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Alana’s Theme In Three Movements
By Bridgel Dung

----I----

On Christmas Day 1995, my sister, her family, and I gathered for dinner at our family home in Nu‘uanu. The holidays were a special time for me, a time to come together to see family members that I would not see except at this time of the year. A car pulled into the driveway; the engine sounded unfamiliar, but the rhythmic percussion of doors opening and closing in 4/4 meter was noticeable. Those sounds announced the arrival of my eldest brother and his family. They always made their traditional stop to wish Popo (Chinese for grandmother) and Goong-goong (Chinese for grandfather) a Merry Christmas on their way to dinner at the Yong Sing Restaurant in downtown Honolulu.

We seldom got to see my brother’s children. As in most Chinese families, a son is “lost” to his wife’s side of the family after he marries. My niece and nephew entered the house first, and as usual we greeted them with oo’s and ah’s.

My nephew, the most handsome six-year-old I knew, greeted his aunts with hugs and kisses. The attention shifted when his sister, just over a year and a half, made her entrance into the family room. All eyes shifted to her, the most darling child I had ever seen. Her brother, I could see, conceded center stage to her.

Popo shouted from the kitchen, “Anybody want some turkey?” The reply was a resounding “No” from my sister-in-law, because they were on their way to dinner and she did not want the children spoiling their appetites. Understandable, but my niece’s eyes lit up when she heard the offer, and I suspected she would get her way. My brother - a pushover since he was a kid - submitted to his daughter’s wish and allowed her to chomp heartily on a drumstick.

In her Christmas dress
and white lace socks, she stood on Goong-goong’s recliner with turkey all over her hands and face. My brother next to her was feverishly wiping her down while my sister-in-law glared at him for his indiscretion.

My sister’s two sons, bored by what was going on, ran up the hallway to the back room to play on their Nintendo game system. After all, it was Christmas and they welcomed the opportunity to play with their new game cartridges. My sister took my other nephew by the hand and led him to the room to play with his cousins while his sister continued devouring the drumstick.

Single with no children, I sat back watching the family dynamics take place, breathing a sigh of relief that I had not contributed to the pandemonium. Actually, I was thanking my lucky stars that all I would be leaving with that night were leftovers. All of this had occurred within a span of fifteen minutes. I sensed that it would soon be time for them to leave, and my instincts did not fail me. Right at that mo-

Visions in the Wind by Nally Scannamico
Sculpture
Spectrum
7
ment, my sister-in-law nodded at my brother, and then said, “We’d better go before we’re late.”

Such a short visit. I loved seeing the children. It felt so unfair to be able to watch them grow up in only fifteen-minute increments a few times a year. We said good-bye and wished them a Merry Christmas. Now I heard the sounds of their arrival in reverse, and I was saddened by the sounds that fifteen short minutes ago had brought so much joy. I was missing them already and anticipating the next time I would see them again. The distance didn’t matter as they would always be a part of me and I a part of them. Little did I know just how much that would mean in a few short months.

---II---

Christmas Day 1995 was the last time I saw my niece and nephew until March 1, 1996. It was a Sunday, and my sister and I were at my parents’ home. The telephone rang. I remember answering it. It was my older brother. He was calling from the Kapi’olani Medical Center for Women and Children. He was calling to tell us that my niece, Alana, had been diagnosed with leukemia. Gaping in disbelief, I asked, “How could this be?” He had no answer. There was silence on the other end. How could he explain to me something he himself could not understand? I gave the phone to Popo. I remember thinking, “This didn’t happen to us, it happened to other people.”

Just as we had come together on Christmas Day in 1995, we would come together again this day in March 1996 and our lives would be changed forever. We were about to undergo a transformation in our lives, we were about to participate in a phenomenon, and we were about to come together not only as a

_Small Life_ by Jeff Kaneko
Ceramic Crayon
family, but as a community trying to save one little girl’s life.

Alana’s prognosis meant she would need a bone marrow transplant to save her life. She needed a donor who would be a perfect match and she needed one soon. She had been diagnosed with acute myeloid, type M-7 leukemia, a type rarely found in children. It was an aggressive form of leukemia and time was a vital factor.

The search for a donor began with Alana’s immediate family. My brother, his wife, and my nephew were tested and none of them was the perfect match the doctors were hoping for. This would be one of many disappointments that would occur over the next 19 months.

The next step required that all family members be tested, family members including sisters, brothers, aunts, uncles, and cousins, both here in Hawai’i and on the mainland. Our families numbered close to 100 people or 100 possible matches. I sensed that we all hoped to be the perfect match, to be the one who might save Alana’s life. None of us matched.

The search for a match continued and went as far as the family village in China. Still, no match. Out of despair, the family made a plea to the people of Hawai’i to come out and be tested, and the people answered in staggering numbers, which forced us to set up locations large enough to handle the crowds of people who wanted to help, help that came in the form of 800 volunteers and over 30,000 donors over a period of six weeks and 42 bone marrow drives. We witnessed an extended family coming together to help one of their own and an outpouring of love from the community. But no match yet. Finally, a few days after Alana’s second birthday, we received news of a possible match in Taiwan. The word “joy” took on a new meaning, and we all took a breath knowing this was a first step.

Alana kept her spirits high throughout her treatment, treatment that included numerous rounds of chemotherapy, unrelenting blood tests, and long hospital stays. She showed an admirable amount of courage, strength,
and power. Impressive qualities for someone of such a tender age.

Her condition did not allow frequent visits from friends or family. She needed to be kept away from exposure to possible germs, as her immune system would not be able to fight off any infections. If staying away meant she would get well, then we could wait until we could be with her.

We waited for word that the donor had cleared all the tests necessary in order to give the lifesaving marrow that Alana needed. The result was positive. On June 4, 1996, Alana and her family flew to Seattle's Fred Hutchinson Cancer Research Center to prepare for the bone marrow transplant that would take place on July 17, 1996.

---III---

Our family went to Seattle to spend a few days with Alana before her transplant, coming together to offer love and support to one another. The transplant went well except for one setback, a potential infection, and she re-entered the hospital for two weeks of observation. After the danger passed, the doctors discharged her to recover in her temporary home in Seattle.

A few months passed and on November 14, 1996, Alana returned home to Hawai‘i. Despite encouraging reports from Seattle, her condition still required as sterile an environment as possible. Our visits consisted of seeing her through the window, waving to her, and throwing kisses. Then on Christmas Day 1996, she made her first public appearance at the Aloha Bowl game at the Hālawa Stadium.

We celebrated another Christmas together. Things continued to go well and then in March 1997 my brother called and told us that the leukemia had returned. We were devastated. The doctors advised that another transplant would not cure her; it would be too risky. We spent whatever moments we could with her as we knew she did not have much time left with us and we celebrated her third birthday on May 20, 1997. Then, on October 14, 1997, we gathered at my brother's
home to say our final good-bye to the little girl with turkey all over her face and hands, to the little girl with courage, strength and power, to the little girl who had transformed our lives, to the little girl who created a phenomenon in Hawai'i's history, and to the little girl who brought together a family that extended across the state.

*Untilled* by Hiromi Matsuo
Mixed Media
The Backward Public School System

By Jenny Warringer

An impending threat to future generations of Hawai‘i is the sub-standard public education system. Anyone who drives by a public school in Hawai‘i can see that it is run down. What goes on inside these schools? How well is the Hawai‘i public school system doing compared to the rest of the country? Do our school systems need reform? The answer is yes, and the problem needs to be addressed soon.

Many of the students here at KCC have attended schools within this system. I ask these students: do you feel that your parents’ hard-earned tax dollars contributed to the quality of education you deserved? A startling fact is that while your education may have been suitable, your children’s education may not be. As reported in the Honolulu Star Bulletin, the educational standards in Hawai‘i have fallen from a “B” in 1997, to a “C” in 1998, and finally to a staggering “D-” in 1999. The rating for Hawai‘i’s school climates is an “F” (Pendleton, Noemi and David, 1999:1).

Another article stated that a review done by the highly respected Fordham Foundation also gave Hawai‘i’s education system a “D-“. Surprisingly, that bit of news wasn’t even reported to the state Legislature or the Board of Education (Rolf, 1999:2). The article also declared that the children of Hawai‘i placed last on the National Assessment of Education Progress fourth grade reading test. The director of the National Education Goals Panel, Ken Nelson, said that the parents in Hawaii should be alarmed because fourth grade reading is a gateway measurement; this means that these kids are more likely to fall farther behind as their education progresses (Rolf 1999:2). When it comes to improving the school climate, little is being done. According
to Lester Chuck who is the DOE facilities director, the budget has been cut so much that “There will be more situations where we can’t even repair the emergency things” (Kreifels, 1999:1).

Which candidate for the upcoming presidential election might help push reform of our schools along? I haven’t heard of a candidate who has specifically mentioned Hawai’i’s school system. There is information, however, on one candidate’s views on education as a whole. George W. Bush’s views on education that apply to Hawai’i are as follows: “[G]et rid of national tests [and] only administer local ones... praise and reward successful schools and shame failures... it’s ok to link funding to performance” (Political Resources OnLine 1999). If George W. Bush were to become president, I would tell him that these kinds of solutions will not help the desperately needy public education system of Hawai’i. We need the national tests to let us know how we are doing in comparison to the rest of the country. Our local control and accountability has not prevented failure. The problems of the Hawai’i school systems run deep, and these simple solutions offered by Bush would do little to help.

