you will never find them truly out of reach to those who go looking for them.