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## Daniel's Song

Mauricio E. Novoa  
Gettysburg College, mauricionovoa03@gmail.com  
Class of 2014

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**Author Bio**

Mauricio Novoa is a senior at Gettysburg College from Glenmont, MD (DMV stand up!), finally getting published in something that isn't a notebook. An English major with a Writing Concentration, most of his works are social justice based, looking at the social elements that affect everyday people in America, thanks mainly to his work with the Center for Public Service and his mentor, Kim Davidson. He would also like to shout out Jeffery Rioux, Gretchen Natter, Tammy Hoff, and Professors Meyer and Melton for adding to the art.

# Daniel's Song

Mauricio Novoa

I sit my younger brother on the steps  
Of the only house he's known  
On the corner of Georgia Ave and Urbana,  
Prime rush hour zone  
By the bus stop in Glenmont,  
And he rocks Chuck\*'s, high tops,  
In black and red, like my J's\*,  
Both brands from my block.  
He's a little skater boy, same style  
His friends roll with on the street,  
While I match the dudes  
Chillin' outside 7-11, drug dealer chic.  
His skin's dark, and mine's light,  
But ironically his life  
Has been a little easier than mine,  
Though our roots are wrapped tight  
In brown soil on white land, unfertile,  
Though we grow and spread.  
I guess with him we all made sure He  
never saw our garden was dead Like  
we did, looking out our windows To  
see hoodlums and struggle.  
Just because we weren't in the ghetto  
Doesn't mean we weren't in the jungle:  
Dudes with hats with their favorite teams  
And brand names on their shirts and jeans  
And old heads in Nautica and Nikes  
Starting to rip at the seams  
And single mothers with another  
Bun in the oven all going to make that bread.  
Like a scary movie, some of these images  
Never get out of one's head.  
He asks me about college,  
And how much do I enjoy it,  
And how much easier it'll be for me

to go out and find employment.  
I look him in eyes the way I did  
One morning when he was five  
And got home from the hospital  
After a seizure from a 103 fever, and I lie  
And tell him school is wonderful  
And I'm making so many friends  
That don't get into trouble,  
And only welcome messages are sent.

“Do well enough,  
You'll get there too,  
And when you get that degree,  
I'll be right there right beside you.”  
It's the same thing Pops told me  
When I finally gave up on street dreams  
That only end in eternal sleep  
For red stitched bandana seams.  
And he's looking up to me  
The same way I looked up as a child  
To the water tower watching over us,  
Collar-blue and not defiled  
By the neighborhood's poisons,  
Too high up from the weeds  
But still close enough to keep an eye  
On the next generation's seeds.  
But as bad as I want his mind cultivated,  
Do I say  
That the road to success is one  
They want us far away from, and to stay  
Away from Gettysburg where they push  
A Mexican off a fraternity porch  
And call him a spic, then surround  
A black man with the same approach  
As White hoods when they hung  
“Strange Fruit” for Crows to pick?  
And they ask how we end up in the hood  
And never leave that shit.  
Do I tell him that preppy boys  
In pastel colors, skittle-pack-looking,  
Thinking they're tougher than Mr. T  
Sit around a table with schemes a-cooking

To run him out without being open  
Are gonna follow him around every corner?  
Or white girls in yoga pants and North Faces  
Will see his skin and leave him a loner?  
So what do I tell him, when I know  
No matter where the wind drops him,  
He could be one of those  
100 brown boys in 100 brown coffins.