Our schools need updated curricula, better buildings, more equipment, such as computers, and nice, safe schoolyards for the children to

Palm Tree by Cassilly E. Woll - Watercolor
play in. More charter schools need to be started up to allow families to choose the schools they want instead of schools being chosen for them. Charter schools have been known to be successful. However, there are only two of these schools existing in Hawai‘i today. If any state school system is a failure it would probably be ours, but that doesn’t mean that our system should be “shamed.” However, our system does need help. Improving the public education system needs to be top priority. How is Hawai‘i’s economy going to improve if the people of this state are not educated? How is the environment going to hold out, much less improve if the people of Hawai‘i have to concentrate totally on the survival of their families? This point seems obvious enough, but what is being done now to address these issues?

The legislature seems more interested in banning fireworks than improving the schools. Why is education such a “non-issue” for the state legislators? Why is the education of the upcoming and future generations seemingly unimportant to them? Maybe it is just easier to ignore the problem than to fix it.

The people of Hawai‘i need to start pushing this issue with local and national politicians. To achieve this, however, the issue needs to be brought to the public’s attention. More stories on the news stations should cover the progress of the school system, and more stories should be written about it in the newspapers. Parents and educators could start holding meetings to share their thoughts, concerns, hopes, and possible solutions to the schools’ problems. They could start petitions demanding that more funding goes into the school system. They could try and encourage as many people as they could to start writing letters to legislators, demanding solutions to these problems.

Federal grants should be sought after such as the Obey-Porter grant. Two congressmen, David Obey and John Porter, started the federal funding of school-wide reforms in 1997. The schools which received this grant, including ten Hawai‘i schools, have improved immensely. More programs need to be
implemented. Two schools, Solomon Elementary and Pope Elementary, have launched new programs (Core Knowledge, Success For All) and the students have already shown measurable improvement (Rolf, 1999:3).

With some cooperation of parents, educators, and the state legislators the school systems will improve. Once the public recognizes and demands something to be done about this, the schools can start in the right direction.
Salvation. This is what the “Hollow Men” seek. Rising from the memory of Dante’s Divine Comedy, “The Hollow Men” by T. S. Eliot draws us back into the world he created in The Waste Land, this time to examine the nature of enervation as it seeks salvation. The Hollow Men, like Conrad’s Mr. Kurtz from Heart of Darkness and England’s national villain Guy Fawkes, are men of high ideals but without moral fortitude. Their passionate quest for the Holy Grail of noble idealism has blinded them to the origin of the question itself and they have sacrificed their morality for the sake of idealism. Now they seek salvation.

Eliot’s poem follows loosely and returns often to The Divine Comedy. Using Dante’s kingdoms of Inferno, Purgatory, and Paradise as a guide, Eliot has shaped a poem which can be seen as a continuation of The Waste Land, which was written just prior to this. He has also used epigraphic references to The Gunpowder Plot of 1605 (whose defeat is celebrated on Guy Fawkes day) and Joseph Conrad’s Heart of Darkness to frame the poem, giving added coherence and structure to an otherwise elusive poem. Eliot has sent his reader on a hunt through literary history, just as he did in The Waste Land, but this time the works alluded to are less vital to understanding the poem. They endow the reader with a deeper understanding of Mr. Eliot’s vision but in the end, the poem stands by itself, a work of its own.

Some critics regard Mr. Eliot’s poem as nothing more than an exercise in allusion. During my research of this poem, I waded through some authors who referenced nearly every line to an outside work. They entangled Mr. Eliot’s poem in so much tedious literary allusion that it seemed not a poem but a con-
vention of classics. Eliot seemed not a poet but a "referencer." Undoubtedly, there is a great deal of literary allusion in this poem, just as there is in most of Mr. Eliot's work, but the allusions do not change the meaning of the poem; they merely aid in the understanding of it. Nonetheless, in order to grasp the full meaning of Eliot's poem we should first have a basic understanding of the works he referenced.

The epigraph "A Penny for the Old Guy" refers to the November 5th celebration of Guy Fawkes Day. The day commemorates the foiling of a mass assassination plot against the king and his ministers. A group of extremist Catholics planned to usurp the king by blowing up the Houses of Parliament on November 5, 1605, the State Opening of Parliament. But one of the terrorists inadvertently exposed the plot by warning his brother-in-law, a member of Parliament, to avoid the State Opening. On the night of November 4th, Guy Fawkes was apprehended in the cellar below the House of Lords standing guard over nearly two tons of gunpowder. After being tortured for days, he was subsequently executed.

The second epigraph, "Mistah Kurtz - He dead," refers to the enigmatic character of Conrad's Heart of Darkness. This is the story of the English seaman Marlow, who was sent into deepest Africa to find the once admired, now feared renegade ivory trader Kurtz. As Marlow travels down the Congo he begins to recognize similarities between Kurtz and himself. When he finally encounters Kurtz at his trading station, he finds a "hollow sham" of a man (Conrad 109). Sick with malaria and verging on insanity, Kurtz makes Marlow the keeper of his memory. Kurtz, using idealism to rationalize murder and other such heinous crimes, is the prototypical "hollow" man.

"The Hollow Men" was originally composed as several different poems, which the poet gradually came to think of as sequenced. Part I, "We are the Hollow Men," was originally published in the winter of 1924. Part III, "This is the dead land," was published as the third part of
"Doris's Dream Songs" in November 1924. Parts I, II, and IV were published together for the first time in March 1925. The whole poem, with Part V, the final addition, appeared in "Poems 1909-1925" later that same year. The separate composition of each individual part, then marrying them to form one, could be the explanation for the poem's lack of identifiable narrative sequence (Scofield, 137). Eliot himself recognized this.

As late as October 1925, a month before the poem's publication, Eliot still had doubts about the poem. He wrote to his editor, "Is it too bad to print? If not, can anything be done to it? Can it be cleaned up in any way? I feel I want something of about this length (I-V) to end the volume ("Poems 1909-1925") as post Waste" (Southam, 202).

It should also be noted that while Eliot did not actually convert from staunch atheism to Christianity until 1926, he began frequently visiting churches as early as 1921 (Gordon, 211). This would indicate that the author was dealing with his own inner conflict over salvation during the period in which he wrote this poem. Knowing this helps illuminate the poem, especially Part V, when the exhausted "Hollow Men" try to recite The Lord's Prayer. Another indicator of Eliot's spiritual struggle is the line "broken jaw of our lost kingdoms." This is likely an allusion to the weapon with which Samson slew the Philis-
tines and signifies that the salvation theme in this poem is not simply a product of following The Divine Comedy.

A full, line-by-line annotation of Mr. Eliot’s poem is painfully tedious and, I believe, robs the poem of its intended final effect. The reader feels an overall mood of disgust laced with pity for these men, who, upon realizing their imminent damnation, make one final lunge at salvation. But the impetus of their effort is not a thirst after salvation’s sake, but rather a fear of damnation. However, a general understanding of some of the more important allusions and the progression of the poem lends a great deal to the enjoyment of this masterpiece.

The short lines establish a sense of breathlessness and exhaustion, while at the same time reminding the reader of some muttered incantation. “The Hollow Men” themselves bring to mind the crowd of the “uncommitted” on the banks of the River Acheron in Canto III of Dante’s Inferno, who have not yet “crossed/...to death’s other Kingdom” (hell itself, in Inferno) and who are “gathered on the beach of this tumid river.” The “multifoliate rose” of Part IV is a vivid connection to Dante’s vision of heaven in the form of a Rose in Paradise, because of the tiers of “petals” as the ranks of the redeemed (Canto XXX, line 112, Canto XXXI, line 1). Eliot’s “kingdoms” seem to bear some resemblance to Dante’s traditional Catholic division of the afterlife into Hell, Purgatory and Heaven, but any attempt to find exact equivalents is strained at best (Scofield 144).

“Headpiece” in the first stanza, in the singular, suggests the hollow men’s uniformity. The “Paralysed force, gesture with out motion” describes the paradoxical effect of the whole poem, which consists both of a sense of exhaustion and of a last concentrated burst of weak energy in the hope of salvation. In lines 52-56 we are shown a glimpse of “the hollow valley,” a part of “death’s dream kingdom.” This scene brings to mind several other valleys. First and foremost is another allusion to Heart of Darkness where Marlow describes a valley as “step[ing] into the
gloomy circle of some Inferno. Black shapes crouched, lay, sat between the trees, leaning against the trunks, clinging to the earth, half coming out, half effaced within the dim light, in all the attitudes of pain, abandonment, and despair” (Conrad, 23).

There are various other allusions to Shakespeare’s Julius Caesar, The Bible, and other works by the author. But none of these is crucial to appreciation of this poem. T. S. Eliot himself was a critic and had a much stricter definition of “literary tradition” than did most of his contemporaries. This poem is a model of the use of “literary tradition” to make an entirely new landscape as the stage of an ancient conflict.
Mocking Birds

By Grace E. Suh

I lived in a simple, ivory building. The windows were identical; they were small and boxed in, arranged in rows evenly spaced. Some were lit up, some were not. At night, the birds would nestle on top of the branches of the kukui nut trees that surrounded our apartment. An abundance of these trees lined Kukui Street, concealing my window from which I peered out on many lonely nights.

The four elevators in the building never seemed to work. They squeaked and shook as they slowly scaled up to each floor. I questioned the authenticity of the license that was placed on top of the wall in the elevator. At times the elevator wouldn’t stop on my floor; instead, it continued to go up despite all the buttons I pushed. A telephone inside the elevator bore a sign that read “In Case Of An Emergency” in bold red letters. I would call for help, but it just rang and rang at who knows where; no one was ever there to pick up my cries. When the doors opened, I ran. The only way home was to go down thirty flights of stairs, to the fifth floor where I lived. Without hesitating, I ran through the narrow hallway to the heavy metal door, pushed my way out into the darkness where the gloomy staircase was located, and ran down the box-like trail, making sure I did not look back to see if anyone was behind me. The number five was imprinted on the door, for the paint on it had chipped off and rays of light escaping from the hallway on my floor shone through the small window. I pulled my way into the lit hall where my door stood waiting for me. As I opened the door, once again, darkness fell upon me.

