It is with great sadness that I am compelled to write a statement disclosing the nature of my independence, and to request full consideration as an independent scholar, despite my young twenty years of age. First things first, the brunt requirements of this statement: my mother is Yasmine Aldana, living in San Diego. My father is Ali Agheli, and died when I was young. My stepfather is William Aldana, living in San Diego. I have also lived with my mother's mother, Layla Amiri, in San Diego.

Now for the story: I do not wish to burden the heart of the reader, but on this occasion, I have been required to. My living situation has long been tenuous. The last five years of my life have included a particular uptick in yelling and emotional torture from my mother. She, who has failed to keep friends, jobs, and family members interested in her, takes out her worldly frustrations on her children and husband. She is, in short, a broken women, who needs help, refuses it, and causes those in her stead to suffer.

Our last meaningful encounter while living together went like so: At 9:45ish in the morning, I entered the kitchen, and began to cook. With 10:15, she approached, and yelled for me to stop. I explained that there was no food in the fridge, and that I was hungry. She did not stop yelling. I did not stop cooking, because I was hungry. She continued to yell at me, and I did well to block it. She broke down and began to physically assault me. This in turn broke me, and I cried and screamed for my younger sister to defend me. I did finally finish the food, by about noon. In that time, I cried many tears, and punched a hole in the wall.

Suffice it to say that we are not compatible to live together! So I've spent much of the past three years living with my mother's mother, on legally tenuous grounds. She lives in Senior Housing, on Section 8, whereby she is not allowed to have another adult living with her unreported. So, I had been "visiting" 5 of the 7 days a week, or more, many weeks in a row. Putting aside the potential abuse of housing benefits, I began to suffer under her stead too.

My grandmother was, at a time, kind to me. I drove her car, visited her at ESL class between my own classes, and carried a cautious optimism for our future. We vacationed together, and while that did involve considerable stress and some emotional abuse, it kind-of worked ... until she, too, broke. Like my mother, she is a bothered and lonely woman, who has repelled friends and family through toxic and manipulative behaviors. Fall of 2024 was the beginning of the end: I came home each

day from 12-14 hours at school, totally exhausted. She, having given up on taking classes due to unfriendly relationships she had harbored with her classmates and teacher, relied solely on me to speak to her each day. Crucially, when I could not provide this service to her, she would yell, scream, and threaten to put me to the street. Such was my life for months, a miserly experience which I clung to for dear life each day, hoping for better.

I distinctly remember working very hard to succeed in my classes and to maintain good enough standing with my Grandmother to survive. I was so thoroughly abused that, on the weekend before my final Calculus exam, I was disallowed to study for the exam, on the grounds that she demanded her entire apartment be thoroughly cleaned by me. I refused, and was yelled at much of the day, and kicked out of her apartment to spend the Sunday with my mother. I failed the exam, earning the first B class grade in all of my collegiate history.

With no real confidence, but a dream unbroken, I enrolled in classes during the Spring 2025 semester. Of these, I withdrew from most. I had become absolutely unable to study or focus. I had been broken by no rest, no joy, and no kindness in my life but those of friends who I could not, in full conscience, burden with the totality of my situation. Near the withdrawl deadline and performing poorly in the rigorous classes of the semester, I did what I had to: I withdrew!

In the time following, I continued working. I had very little savings, having spent much of my income doing office work on paying for food and gas. I continued making appearances as President of the Computer Science Club, and as a member of the Speech and Debate Team. Eventually, a peer confided in me his own need for a roommate, and so I plotted to and successfully did join him. My living situation is humble: a roll-out bed on a living room floor. But it is peaceful and quiet; my roommate and his mother are courteous and sensitive to mutual respect; I can, again, focus.

I fled home in the last days of March this year. I have paid rent for four months. My income has fluctuated severely. I worked 130 hours in two weeks at a tax office during the first half of April. I worked up to 10 hours a day with no days off, specifically to earn enough to move out. My timing was perfect, because the CPA had just argued one of my co-workers out of the job! Given both the seasonal nature of the job and the unfortunately abusive behavior of that boss, I have left that. Since then, my income is sourced from small amounts of work from Wiley zyBooks

as a content reviewer, and from Mesa College's own MT2C as a tutor.

I have and continue to actively seek additional employment, so that I may do better than eke out a portion of a living until I do, fingers crossed, get enough hours from MT2C to live off of during the Fall. That may not happen! In such a case, at best, I can work a job on the weekend to make ends meet, and see if I am able to do two or three of my desired five classes this Fall. On the condition that I have the fallback (certainly not the first option) of a Federal Loan, I do not have the stress of worrying for my life; on that condition, I can complete my Summer course in Statistics with peace of mind, and gladly study the Calculus II and Spanish III material I'll be encountering in two short months.

Just this morning, I attended an interview working at a coffee shop. My schedule as a student largely disappointed them. A week and a half ago, I was accepted for a job as a Cashier at The Great Greek restaurant, on the condition that I performed to their needs during training. Following a full work day on the Saturday, and a half day on Sunday, including responsibilities as both Cashier and Janitor (with all of the displeasure implied by the latter role), I was rejected, citing concerns that they needed someone who had enough training to generate the maximum possible revenue immediately. In short, I was perceived as a trainable young adult; however, the restaurant economy was perceived as too tough for the risk of a new trainee to be profitable. I am not so deeply discouraged, but I am worried. I continue to apply to jobs; later today, I will apply to nearby CVS and VONS stores, and so on.

My point in all of this is that I'm trying, very hard, to stay away from the awful living situations which beckon me back with open arms. My grandmother sends text messages attempting to coo me, with compliments and apologies that fall flat. My sister has, since my departure, disclosed to me that she has received considerable emotional abuse, and that she "just wants to die", which has prompted me to open a case with Child Protective Services. Should that pending case rule in her favor, I do hope that something can be done for her. Even if it doesn't, it serves to hold my mother accountable for her behavior. Since finding out that I've opened that case, my mother has treated my sister a little gentler! Suffice it to say that I am wholly unable to depend on my mother for anything, on the grounds that she turns to sadism at her own whims for pleasure. I am unable to ask my last parent for help.

Thinking deeply on this does disturb me, to the extent that a familiar headache returns, and a nearly forgotten fatigue graces my heart. I am

healing, very well, from a bad situation. I hope that I may be granted the leeway to guarantee that situation while I work with great efficiency, and hopefully even some pleasure, to earn the requirements to transfer successfully to my dream school for my dream degree, UCLA for a BA in Linguistics and Computer Science, by Fall 2026.

I have no therapist, case worker, or religious minister in my life. I can best ask my roommate, Dyllon Tompkins, to provide an account of my circumstances through his first-hand witnessing of certain events.

Kian Agheli
9 July 2025