

Angy Rivera  
Freedom of Speech Poem

### Unidentified Identity

I've been here since I was three,  
growing up I thought I was the same,  
my friends and I experienced the same pain.  
Worrying about parents, girls we didn't like and kissing boys in the rain.  
Was our make up right? Were our clothes ok?  
Junior High exams were making us go insane.  
-After graduating  
Things start turning, molding, unfolding.

*Now I'm an official high school student.*

Spring recess comes around  
There are trips to Italy, France, Greece and Spain.  
I can't attend but I still try to blend.  
I win awards. I win contests.

*I've turned sixteen.*

Everyone worries about obtaining their working papers,  
and taking drivers Ed courses.  
I've turn sixteen too  
but I don't worry of any of these things.  
I'll wait for what the future brings.

*I'm an official High School Junior.*

I've become a pretty good actor, or am I a liar?  
I always have the right answers  
maybe not for this equation.  
I'm starting to lose patience.  
Everyone around me is driving, traveling.  
I'm focused on learning.  
Education might be the only way out.  
School, a place I can't be without.  
Report cards are coming about.  
I'm a straight A student.  
I have the qualities of a leader. I'm an achiever  
I've become president of a club.

*I'm an official high school senior.*

The time has come to fill out college applications.  
I'd be the first in my family.  
I have all the right qualifications,  
but it's time that I start paying attention.  
I take a look at my reflection:

I'm American, I'm Colombian, I'm a daughter, a sister, a translator, an English speaker, a Spanish speaker, a reader, a writer but that is just a fraction.  
What is the rest of me? A delicate subject  
and I must speak about it with caution.  
I start to face major problems.  
I don't recognize myself anymore,

I've become a complete stranger.  
Determination drives me to the financial aid office at the college of my choice.  
While I marvel and rejoice  
at the thought of pursuing my education.  
The universe has set into motion  
the first of many events that will push me into action.  
The administrator is heartless. She carelessly states that there will be no financial help for me.  
NO matter the grades  
NO matter the resume  
NO matter the extracurricular involvement  
NO matter how much community service I've done.  
For that moment,  
feelings that for years I had pushed into the basement of my soul  
come flooding out with no control.  
I'm undocumented.  
The world I once knew so brightly painted,  
has now dulled down and faded.  
I woke up that day with hope and only found tears.  
Tears that sting.  
Salted tears that show the pain I've been hiding within.  
I'm under constant pressure. I have to set a good example  
I'm undocumented.

*It's my eighteenth birthday.*

I'm an "illegal" adult.  
I wish to be considered equal some day.  
Once again  
Those around me are moving ahead. Everyone has registered to vote,  
signed up for credit cards,  
some take of to the army.  
However, I'm running out of time.  
I'm losing my mind.  
My education is on the line.  
Thoughts of suicide running through my brain  
Cold, uncaring feelings running through my veins.  
Something sets a light off inside me  
and I envision my mother at the age of twenty three  
dreaming of a better future for herself and me  
and so we traveled to America for the chance to be free  
I came back to reality  
and decide that I won't allow my illegality  
stop me from pursuing my happiness freely.  
The search for scholarships start.

*With a lot of hard work I'm an official college freshman but my journey isn't over*

Criminology is my intended major.  
I still struggle, at times I stumble.  
The organization I'm a part of reminds me,  
that there is a way to reach your D.R.E.A.M by ACTing.  
Now I outreach.  
I've become an organizer, protestor, marcher, an activist, a voice to the immigrant community.  
A voice to those that like me,  
once felt like nothing.