When I was younger, my sister Jean, who is only two years older than I am, always protected me from danger. Once she yelled at a girl in my school and threatened to beat
her up if she bothered me again. She was independent, while I was dependent on her. When she moved on to intermediate school, she would take the bus back into Mānoa Valley where my elementary school stood and meet me at the library where we finished our homework. We took the bus back home late in the afternoon, and the hour-long ride downtown brought darkness upon the streets. The bus stop was four blocks away from our home, though it felt like a mile away. The streetlights shone down to reveal the hideous male hookers who dressed like women, the drug deals that took place, and the homeless people scrounging for money. They always frightened me, but my sister never feared them; she just took my hand and walked as if we were untouchable.

One night, we spotted
two grubby old men down the dark and vacant street. Their overgrown, ashy beards shadowed their mysterious faces. Their clothes were dingy and dark from the dirt they had accumulated since they hardly ever bathed. Their mumbling grew clearer as they staggered towards us, and the rancid stench emanating from them made me want to gag. The men were twice our size, perhaps four times as old as we were, and ten times as revolting as the homeless people I had seen. They asked us where we were going, and I knew that they could see in my eyes that I was horrified. My sister grabbed my hand and yelled, “Leave us alone!” As they surrounded us, the stench of liquor traveled up my nose; it was a familiar odor, an odor that sent chills through my body. At that moment, I thought we were going to die. So we just ran, as we always did.

Our home was lonely. We left the television on so that it wouldn’t feel so quiet and empty. Our mother worked late shifts, coming home close to midnight. I would wait anxiously in front of my small window in the bedroom, looking out for her small blue automobile. To kill time I would watch the kukui nut trees that stood still in the night, as if they were frozen. Not one branch or leaf moved and all the birds hovered together in a ball like a family. It was hard to spot my mom’s car; the long branches and maple-shaped leaves hampered my view of the street, so my ears were conditioned to identify the sound of her car motor. They had also adapted to the sound of disputes from outside that echoed into my window. Swearing, crying, and screaming broke the silence of the still night, and the poor birds would awaken. Any sort of abrupt noise startled and disturbed the birds, and they would let everyone know by squawking noisily, drowning out the sound of profanity in the air. Then they would fly to another kukui nut tree and the screaming resurfaced. I blocked out the disturbing noise by covering my ears and running to my bed for comfort.

The sound of my mother’s puttering motor delighted me. It was loud and
annoying for others, but I found it pleasant and familiar. I was always happy to see her and relieved that she was all right. My dad usually came home from work at around seven o’clock, depending on how busy it was that day. It was when the clock struck nine. Then ten. Then eleven. I hid in my bedroom, lay on my bed, in a ball, shaking uncontrollably. The quick clank of the door unlocking sent electric shocks up my body. I would hide under my sheets since I had nowhere else to go.

Ever since I was young, I thought that alcohol was a gateway for the devil to take control of my father’s body. My dad would come home drunk, his face flaming red and beads of sweat dripping down his forehead. His breath was potent, for you could smell the alcohol a mile away. His eyes were glassy and sinister. I could feel the heat from the anger burning up inside of him. My dad was not the same person he was in the morning: driving me to school, giving me money to eat, and telling me that he loved me. At night when he usually drank, he looked different; he was different; he was cold and hateful. He hated my sister and me. Although he never struck us, he hit us with ugly words and left us with broken hearts. He threw practically everything on the ground, making sure that it was broken: phones, fans, televisions, pans, keys, glass. Nothing really lasted too long in our household. I would cry, but that made him angrier. My sister would talk back to him, and that fed more fuel to his open flames. My mother would come back from home after a long day’s work only to have to clean up.

The trees covered up what happened in our house, but did it hide the cries? Did we wake the birds? Nights like these were frequent and all too common in my childhood.

Sometimes I would sleep in the comfort of my best friend’s house in Mānoa. I loved her house. It was tranquil and safe. Her house was warm, and her parents were like the ones I saw on TV. They cooked warm dinners and ate together. They had big windows all over the house and a big dog to keep them safe. I was happy to get away from...
my home, the trees, and the mocking birds.

One day, after staying at my friend's house, I found out from my sister that he did it again while I was gone. I felt bad for her, and I promised her I would not sleep over at my friend's house again. The next day was always different from the night before. He would feel guilty for the pain he had caused, then apologize and promise us that he would never do it again. The only people I trusted were my mom and my sister because another month would fly by and another broken promise awaited us.

My relatives had a get-together as they always did on special occasions. It was on a holiday and all my uncles and aunties were together. I hated them, for they would influence my dad to drink more. They didn't know what we would have to deal with later behind closed doors. The men drank and gambled while the women sat together conversing. An argument between my uncles erupted and everyone went home. My father insisted that my sister and me ride in his car while he drove home, perhaps so he would have a chance to mention how worthless we were and how much he had wanted a boy. I watched as he turned down a one-way street, the wrong way. I could not say anything or else he would get angry; just my talking would upset him. I shut my eyes like the sleeping birds outside my window. Somehow we got home in one piece although our hearts were shattered. And that was just the beginning of the night.

My sister and I were scared, more scared than the other nights. His hands were fisted tightly. His face replicated the suspicious faces of the men that had bothered us on the streets of downtown. I thought he wanted to kill us. Trapped in my room, I stood in front of the window and prayed that we would still be alive tomorrow. I looked at the cold dark street and wished that I were out there instead of being stuck in here. I wished that I could transform myself into a bird, fly away, and mock as I pleased. Oh how I wished I could be a bird. I thought of my friend in Mānoa in her bed sleeping like a baby. I couldn't wait to go to
school; it was safe there and only five hours away. Finally, my dad left the house and the door was shut. My sister ran to the door to lock him out. Or was she locking us in? She grabbed a kitchen knife to protect us. We hid it between our mattresses just in case. Then she started packing our clothes in our school backpacks. The door, only a few steps away, intimidated us. What might be waiting on the other side of it shook our hearts. I tiptoed to the door, leveling my eye to the peephole, making sure that the coast was clear. I opened it, and as we ran out of the house I could hear a flock of birds flying away from the kukui nut tree.

Foliage by Yumiko Shibata - Watercolor

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Morgan's Corner and the Role of Superstition In the World
By Brent Fujioka

Hawai‘i is a place of myths and legends. Wherever you travel on this tropical paradise, you will find some kind of mythical story. The stories range anywhere from night marchers and menchune, to the all popular concept of the haunted house. Many of these tales are based on a certain amount of superstition. In addition, the stories themselves could be based on actual facts, but the details of those events have been often times remade with each retelling. Morgan's Corner is a place with one such story. The tale is widely known throughout local culture and there are currently many versions and rumors surrounding the tale. The tale in essence began as a superstition. Someone just told a scary story that got way out of hand. However, I feel that it is the dark side of human nature that impels many people to believe in places and events revolving around superstition. They use superstitions such as ghost stories, urban legends, witchcraft, and religion to somehow explain the inexplicable.

A superstition can be one of many things (Vyse). A superstition is defined as an opinion based on bad judgment that normally leads to actions with dire consequences. However, a superstition can also take form as an urban legend. Other times, a superstition can just be a rumor foretelling misfortune. A superstition can originate even in religion. In any case, many people throughout the world believe in superstitions. Many celebrities often times have good luck charms and follow certain procedures to ensure continued success (De Groot). Quite a number of athletes go through a routine before every performance that is based on superstition. However, the people that follow superstitions most of all are everyday people like you and me. We avoid walking under ladders and breaking mirrors to avoid bad luck. Why do we believe
such trite nonsense? Many of the people who believe superstitions have a desire to put their faith into something material. After all, most people would agree that much of their life is based on beliefs and practices that have foundations on sheer faith. By believing in some sort of superstition, they take all the bad things that the world may send their way and package them into convenient uncommon situations that hardly ever occur. I feel that for many individuals, superstition is used to explain what we as a society do not yet comprehend. In many ways, superstitions resemble many of the bad things that we as human beings encompass in ourselves.

Morgan’s Corner is a very good example of an area based on superstition. The corner is located on O‘ahu in an area called the Pali. The historic Pali cliffs is the location of a great event that took place involving King Kamehameha the Great (Legends of Hawai‘i). Kamehameha engaged in war with other island chiefs in an attempt to unite the island chain. Enemy warriors were thrown over its steep cliffs.

Today, the Pali is a place of rumor and superstition. Morgan’s Corner is just one of many places that are claimed to be haunted in the Pali mountains. Before the Pali Highway, which connects Honolulu to Windward O‘ahu was built, the only way across these mountains was by a twisting road now called Old Pali Road. It is a dark street with no streetlights and harbors few residential areas. The road itself is only about three miles long. A tunnel of trees covers almost the entire stretch of the road. Morgan’s Corner is a hairpin turn approximately halfway through this road. The location of the corner itself provides the perfect setting for a superstition.

