TieHis body ached really bad. He felt like he had something worse than the flu at the moment and the flu made you feel like you had gotten beaten and whacked by baseball bats. His body throbbed, and He threw up in the bucket next to him his entire body feeling like lava erupted from his throat and flowed from his stomach, chest and out of his mouth. He felt like his veins were boiling. He was shaking really bad. He curled up into a ball but it didn’t help. She prayed. His mother gave him some soda pop and he drank it. It had no effect except making him throw up again. His mother prayed then she gave him some water. He threw up and his body shook afterwards. You could see fire in her eyes as she watched him throw up. He wondered what she was thinking. She prayed then brought him another drink. She said try this.   
She gave him a red liquid and it burned as it went down.

“What is it mother …I can hold it down without throwing up,”

“It’s cranberry juice,”

He drank some more…pain oozed down his chest

“Dear father please heal my son and I’ll do anything you want,”

“Mother don’t pray that,”

“But you’re my little baby,”

“Can you get me some more cranberry juice,”

“Of course,”

She came back with another cup of cranberry juice. He drank it happily. He could actually feel it go down his body. He hated throwing up It felt awful.

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“Can you buy cranberry juice,” said Tien

“Of course,” His mother wheeled her cart over to buy cranberry juice.

“I think this is my new favorite,”

“I would drink it too after what you went through,”

“Momma, I’m build a giant robot when I get home,” said Tien’s little brother.

“I can’t wait to see it,”

Tien built robots in private and trashed them afterwards. So far, he had built a robot that could cut onions, fruit and vegetables. His brother only built mechs but Tien built robots that could do everyday things. Mechs were cool but there were other things besides mechs. He could make more sophisticated robots also because his brother was just dabbling with code when he programmed his bot but Tien was actually learning programming in class.

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Tien’s mom took him to the food bank with her. He hated the food bank because they controlled what you could buy. I understand why they don’t want to run out of food but why wasn’t his mother given more food stamps. Life was weird like that. People always gave you bad choices. You can go to a grocery store and buy the food you want but you must use the money you earned. You could go to a food bank but you had to have limited choices. You could use food stamps and buy without what you earned but you got no money. The power of capitalism. Capitalism was good but it had its flaws like any government system. He punched the wall. His mom worked long hours at a retail store which was much worse than a sweatshop in his opinion. You had to clean, watch the counter, ring up customers, shelve merchandise, change prices, climb ladders, deal with annoying coworkers, deal with annoying customers, and deal with annoying employers. They needed more workers. Theme parks don’t make everyone clean they hire people to do a specific job not every job all on the same shift. You had no time to be home and relax and when you were home you had to clean. His mother worked at a theme park and she worked at a retail store and as a waitress. She was barely home. He felt like he was raising himself because she was never home. Then he was expected to watch and raise his brother.   
His brother didn’t like his mother for not being home but he didn’t understand that she worked to provide for the family. He hated his father even more because he left their family.

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Tien started building a fan. He gathered up the propeller, the base and all the other parts. His mother walked in. She smoothed out her clothing and sat on the bed.

“Tien my boy,”

“you need something mother,”

“Yes, I want to tell you a story…..,”