

“We Are Americans” by William Perez

A Review From The Immigrant Magazine
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“We Are Americans” by William Perez is a very factual and unflinching expose about the lives of young undocumented immigrants trying to pursue the American dream against a backdrop of odds brought on by no fault of theirs. Perez paints a picture that leaves the reader with a clear picture of how inhumane the current immigration process is and the need for comprehensive immigration reform.

It is the story of young people brought to the USA by parents seeking better opportunities for their families and upon arrival becoming unwelcome guests because of their legal immigration status. Unfortunately we now hear the voices of children who face the daunting task of fighting for their legal and social futures unlike their American born counterparts whose only jobs are to go to school and make something of themselves.

As I read each account I am struck by the succinct narration about their lives from childhood innocence up to their young adulthood when they each sadly find out that they are illegal and the consequences thereon. How these young adults now find themselves in a state of segregation where certain privileges are reserved for all but them just by virtue of place of birth. Even worse the fact that their consent to be either in their parents homeland or here in the USA was and could not have been a choice made by them.

William Perez certainly does a fine job of actually putting faces and giving a voice to stories which otherwise seem abstract or just theory for political debate and media frenzy while ignoring the human dignities involved. We are brought into the lives of of hardworking young men and women like Penelope, Jaime, Jeronimo, Lilia, Daniella, Isabel, Lucila, Pulina, Angelica, Sasha, Eduardo, Raul, Lucia, Michael, Julieta, Alba, Jessica, Julia, Ignacio, Nicole who now show us that laws are man-made and should be made to accommodate human needs and not the reverse. These above mentioned names only symbolically represent a fraction of the millions of young people in this dire situation. The Dream Act as mentioned by Perez could be a solution or an option to be embraced by all Americans to reconcile a nation so divided on an issue that can be remedied by sheer goodwill and compassion. Perhaps in so doing many will join Perez to show that we are a nation that not only cares for animal rights amongst others but equally cares for children who cannot be held responsible for the mistakes of their parents. These young people in most cases have lost connection with their countries of birth and have all their lives known the USA as home but for the lack of a social security card(which is how most found out about their illegal status).

“We Are Americans” is a great and easy read which makes for great contribution to the already existing conversation of humane and comprehensive immigration for all.

Hopefully we steer this into a more humanitarian approach and less of a political punch line for points.