To fully grasp the superstitious qualities associated with Morgan’s Corner, one must know the story that many locals associate with the area. Although there are various versions of the tale, this version is prominent in most retellings. According to Glen Grant, one night in late summer, a young couple drove to the corner to engage in making out. The boy was in the...
driver's seat and the girl was in the passenger's seat. That night, the weather was rainy and humid. They had parked under a gigantic tree so that the car would be a little more sheltered from the rain. It was already 11 pm when they arrived. They had made out for a few hours and decided that it was getting late and the best course of action would be to head back home. However, when the boy started the car, the engine made funny noises and refused to start. The boy went out to check the engine but could find nothing wrong. He decided that he should walk into town and go to the nearest gas station and ask for help. He told the girl to wait in the car for him and that he would be back shortly. After waiting for a while, the girl eventually got tired and fell asleep. During the night, she awoke to the sound of rain dripping and the scraping of branches on the roof of the car. She paid it no mind and fell back asleep.

When she awoke, it was already the next day. The first thing she saw was a police officer telling her to get out of the car. There were a lot of police cars around the area and she wondered what happened. She opened the door and the police officer pulled her out of the car not letting her turn around. They asked her why she was out there and what had happened. She told them how she and her boyfriend had made out the night before and how the car would not start and that her boyfriend had gone into town to get help. He then told her not to look back. However, her curiosity got the better of her and she
decided to see what this was all about. When she turned around, she was horrified. It was not the rain coming down on the car the night before, but the blood of her boyfriend who had been hung above the car. His wrists had been sliced and his body gutted from head to groin. What she had thought were branches scraping on the car roof were the fingers of her boyfriend blowing in the wind. His ankles had been tied to the large branch that stood over the car. Rumor has it that if you hug the trunk of the tree on which he was hung at midnight and look up, you will be unable to let go, and will see the boyfriend’s face looking down at you from the treetops (Chicken Skin 169-173).

Many consider the story of Morgan’s Corner to be an urban legend. An urban legend is just another form of a superstition. It is a story that has been repeated throughout the years by word of mouth (Urban Legends). Many times, urban legends are based on factual information, but have been modified constantly through each retelling of the story. They are in many ways comparable to tall tales. Almost always, the events of urban legends happened to a friend of a friend. This is one of the worst ways to hear a story. When a story comes from a third hand source, it is almost always false. In actuality, the tale of Morgan’s Corner is very similar to a common urban legend that can be found in almost every state in the U.S. It is so popular that it was even featured in the motion picture, Urban Legend. There are many variations on the story everywhere throughout the world. In Hawai’i, there are many different versions of the Morgan’s Corner story alone.

Just because the legend of Morgan’s Corner is surrounded in superstition, it does not mean that the tale has no factual relevance to the location. Remember that many times, urban legends are tales based on real events. Through my research, I have found the real basis for the story of Morgan’s Corner (Burlingame 89). In the 1920’s there was a doctor by the name of James Morgan who built a villa on Pali Road right on a sharp hairpin turn, which was a
very bad commuter slowdown. Thus, it claimed the name Morgan's Corner. Dr. Morgan's neighbor was Therese Wilder. In 1948, two prison escapees James Majors and John Palakiko invaded the home of Therese Wilder. The 68-year-old woman was unable to defend herself against the two 20-year-old men. They assaulted, tortured, and eventually hanged her. The two were caught and charged with the murder. They were found guilty and were sentenced to hang in late September of 1951. They had been shackled and were walking down the long halls of the prison, when Governor Oren Long stopped the execution due to the public demand. The public felt that the men were being executed for the simple fact that they were not white.

Palakiko and Majors would have been the last people to be executed in the state of Hawai'i. They were both paroled in 1963 and later had only minor confrontations with the law. John Palakiko died mysteriously some time later and the whereabouts of James Majors are unknown. These historic events provided the basis for what started the superstitions surrounding the area known as Morgan's Corner. The events were modified by superstition to fit into the model of what would be considered to be appealing to the darker side of human nature.

Another example of a historic superstition would be the Salem Witch Hunts. During periods in the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries, many women were accused of being witches (Witchcraft).
These women were normal townspeople who had, up to that point, led very normal lives. During this time in history, there were many superstitions going around and for many, it seemed reasonable to believe that a woman could be a witch. A woman was often accused of witchcraft when children would accuse her of performing unusual rituals upon them. Many of the women accused were using herbal remedies and special techniques taught to them by Native Americans to heal the children. The people of the town would more often than not see this as a sort of curse or representation of bad luck. Their fear made them believe that the woman, who was accused of being a witch, was a danger to the town. The people of the town simply did not understand any of the practices that the women were using and it frightened them. The only explanation that they had for many natural phenomena, such as medical recoveries by herbs, was that a witch caused it. Since science had not been perfected at this time, people around the world would constantly rely on superstition as a way to divulge the truth. Women who were accused of witchcraft were taken to court with trials that were amazingly swift, lasting not more than one week at a time. If convicted of the crime, they would be hanged in a public setting, burned on a cross, or drowned in freezing cold water. Women accused of witchcraft almost always were found guilty. There was little factual evidence to prove that they were not witches, and at that time, superstition was so prominent that they could be convicted of this crime on those grounds.

In this type of setting, superstition can be very dangerous. The Salem Witch Hunts led to many people accusing their own neighbors of witchcraft. It was a situation in which superstition and fear were allowed to get out of control. The accusations of these children led to innocent people being hanged in the area of the original U.S. colonies. In this case, superstitions led to actions that were born from very bad judgment.

Even with very bad examples of how superstition
can get out of hand, there are also many ways that superstitions have positively affected our culture. In many ways, the many religions that we practice can be considered superstitions. For instance, let's play with the notion of the existence of God. It has been documented that over 99% of the world's population believes in some sort of higher force that leads our lives in a certain direction (Edelen). There is no proof for this; however, there is a significant number of people who place their faith in something or someone that no one can prove exists. To some people, this concept makes absolutely no sense; however, to many people, it does. Many people also feel that there is life after death. Christians believe in the concepts of Heaven and Hell (Kindersley). The idea that the good go to paradise and the bad go to Satan's hole sounds farfetched to anyone who may come into contact with Christianity for the first time. Who can prove exactly what happens after you die? The answer is plain and simple. There is no way to tell if there is a Heaven or Hell. Since there is no factual basis for this belief, it can quite literally be considered a superstition. However, it is not just any superstition. It is a superstition that so many people have faith in. Therefore, many people no longer question the superstitious qualities of which the religion is based on.

In many religions, the center of faith is often some sort of figure who was believed to be similar in status as God. People take up faith because they know that they are not perfect and want to make themselves comparable to the person at the center of the faith by following his/her teachings. I feel that that is also one of the reasons that many people turn to religion, a type of superstition, in times of great need. They turn to a higher power because they want to believe that there is still hope for them. Many times, their faith in God actually saves them from what could have possibly been a disastrous end. It is not exactly the faith that saves them, but the motivation that the faith brings to them. Their faith is an invisible force that propels them to change their lives for
the better. So in a way, the faith does help to change their lives.

Another example of religious superstition would be the Holy Bible. There are many larger-than-life stories contained within its pages. Many people are alleged to have contributed to the making of the book, but it is not known for certain if they really did help to write the Bible. For all anyone knows, it could have been some unknown person who wrote the Bible. The Bible is the book that the religion of Christianity is based upon. If it is proven that the Bible is not factual, then what does that say about the faith? People rely on faith, another type of superstition, to see truth behind what would normally be seen as a story.

Again, superstition is prevalent in Hawaiian culture. Many residents of Hawai‘i believe in spirits and follow many other superstitions that they may have adopted throughout the years. Since Hawai‘i has such a mixture of cultures, there are often many mixtures of beliefs and ideas. Many locals have taken in the belief of life after death, the existence of ghosts, and a mixture of concepts from each individual culture of every ethnicity that inhabits the islands. The idea of Morgan’s Corner is just one of many ways that superstition remains active in today’s modernized world.

In the end, it just comes down to the way that a person’s mind naturally functions. I feel that the dark side of a human nature will always tempt people to use superstition as a way to explain the inexplicable. I think that it is unavoidable by any means. Even with the development of science, people will just not give up hold of the world of superstitions. People need stories like that of Morgan’s Corner or the Bible to make life more interesting. Other times, people just need reasons to explain what is happening to them. They want to find some explanation for what is happening, but if there is no scientific basis for it, the human mind will almost always turn to superstition as a medium for explanation. Even though we no longer have events totally based on superstition,
such as the Salem Witch Hunts, many of our daily routines still hold superstition in focus. Coincidences in life may occur, and many will continue to label them in a superstitious manner. With the arrival of many new ideas and discoveries of different life forms, it is just a matter of time before human nature will kick into gear and superstition will be once again used as the tool for explaining the inexplicable.
A No-Frills Education For The “Juvenily” Challenged

By Natasha Blanchette

The emergence of the returning adult student from a virtual quandary of trials and tribulations, only to sparkle as they are ignited by the experience of broadening one’s aspect through personal growth, self-fulfillment, and furthermore through achievement of the merits of higher education can be analogized to the phoenix “rising from the ashes.”

Despite the enfeebled fledgling first steps, adults shine in school as highly motivated and enthusiastic students, our battle half over from the point we yell “present” at roll call in class. My decision to attend college was not an easy one. I hadn’t graduated high school the previous year; I’d graduated the previous decade. My first day at college was not any easier than the decision to return, and the angst I felt that day was not dissimilar to my first day at primary school; I was surrounded by people I didn’t know! Where was the bathroom? What time do I get to go home again? I had a lot to learn.

In collating information for this research paper on “adults attending college,” I discovered that my position as an adult student on campus was by no means an anomaly. The number of adult students returning to higher education is increasing every year, and according to a 1994 analysis of returning “nontraditional” students, as many as 43% of all college students are currently over the age of 24 (Marino). The adult student is considered as being over the age of 25 years taking college courses: part or full time, for credit or personal interest. The Journal of Psychology defines the nontraditional student as having multiple roles (e.g., parent, employee, student), and traditional students as those who enroll directly from high school who do not typically have multiple roles.

Adults return to school for varying reasons, although
furthering an existing career, career change, "the love of learning," and attaining personal fulfillment appear to be among the most common. Sometimes a student's personal motivation in returning to school is influenced by a "trigger," such as divorce, children leaving home, loss of employment, move to a new locale, and job dissatisfaction. Interestingly enough, the most significant influence to return to school is to advance in a job and further employment opportunities. "The excitement of personal growth ranked high as the reason for their persistence" (Harrier 176).

The "trigger" that influenced my return to school was moving to a new country. In shedding the cocoon I had woven for myself, I left my employment, colleagues and friends behind in New Zealand. I faced the seemingly daunting prospect of beginning all over again in Hawai'i. I was able to put this once dramatic decision into a new perspective; the considerations that had held me back previously from pursuing college study were no longer relevant in my new life in Hawai'i.

Fellow adult student Gina Lockwood is completing her second semester back in school following an absence of ten years. She attended college directly from high school but dropped out after only three semesters. She found her school life to be cumbersome to her social life of partying with friends and subsequently missed a lot of classes. Gina reflected that she was not up to the responsibility of college. Ten years in the work force, she returned with open eyes having realized the importance of higher education: "People with a degree were making more money and telling me what to do - and they were a lot younger than me!"

Initially, adult reentry students tend to enroll for
part-time study. I fall into this category of part-timers, choosing a light load of courses this first semester to "test the waters" and take a little time to acclimatize myself to this foreign environment. Leppal comments that many adults "fear that they have forgotten both study skills and concepts they used to know" (47), and Harriger, that "not having attended school for a number of years, these adults are characterized by a need for confidence-building before accelerating their academic programs" (173).

To attend college, adult students must overcome barriers that are not necessarily relevant to the younger traditional student. Finances are a crucial consideration for the adult student - with family, home mortgages, and Foodland all vying for the wallet. Time, or lack of it, is another major obstacle to the adult. Juggling school with the demands of an employer and family, adults will often elect for part-time studies. Also, the institutions themselves can be discouraging to adults with practices and procedures not hospitable to the adult lifestyle. These can include lack of evening classes, in-person daytime registration, and daytime-only advising hours.

Despite the anxieties and difficulties adults must overcome, they "appear to compensate as a result of a strong motivation to learn and obtain their education" (Harriger 179).

I was not surprised in researching this paper to find that the overall performance of the adult student is superior to that of the younger continuing student. It stands to reason that our "life experience" should count for something. It's gratifying to know that having stepped out of the "institutional" learning curve does not mean you can't step back in and bring with you the knowledge and skills acquired in the "real world" and have them complement your formal college study. We do, however, tend to suffer when it comes to the institution's placement tests. Kasworm points out that studies identify that while adults score significantly higher than the traditional students in the entry level tests on vocabulary and
spelling, they do not perform as well as the younger students on tests of mathematics skills (171). Furthermore, Morris notes that adult placement test scores decrease as the delay in returning to school increases (4).

This was true of my placement test experience. Rating an average score on the English test, I was unable to gain even a passing mark for the Pre-College Math test. Years of disuse of the formulas and applications of mathematics had taken their toll. I had always affirmed in high school that once I left school I was never going to need the sine/cosine formula - and I was right - until now.

One reason for the success of adult students is that they are extremely motivated - both externally and internally. They choose to be in school and have gone to great lengths overcoming barriers in order to attend. Financially responsible for their education, they are focused to “get their money’s worth.” Coming from the workforce and having personally witnessed the advantage from higher education (such as my friend Gina Lockwood), they are determined to do all they can to achieve this credit for themselves and further their career. I find myself internally motivated and do not have a particular career goal in mind. I’m attending class for the love of learning and to better myself, although I also appreciate that a degree will do well in enhancing my employment opportunities.

In contrast to the highly motivated and mature adult student is the traditional student. These students flow directly into college from high school because it’s the “traditional” thing to do. They have not consciously considered why they are attending, and have no external experience to draw on in assessing their motivation other than the obvious; their friends are attending and their parents are supporting them.

Another factor linked to attributing to the success of the adult student is the amount of time devoted to studying for each course. Studies concur that while both traditional and nontraditional students spend approximately the same total amount of
hours studying, the adults take a lighter course load and consequently spend more time studying per course. Adults are also noted to be more involved in their learning, participating more in class, asking questions and interacting with instructors. They attend class regularly and if they miss, make arrangements with classmates or with the instructor to cover the course material. I feel that to be an apt pupil, it's important to identify the number of courses you can take while applying the appropriate energy and effort required to be successful in each class — and enjoy it. What is the point of attending class if you are going to show up half an hour late and then proceed to sleep through the remainder of it?

"As the need and desire for education persist throughout the lifespan, more and more adults are enrolling in higher education" (Harriger). The number of higher education institutions that offer programs to adults has doubled in the last ten years. Institutions attempting to "cash in" on the burgeoning adult market are making strides toward integrating the adult student population with the traditional, adapting their goals and mission statements to accommodate the market - but many schools fall short of the adult expectations. The expectations of adult students are quite different to those of the traditional student.

Higher education is not the central feature of their lives, but just one of a multiplicity of activities in which they are engaged every day. The relationship these students want with their college

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is like the one they already have with their banks, supermarkets, and the other organizations they patronize. They want education to be nearby and to operate during convenient hours—preferably around the clock. They want easy, accessible parking, short lines, polite and efficient personnel and services, expecting the same consumer expectations they have for every other commercial enterprise with which they deal. What they don't want are the extras colleges usually offer. They seek a stripped down version of college without student affairs, extracurricular activities, residence life, varsity sports, campus chaplains, museums (Levine).

Institutions can vary greatly in their encouragement of adult students. Those that are most successful in serving the adult student offer comprehensive programs and services for adults from the moment they enquire about returning to school and through the process of application to graduation (Harriger).

Kapi'olani Community College has taken certain steps to capture and accommodate the adult student. KCC has considerable flexibility in scheduling of classes, including a reasonable selection of evening classes, although in contradiction lapse in administrative processes with a cashier window that opens only on weekdays and closes at 4:15 p.m. The bookstore at least meets the student halfway and extends store hours at peak times, namely around the start of each new semester when students scramble to purchase the course requirements. Where Kapi'olani does excel, however, is in their service to parents with children. A childcare center is provided for children of students and there are several supplementary programs such as the ‘Single Parents and Homemakers Program’ which support and encourage these students. Course pre-requisites are a necessary evil, but I can generally appreciate the theory behind this protocol. However, I remain baffled as to what logical reason deems me ineligible for Anthropology 100 when I'm able to take Zoology 142. I placed rather unfortunately on the place-
ment math test, but what could they possibly be calculating in anthropology that I couldn't either remove my shoes or use a calculator to figure out!

I chose to begin my secondary education with Kapi'olani for two reasons. Stepping into new territory, I anticipated it would take me a while to find my feet, and I knew that long before I could even step into a classroom it was going to take some negotiation just to familiarize myself with the registration and administrative procedures. Kapi'olani did not appear as some vast impersonal campus
where I would be an insignificant amongst thousands, and I felt confident that I would receive more personal service from both the administration and the classroom. The class sizes at Kapi'olani are often one quarter of the size of those at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa, and I just couldn't picture being in a class with a hundred other students - what if I had a question?!

Entering Kapi'olani in the spring, I really had no idea what was ahead of me or if school was right for me. But during the course of the semester and with guidance of a certain “high-heel wearing, Diet-Pepsi drinking English teacher,” I believe I have found a little niche for myself in college. I have valued her input and encouragement as both a teacher and fellow student of life. I have no regrets in returning to school as an adult student. Would I rather have gone to college direct from high school? Nah! I know what I want from my education and I know what I have to do to get it. It’s been an enlightening first semester at Kapi'olani and it’s left me with a great sense of achievement. I don’t see my life as being any less complicated since I “dropped out” of the “real world”: I still have to get up four mornings a week and find the right pair of sneakers to go with my cut-off jean shorts, and I never do quite manage to dodge the sprinkler system at the park as I fly past on my moped en route to school, but I’m enjoying myself and definitely see my future in brighter shades of gray.

My advice to the unmotivated continuing student? Take a break!

My advice to the education institutes regarding adult students? We want simple procedures, good service, flexible scheduling of classes and at low cost. We want a “no-frills” education, although a Starbucks on campus would go a long way!
Okinawa: The Acculturation of the Okinawans in Hawai'i

By Carrie Akamine

As a young girl living in Hawai'i, I can remember being asked, "What ethnicity are you?" "Half Japanese, half Okinawan," I would reply. More often than not, the person asking the question would reply with "No wonder!" It was something about my hairy arms, olive-colored skin and almond-shaped eyes that distinguished me from a pure Japanese. Back then, I did not pay attention to racial differences, nor did I feel I discrimination. However, I was constantly told that Japanese and Okinawans were different. I had to question my self-identity through the origins of my blood. "Who am I?" "How did my ancestors come to Hawai'i?" "What is the difference between a Japanese and an Okinawan?"

Intensely curious, I was inspired by these questions to seek out answers. These answers are not only the basis of my research paper; they are a part of my own cultural identity. In this paper, I discuss who these indigenous people of Okinawa are. Beside the physical differences, what cultural differences exist between the Japanese and the Okinawans? Furthermore, I will discuss the discrimination of the Okinawan immigrants living in Hawai'i. Lastly, I will discuss the triumph and acculturation of the Okinawans in Hawai'i.

The Ryukyu Kingdom

Strategically located four hundred miles off the coast of China, the forty-seventh prefecture of Japan is Okinawa and approximately one hundred and sixty islands. The main island, Okinawa, served as an international meeting place for the surrounding countries: Korea, Philippines, China, and Japan. Okinawa, once established as the Ryukyu kingdom, was considered a friendly kingdom welcoming people of all cultures (Zich 92). Before becoming a prefecture of Japan, Okinawa did have a separate culture, reli-
The Chinese had the greatest influence upon the aborigines of Okinawa. The Okinawans adopted the Chinese lunar calendar and their love for pork (Adaniya 22). My grandmother, Hilda Darr, confirmed this by telling me how much Gujya (my great-grandmother) loved to eat crispy pork. She also told me that Gujya used to celebrate two new years: one New Year was celebrated American style, the other was celebrated by the Chinese lunar calendar. The Chinese New Year was embraced by eating pig's feet soup and making Okinawan mochi called "nantu."

The Chinese were also instrumental in Okinawa's religious practice. The Okinawans worshipped their dead ancestors, a practice called "ancestral veneration." Ancestral veneration is the honoring of deceased ancestors, believing that they have the power to intervene with destiny. This tradition is taken from a similar ancestral cult in China. In China this practice of worshipping dead ancestors is associated with filial piety (Nakasone 87).

Perhaps the biggest difference between Japanese and Okinawans is in gender relations. "Okinawan culture has a strong matriarchal orientation in contrast to Japan that is strongly patriarchal" (Nakasone 10). Throughout Japanese history, the focus has been around the man and his reign. In Okinawan culture the man held a "political hierarchy," while the woman held a "religious hierarchy." Together the two worked in harmony to raise the family or kingdom. My research suggests those women in Okinawa were equal in status, if not higher. For example, the "village priestess" had a stronger influence than the "village chief" did, and during traditional ceremonies the male "kaiminutchu" would serve the female "kaimanchu" (10).

**Discrimination against the Okinawans**

The identity of the Okinawan people has been in question since it became a prefecture of Japan in 1879 (Zich 92). According to both the U.S. Census Bureau and the Bureau of Health Statistics of the Territory, all individuals of
Okinawan blood are considered Japanese (Matsumoto 125). If the Japanese and Okinawans were considered of the same blood, why were the Okinawans discriminated against?

Historically, the humiliation of the Okinawan people by the Japanese is a part of Okinawa's cultural history more than a century ago. In 1609 feudal barons attacked Okinawa from southern Kyushu. Since the violent undertaking, the people of the Ryukyu kingdom were made into vassals under Japanese
"Okinawans were prohibited from speaking Japanese, wearing Japanese clothing or adopting Japanese customs" (Zich 93).

According to the author of "The Contact Zone," this undertaking is typical of cultures that "meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power" (Pratt 584).

Although the Okinawans in Hawai'i did not serve the Naichi Japanese, there was always a quiet undertaking of superiority amongst the Naichi(mainland) Japanese. The Naichi Japanese, who had arrived in Hawai'i fifteen years earlier, felt entitlement over the land (Matsumoto 128). The Okinawan immigrants were easy to recognize; they were shorter, hairier, and had wavy hair. Many Okinawans were pig farmers and spoke broken Japanese and English, all of which were considered undesirable by a Naichi Japanese (129). My Grandma Darr recalls the chant the Naichi Japanese neighbor would sing:

Okinawa ken ken, buta kau kau.

Fortunately, the discrimination of the Okinawan people was not acted out in violence. The silent hostility never went beyond a comment or two. However, all this was to stop when the bombing of Pearl Harbor occurred. All of a sudden there was no distinction between Okinawans and Japanese. For the first time in history, the two ethnic groups were completely equal in social status (Taniguchi 158). I believe the Naichi Japanese in Hawai'i felt a responsibility for the bombing of Pearl Harbor. This sense of guilt led them to be humble. My grandma Darr believes that WWII actually helped the Okinawan people in Hawai'i to prosper. The sense of equality gave the immigrants of Okinawa a chance to pursue business opportunities not available to them before the war (Matsumoto 125). The aftermath of WWII brought about the abolition of such terms "Uchinanchu" and "Naichi Japanese." Although I have no evidence to prove my point, it appears the bombing of Pearl Harbor may have
been instrumental in the mediation of two ethnic groups. I can only assume this to be true because as a woman of Okinawan ancestry, I have not felt discriminated by anyone of Japanese ancestry.

Okinawan Culture in Hawai‘i Today

Today, the Okinawan culture thrives in vibrant review. Newspaper articles are written to remind us that Hawai‘i has the largest Okinawan population outside of Okinawa itself (Matsumoto 125). The Okinawan pride blossoms, as organizers of the yearly festival predict an attendance of ten thousand people (Pai A3). They also estimate a total of twenty thousand dollars worth of andagi (Okinawan doughnut) are sold yearly (Lim A5). The celebration of Okinawan culture does not confine itself to the state of Hawai‘i. A celebration of Okinawan dance took place at the Kennedy Center in Washington on March 29, 2000. The music was performed with classical instruments such as: sanshin flute, kokyu fiddle, and taiko drums (Dunning 136).

The Acculturation of Okinawans in Hawai‘i

The prosperous community of Okinawans can claim with honor their new identity into the state of Hawai‘i. The people of Okinawa, both past and present, have embraced and thrived in conditions that have maintained traditional customs. Yet, as an ethnic race, they have learned to adapt to modern surroundings. This concept of acculturation is essential to the preservation of all indigenous cultures around the world (Pratt 595). The kingdom of Ryukyu thrived as an independent country with its own culture, language, religion, and political government. Since becoming a prefecture of Japan, Okinawa and her people have had to learn to survive by adapting and integrating new traditions from their predecessors. Thus, these modifications have not diluted the Okinawan culture, but instead enhanced their authenticity as an ethnic race.

My intention, in doing my research, was to set apart the Okinawan culture from the Japanese culture. While it is true that they were separate
cultures, I have found that identity is found through metamorphosis. Through the many perspectives of Okinawan history, I was able to form my own insight. I can say with ease: Okinawa is a part of Japan. The identity of Okinawa is not lost in the shadow of the mother country. Instead, it is fortified by its contribution to Okinawa’s historical background. Likewise, Japan has not conquered Okinawa. Instead, it has gained a country of heart.
One Morning Alone in Alaska

By Cassandra Lee

In Sitka, Alaska, the rain sifted out of the sky in a perpetual, insipid mist from late August to early June. The cruise-ship tourists would spend their summers touring the fourteen miles of road, the Russian Orthodox church, and the salmon canning facility, and then leave, thinking they'd found another island paradise, only this time the bartenders served hot cider instead of margaritas with paper umbrellas.

Then in August, the dorm residents of the local junior college would arrive, and the sky would remain clear just long enough to teach them what they were missing. By the start of the semester, the freshmen would notice the clouds had closed over the island and choked out the sun. Then the rains would begin blowing over the streets, the harbor, the forests, and the campus in fine, silken sheets like a continuous sneeze. It rained 90 inches a year in Sitka, one drop at a time.

My parents had enrolled me in Sheldon Jackson College without my consent, and I had spent my first week in town hiding under my blanket, sleeping deeply in the hope that it would make the semester pass more quickly. I was alone, cut off from my friends and my home, and there was nothing in the little wedge of cutey houses and summertime businesses to distract me from the anguish of it all. It felt like exile.

One morning in October the rain stopped, and wind swept the sky clear enough to lure the sunlight-starved students from the lower forty-eight into the open, like moles coming up for fresh air. My roommate Sotera had disappeared, probably into town to develop some film, and without company I didn't know what to do with myself. I meandered down the gravel road from the dormitory to the recreation hall to the library, and then I found myself on the two-lane road that ran along...
the lower edge of campus, staring to the right at the familiar walk to town and to the left at the road that curled along the shore toward Indian River Park. Unexplored territory. Not well populated. A little intimidating despite its proximity to the suburban oasis between school and the town square.

Full of ambiguous fears, I waffled between the lure of the bookstore and coffee shop and the moral compulsion to expand my horizons. After all, I recognized the potential for regret two years down the road when I might be unable to say anything about Alaska except that it had nice walls. So I did the brave thing and started walking toward Indian River with my hands tucked tight in the pockets of my jacket and condensation billowing upward with every breath.

I passed the beach first, a stretch of shore littered with delicate but sharp-edged clam shells and murky foam. I walked out over the sand and silt and heard the crunch and crackle of the shells beneath my shoes. I smelled the pungent odor of rotting kelp. Long brown rods of it lay in tasseled, knotted masses at the water's edge, and every piece had elliptical blisters to keep it afloat that had become useless and withered after some high-tide beaching. I didn't touch the seaweed. It had an alien quality that made my shoulder blades hunch up against one another. Seaweed at home had a fluid, accommodating nature, but this stuff seemed as stiff as basket reeds. I imagined that if I swam out amidst it, it would weave together and trap me so I could only suck at the surface of the water like a carp.

The water itself was so cold it numbed my hand, and I backed away from it, realizing this wasn't my Pacific. Whereas the ocean at home would carry you in its cool embrace indefinitely, this water would gnaw you to death in a few minutes.

I left the beach and continued down the road to the park. It had a little ranger station at the opening of the wall and a trio of weathered Tlingit totem poles stared across the parking lot as if they saw nobler things than the rusty hatchbacks and American-
made trucks. Beyond them the forest stood just as straight and noble, dark and dense and innately mysterious as if unblemished by beaten down dirt trails and informative plaques.

I stepped out on the circuit trail alone and apprehensive. The cold, chalky cry of ravens punctuated the rush of waves, and my only company was a kayaker whose wheeling paddle carried him out of sight. Well watered salmon-berry bushes fluttered their dark leaves at me, and urban instincts leapt to the fore. I thought about where someone might hide along the trail and what I would do if that someone jumped out at me and brandished a knife or a gun. Scream, most likely. Run perhaps. Maybe I'd play out the last moments of my life like the teaser scene of a horror movie and die tragically isolated from my family and friends back home.

Then again, maybe the worse and more realistic threat was grizzly bears. Sitka had a few that would, once in a great long while, rouse their sleepy brains long enough to come and paw spawning salmon out of the river. One man had been mauled on a hiking trail already, and I could see myself caught flat-footed by a foraging bear. The only thing I could think to do was to get down on my stomach, cover the back of my head, and cower, and that, too, would have made a great opening scene for somebody else's story.

The trail looped around an oblong strip of land like a hairpin, and I reached the bend of it and headed back roughly in the direction from which I had come. On this side of the park the sun rolled over the fir boughs and glittered on the river that ran alongside the trail. On the river's opposite bank, I saw homes on the rocky beach that faced the open ocean. It dispelled the illusion of solitude, and as I got closer to the head of the trail, I began to hear the animated exclamations of tourists.

They stood over the river on an arched bridge and pointed at the water, thickly clotted with salmon trying to get home. The river boiled with fish, and the scene had a charnel morbidity. The salmon's skins had gone whit-
ish and patchy, and some of them lay on their sides in the mud. They wanted to get home so badly, but why?

I began to resent the intrusion of those cruise-ship retirees. They'd ruined my little adventure alone. I'd set out for a solitary hike in the wilderness and wound up on the road too oft taken, and now all I could tell people when I got back was “I took the tour.”

When I returned to the dorm, I wrote a letter to my parents to tell them about the salmon, the berry bushes, and the kayaker because I knew it was the kind of thing they'd sent me to Alaska to see, but I wrote with indifferent condescension. After all, they were the kind who'd go straight from the parking lot to the salmon river, maybe with a gaggle of old ladies with curled white hair and big purses. I had taken the long, wild way, and I had done it alone. I had claimed a few miles of Sitka for myself.
Through Tom’s Eyes

By Jorge Corbalan

Tennessee Williams’ The Glass Menagerie is an unconcealed memory play. Contrary to most plays, its narrator is also a character. Tom Wingfield in many respects is very similar to the young Tennessee Williams, as Laura Wingfield is similar to Williams’ sister Rose. By using this unusual form of narration, Williams was able to mirror his own personal experiences with his family, particularly his sister’s decline into psychosis after he left home to seek a career as a writer. But like the accomplished artist he was, Williams makes known his love for Rose and his guilt over her decline in a roundabout way through a series of sumptuous symbols woven within the tapestry of the play: the unicorn, the picture of Mr. Wingfield, and Malvolio’s coffin trick.

The unicorn is a symbolic representation of ways that Laura is unique or unusual. Its horn symbolizes the ways that Laura is an unusual person, such as her using many escape mechanisms. Laura’s escape devices include her glass menagerie, listening to records on the Victrola, and visiting the park and zoo. Laura identifies with her glass menagerie because she has trouble identifying with the real world; the pieces are small and delicate, just as she is. The Victrola is a reminder of Mr. Wingfield; Laura often plays records to avoid the present and thinks pleasantly about the times she had with her father. When Laura stopped going to Rubicam’s Business College, she would spend many of her days at the zoo or park. She was a nature lover and thought of these places as very peaceful and beautiful, a sharp contrast to her real life. The fragility of the unicorn recalls Laura’s delicate psychological condition. Laura’s emotional problems caused many difficulties in her life. While in high school, Laura was very self-conscious about the brace she had to wear,
which is evident in the following passage:

Laura: Yes, it was hard for me, getting upstairs. I had that brace on my leg—it clumped so loud!

Jim: I never heard any clumping.

Laura: To me it sounded like—thunder!

Jim: Well, well, well, I never even noticed.

Laura: And everybody was seated before I came in. I had to walk in front of all those people. My seat was in the back row. I had to go clumping all the way up the aisle with everyone watching!

Jim: You shouldn’t have been self-conscious.

Laura: I know, but I was. It was always such a relief when the singing started (Williams, Glass Menagerie 112).

Laura suffered all the way through high school. Unfortunately, she scored poorly on her final examinations and dropped out of school. After such a failure, her fragile self-esteem dropped from low to almost non-existent, and she could not face going back. Six years later, with pressure from her mother, Laura took another stab at education, this time enrolling at Rubicam’s Business College. However, Laura made it only to the first test. As the test began, she vomited on the floor and had to be carried to the bathroom. Laura never returned to school, and once again her fragile emotions got the best of her. The transparency of the unicorn represents the fact that Laura’s problems are easily apparent to anyone who cares to notice them. This is best seen through Jim’s evaluation of her:

Jim: You know what I judge to be the trouble with you? Inferiority complex! ... Yep—that’s what I judge to be your principal trouble. A lack of confidence in yourself as a person. You don’t have the proper amount of faith in yourself. I’m basing that fact on a number of your remarks and also on certain observations I’ve made. (118-119)

Jim, practically a stranger, was able to see right through Laura and recognize her glaring psychological problems.

Although the unicorn is the most famous symbol of the play, the picture of Mr.
Wingfield strikes the reader as also thought-provoking. It is a symbol of his pervasive influence on Amanda, Laura, and Tom. First, the largeness of the portrait suggests Mr. Wingfield’s strong hold on Laura, even though he has been gone nearly sixteen years. The “larger-than-life size photograph” looms over the family as a haunting reminder of him (30). This especially torments Laura, who hopes someday he will return. This is evident in her constant playing of the Victrola. The Victrola brings back pleasant memories of her father; she remembers when times were
good and wishes things could be like that again. Second, the grin on Mr. Wingfield’s face reminds Amanda of the effect his personality has had on her life. Mr. Wingfield’s grin and good looks are what first attracted Amanda to him. He was full of charisma and won Amanda’s heart through physical attraction. Amanda remembers the pleasant times they shared and, as a romantic, still hopes that he will return. However, more realistic in her situation, Amanda interprets the grin as a painful reminder of his mischievous and devious manner of leaving. The grin signifies Mr. Wingfield laughing at them by abandoning them. This is apparent when Tom states: “The last we heard of him was a picture postcard from Mazatlan, on the Pacific coast of Mexico, containing a message of two words: ‘Hello — Goodbye!’ and no address” (30). Finally, Mr. Wingfield’s doughboy uniform mirrors Tom’s adventurous aspirations to become a Merchant Marine. Tom longs to break free of his boring life and satisfy his craving for adventure. He rationalizes his plans to abandon his family through heredity: “I’m like my father. The bastard son of a bastard!” (97).

Like the picture of Mr. Wingfield, Malvolio’s coffin trick represents some more of the great symbolism used throughout the play. Malvolio’s coffin trick is a token of Tom’s suffocating life. Malvolio’s similarities with Tom refer to each of their life-threatening situations. Malvolio faces literal death by suffocation if he does not successfully escape the coffin. Conversely, Tom faces figurative death by emotional and spiritual suffocation if he does not find a way out of his present situation. The coffin symbolizes the life from which Tom is striving to escape. Tom looks at his life as a “two-by-four situation” (57). He fears living the next fifty-five years of his life working in the basement of a warehouse, performing mundane tasks, and making a mere sixty-five dollars a month. Although he loves his family, he cannot tolerate the thought of spending the rest of his life in a cramped apartment, supporting his family, living with the constant
worry of Laura's well-being, and putting up with his mother's frequent nagging. The nails of the coffin represent Laura and Amanda. In his trick, Malvolio escapes from the coffin without disturbing any of the nails; however, Tom knows that that will be impossible for him: "You know it don't take much intelligence to get yourself into a nailed up coffin, Laura. But who in hell ever got himself out of one without removing one nail?" (57). Tom is suffocating in his own figurative coffin, but for him to escape he must abandon Laura and Amanda. Clearly, Malvolio's escape from the coffin was much easier than Tom's flight from his stultifying life.

In conclusion, Williams' play, through well-written symbolism, offers its readers many emblems to study, including the unicorn, the picture of Mr. Wingfield, and Malvolio's coffin trick. This drama teaches the reader about the struggles of the Depression and the effects it had on the people who lived through it. Additionally, like Tom, Williams suffered with his own suffocating lifestyle, until he finally escaped to become a playwright. When Williams left home, his sister Rose was devastated. Her neurosis worsened to psychosis, and at age 27 she was lobotomized. Like Tom Wingfield, Tennessee Williams, whose given name was also Tom, felt much guilt for leaving his family, especially Rose.

Although what happened to Rose is very tragic, I feel it is hard to blame Williams. Unfortunately, after he left, surgeons performed a lobotomy on her, but if he would have stayed, it would have been as if he were lobotomizing himself. In my opinion, The Glass Menagerie is a tribute to Rose from her loving brother, Tennessee. I feel it is a wonderful play. With so many tokens throughout the play, each one with many facets, it was truly exciting to analyze and discuss them.
The Twenty-Year Prison

By Kristy Sakai

When we are first able to comprehend thoughts, we are each instilled by society with different notions, morals, and expectations. When I was a child, my father Ikarios, who raised me with love and nobility, would tell me mythological tales, and I would frequently envision myself lying in serenity on the soft emerald carpet of grass which sparkles in the golden sunlight. Blinding Helios’ dazzling rays of sunlight illuminate Ithaka as if they are mystical gleaming, golden staircases to the home of the gods above.

Suddenly, a dark shadow falls upon me, rending me from my beautiful sight. I rise up and gasp as a silver blade is forced up against my throat. A man dressed in black is standing close before me, and I let out a shrill scream as his enormous hands cover my face. I am in complete darkness as I feel the blade piercing my skin, anticipating my descent to Hades. Suddenly, the darkness vanishes and I open my eyes to a man dressed in white standing above me, the blazing sun behind him creating the illusion of radiance from his glittering body, making him appear to be an immortal. He smiles at me dashingly and offers me his hand, as the crimson blood from the man in black drips slowly from his long sword. He kisses me and takes me off into the sunset to live with him for all eternity in happiness, love, and fame.

My vivid imaginations have led me to better understand that each woman is on a constant quest to find love, to find her soul mate, her perfect match, her hero. Some women settle for less than their ideal fantasy men of perfection, but I, Penelope, would not give up on my quest to find this hero, the only man who belonged in my heart, and after endless years of searching, I have found him. We have lived in love for a long while and we have borne a wonder-
ful child named Telemachos, but then one day my hero had to leave me, for he had other heroic feats to obtain. He has not returned since, though it has been 20 years, and in the

Odysseus shall someday return and save me from these vicious suitors. I await and anticipate his return for a variety of reasons, for I must fulfill my duty as an obedient and

duration savage suitors have ravaged our household, wasted our substance, and indulged upon the servants. These suitors are forcing me to choose one of them for marriage, although I know in my heart that just as my imaginary hero once came and saved me during childhood,

loving wife and remain faithful until his final return.

I sit gazing out of my windowpane at the silver, dancing stars, seeming to be woven into the black fabric of the night. "How can you dance so merrily, when you are trapped in a world of darkness?" I thought to myself, as
a glassy tear trickled from my sorrowful eyes. It is then that a rapping at my door disturbs my thoughts. The door creaks open slowly and there stands Melantho, my cherished maid. She comes and sits beside me at the window. “Penelope,” she speaks softly, “the other servants and I are worried about you. Why do you lament here in your room each night? Your radiant color has been washed from your face with these tears, and we fear that your sadness shall send you to the house of Hades, just as it has done to Odysseus’ mother, Anticleia. Why do you not simply choose one of the fine suitors and give up the futile hope of Odysseus ever returning?”

“My dear Melantho, each night I hurl myself onto my beautiful bed and weep tears of agony and grievance for my loving Odysseus who is the only man who shall ever fulfill my childhood image of a hero. There are many suitors who have brought me fine presents, although I feel that none can measure up to the greatness of the man that Odysseus was, before he ‘went to that evil, not-to-be mentioned Ilion’ (595). Odysseus was a godlike man, who was extremely resourceful, a divine warrior, and greatly respected ‘whose fame goes wide throughout Hellas and midmost Argos’ (36). He is my soul mate and I love him dearly. Nowhere in the land is there another who will make me feel the way he did, as Antinoos also admitted (311) that there is no man who measures up to the kind of man that Odysseus once was,” I spoke, the tears spilling from my eyes.

“Penelope, Odysseus has been gone 20 years. Do you not think that he would want you to be happy and find another husband?”

“No. Before Odysseus left for the ‘evil not-to-be mentioned Ilion’ (595), he gave me specific instructions that when Telemachos is grown and ‘bearded’, then I may make myself another husband (277), and I will follow these instructions that my love has bestowed upon me, above all consequence. I must be an obedient wife to my love, the great Odysseus, and carry out his orders dutifully. Although,” I said with a laugh,
"I know that I am bestowed upon with ‘cleverness’ by Athene (42), and I shall not make waste of the mockery that these suitors are making on my household. I shall take advantage of the situation, by captivating the suitors into bestowing upon me lavish gifts, although my mind has no intent of marrying them, therefore making a great name for myself (42). I shall tease them and enchant them with cunning words, so that they will be at my beck and call. I suppose that eventually I shall have to marry one of the wretched suitors, because Zeus has condemned me to a life of misery, but as for now, my plans are to delay marriage by making a shroud for Laertes. I am clever, however, and I also anticipate that some man may come to me and try to deceive me with words into believing that he is the long awaited Odysseus (340). There are many men with wicked intentions, and for this reason I must be extremely skeptical ......

"But Penelope," interrupted Melantho. "You are so beautiful, and your home is being ravaged by these insolent suitors...."  

"What you do not understand, Melantho, is I do not want to give up my beautiful home, for I shall be forced to leave it once I accept a husband. I shall have to go away with that strange man to his own home and forsake this glorious place full of good living, which serves as a shroud for infinite glorious memories. ‘I think that even in my dreams I shall never forget it’ (311). Here in this home, I have become a bride, I have borne a son and raised a family. No other home in Ithaka, or throughout the entire world for that matter, shall ever be able to equal the serenity and glorious pastimes en captured within these sacred walls. As for my beauty, that was taken from me the day that Odysseus departed for that ‘evil not-to-be mentioned Ilion’ (289). Not only did the sea sweep away my beloved Odysseus, but it washed away my beauty as well. Just as the black, salty, unrelenting waves of Poseidon slowly crumble away the beautiful, glittering, sand castles built by innocent children, grain by golden grain,
it has also drained away my innocence, vitality, and strength, day by heart wrenching day. If Odysseus were to return to me once again, he would restore all of these virtues to my withering soul and ‘my reputation would be even more great and splendid’ (285) than it is now. If Odysseus returns, Telemachos would also be given fame and respect, and he would be able to hold his noble head high with strength and pride. You see, I love my son with all of my heart, and for all of these great reasons, I shall endure the pain, loneliness, chastity, and the torment of the suitors in hopes that my beloved hero shall have his long awaited homecoming.”

Melantho sighs, and I ask her to accompany me down to where the suitors are having their late night feasts, to speak to Telemachos, for it is not ladylike and proper to go among such men alone. We descend the staircase, and ‘I hold my shining veil in front of my face to shield it’ (311). Towards the bottom of the staircase, I hear the sweet voice of Demodokos serenading the rowdy suitors, with a song of valiant

Odysseus and the Trojan war. With that, tears begin to well up in my glassy eyes and stream down my cheeks, for my heart longs for my loving husband to return and make my life right once again. We walk slowly down the dimly lit staircase toward the bright light at the end of the stairway where the suitors are feasting. Suddenly, two silhouettes appear from the bright light, and Melantho and I stop abruptly. As my eyes become accustomed to the light, I realize that the two figures are my own beloved son, Telemachos, and the detested suitor, Eurymachos.

“Mother, why are you
weeping?" Telamachos scolds forcefully. "It is only a song, and if you cannot remain hardened to the lyrics, then you should not be here. Go upstairs and take your serving maid with you! Go now, and lie down on your bed!"

I stare at him in shock, not being fully able to comprehend his forceful orders. Then I turn and walk slowly back up the stairs toward my chamber. The tears are still spilling down my cheeks like thinandering streams. I feel extremely hurt and saddened, but I know that I must follow the orders of my loving son. I love Telamachos deeply and unconditionally. He is the man of the household, and I must be obedient and submissive to his requests as a good mother should be. I turn to make certain that Melantha is following behind me and that my chamber is empty. I do not want to be interrupted as the orders of my loving son are important.

When we have reached my chambers, I slowly close the door and latch it with the rusted hook. I can still hear the rowdy voices of the drunken suitors below, as they sing their joyous songs and devour my household and livelihood. Even when they are gone, their drunken chaotic bellowing still echoes in my mind. I turn to look at the blissfully dazed face of Melantha, the traitorous bitch who is lost in her own devilish thoughts of betrayal. She smiles at me and speaks joyfully, "Penelope, you should just marry a suitor..."
Her words are halted abruptly in mid-sentence, and a petrified look washes over her face. The rosy color drains from her cheeks, which become a dead white, and she lets loose a terrified shriek, as I raise my arm and send it down upon her face with all the mighty force that still remains in my tormented soul.

As my hand impacts her face, I let loose all the blazing anger that has been festering inside of me, upon this unfaithful bitch. I slap her for all the pain and anguish inside of me for my loving Odysseus, as I will never find a hero and virtuous husband so great. I slap her for the repulsive suitors imprisoning me in my own household, while they ruin it and eat away at its sacred walls full of cherished memories. I slap her for my stolen beauty and my reputation, which would become greater once Odysseus returns. I slap her for my beloved Telemachos who deserves the honor and good stature that Odysseus would bring to him upon homecoming. I slap her for the sadness and hurt I feel when Telemachos shouts orders to me. I slap her for trying to make me break my promise of loyalty to Odysseus. I slap her for the duration of the 20 years in which I felt as if the man in black from my childhood fantasies was once again holding the silver blade to my throat, and I slap her for all humanity who are impeded upon by Zeus above with agony, misfortune, and torture.

Treacherous Melantho falls to the ground flimsily. Upon impact she grazes her head on the rusted latch of the door, like a bird flying high in the sky who is wounded by an archer and strikes its head upon a tree in its descent. It is then that a strange feeling washes over me, a feeling that I have not felt for 20 years. To my astonishment, the brightness and radiance return to my lifeless and desolate eyes, and my dreary lips slowly spread into a gleaming smile. It is then that for a brief instant, the echo and torments of the rowdy suitors fade, the rusted hook which fastens the door glitters with gold, and the man in black from my childhood fantasy has once again perished. It is also in this brief moment of triumph, that I am
once again a queen in my own household, and I find that my long awaited hero has returned.... for inside of me shines the man in white.
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Through Tom’s Eyes


The Twenty-Year Prison

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