

Ka'imi'loa:

Through Rose Colored Glasses



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"A liberal translation of 'ka'imiloa' would be "the seeker of knowledge" but like many Hawaiian words, the term has many layers of meaning, such as "distant traveler," "the far seeker," or "one with great knowledge." On another level, the word can also mean to search within the self, which is what the act of writing often does for both the writer and the reader."

—Lisa Linn Kanae

Ka'imiloa accepts essays, poetry, short stories, and art with a global focus. If you would like to submit your work to a KCC journal, please email kapio@hawaii.edu.

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尉迟恭

Door Gods

Harry Yu

A door god is a Chinese decoration placed on each side of an entry to a temple, home, business, etc., which is believed to keep evil spirits from entering.



Breaking Tradition

Michael Riley

He staggered to his feet. He stumbled with each step he took towards me, his slanted eyes narrowing on my large frame. I stood abruptly with my fists clenched at my sides, tight with control that could break at the slightest provocation. He fell backwards and then clumsily caught himself. His cheeks contorted into a deep shade of red, furiously shocked at my sudden action. He pointed his finger accusingly, just mere inches from my face. Hateful words spilled out of his nasty mouth, a product of his drunken state that was becoming increasingly regular. He continued to push me closer to the edge. I stood my ground as I hovered over his inferior height, and locked my eyes onto his.

I closed the gap between us. My muscles were taut with adrenaline, ready to strike. I could feel his rapid breathing against my chest. I could feel the spit hitting my chest with every slurred word that continued to escape his dirty mouth. The screams and yells from around us didn't faze me. Tension filled the air with the fear that I would strike at any moment. Desperate and frightened hands tugged at me from every direction, begging me to stop. Their efforts were thwarted as I simply brushed them away, never once breaking my gaze from his.

Tonight was the night that he and everyone else would realize that I was no longer the scared half-breed they thought I was. I was no longer willing to obey their every command without thought or question. I was no longer terrified at the mention of their name. I would no longer be their slave because I was the youngest, because I was different. Tonight, he and everyone else would realize that I was taking a stand.

Smile

Hannah Elise Abbott

Ever since I was a little blonde girl,
I lived by a happy and persevering slogan
The girl with the smile will go the extra mile

In preschool when my haole four-eyed friend was teased
I invited her to play foursquare with me during recess
The girl with the smile will go the extra mile

For my eighth grade graduation
My class President was too shy to give the commencement speech
So I decided to confidently give it
The girl with the smile will go the extra mile

My freshman year in high school
I decided to run for student body treasurer
Even though everyone said I wouldn't make it
I won while using my slogan
The girl with the smile will go the extra mile

I shiver as nighttime lifeguarding class begins
I wish I could wear my contacts to see
Tomorrow I'll remember to wear a rash guard
Should I complain?
No, I think I'll smile away the miles
The girl with the smile will go the extra mile

Correct, Don't Neglect

Victor Raquel, Jr.

We all make mistakes.
So what do we do to fix it?
We learn to correct,
not neglect.
You say you're perfect
but you don't know everything.
It's a lesson.
Don't do anything bout it, you aint progressin.
No stressin.
Just do as I say
and you'll learn to prevail.
Not fail.

Some choose to compromise
But lies and more lies are left behind.
Try to be legit!
Don't trip cus it feels like I'm always right!
Learn to accept the truth
because sometimes it's not worth the fight!
Don't waste your precious time
on some wasteful shit just cus you think I always win!
I just learn to correct
and not neglect.

Every time you speak,
I don't hear nothing but see spit comin out.
So what you talkin bout?
Don't be mesmerized
just so you can apologize---
Cus I'll beat you down in slow motion.
So don't continue to be a part of the problem.
Be a part of the solution!

Airplane

Toshino Diaz

We say hi to each other
even though we never met before
and we won't meet again.

We are in the airplane seats
and I am traveling by myself.
A man is sitting next me
And I start to tell myself

Not to be too friendly, but not too rude.
I can see that he also tells himself
Not to be too friendly, but not too rude.

In the airplane,
the air is dusty and the lavatory is not comfortable.
We have limited space
and we will spend several hours next to each other.

People are nice to each other.
The man in front of me is talking to a man next to him.
They look so friendly.
I won't be surprised if they just met for the first time in the airplane.

I forgot what we talked about
because I have places to go.



Sun and Rain

Ashley Trapp

The sun comes after the rain.
You lifted the veil of darkness,
You were my shining light.
You brought me back to life.

The sun comes after the rain.
Overwhelming love,
We were unstoppable.
You dried the rain from my view,
I see clearly now.

Where did my sun go?
What did I do?

We fell so far, so fast,
Blink of an eye took it away.
Blame who cries in the mirror.

No sun, just rain,
No one, just silence.
Decision to leave you haunts my memory.
I am the reason for the pain.

No sun, just rain.
Possessed by my selfishness,
Both left brokenhearted.
Forgiven but not forgotten,
I am numb with guilt and regret.

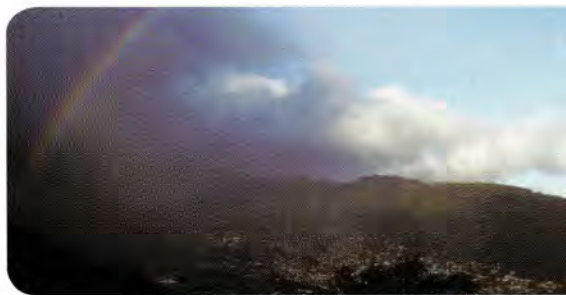
You try to forget me,
I won't let you.
You still love me,
A glimmer of hope ignites within me.
After the rain comes the sun.

Love means giving second chances,
So please follow your heart.

I was lost when I lost you,
We were the best part of each other.
After the rain comes the sun.

I can't live without you
Let's give it a try,
Let's take it slow.

After the rain comes the sun.



Misery

Sheila Felipe

Listen to the rain,
it's telling you my story.
I'm emotional.



Depression

Sheila Felipe

Hot summer nights,
holds nothing but memories
and buried secrets.

Oregon

Jennifer Mercado

Trees have shed their shade
Cold air pushes leaves aside
Rain clouds fill the sky

Nature's Song

Jennifer Mercado

Cardinals sing soft melodies
With a breeze, the scent of fresh water rushes past
While the trees dance to nature's song



Junior or Senior?

Hannah Elise Abbott

Three weeks of sweat, blood, bruises, and nightmares
I tried as I cried,
Will I ever pass?

The local boys strangle me underwater
I make my escape as I claw their nipples
Water rushes into my nostrils as I inhale

What keeps me going is the
Uncle Bob Certified Lifeguard shirt
That will only come in the end

It's vibrant honey yellow color strikes the
Common eye as people realize, you are a trained
Senior lifeguard, the word LIFEGUARD is
Printed boldly in bright red

Uncle Bob yells, Uncle Bob hugs
Uncle Bob is missing fingers from the war
He is intense, this experience is intense

Graduation has come, my name has been called
As I receive my shell lei, I look down at my certificate
I smile because the words Junior lifeguard are nowhere
To be found, I laugh because my name is spelled wrong

I now wear my bright yellow shirt, practicing CPR on dummies
I take a deep breath in and wonder how I'll react
When all of this practice turns into a real life or death situation
Will I panic? Or will I pass?

Through Rose Colored Glasses

Karen Brizendine

This piece is a symbolic self portrait, expressing my determination to complete college. I struggled to work through my original degree in accounting before I allowed myself to pursue my true passion, which is art.

Additionally, I suffer from a condition called Scotopic Sensitivity Syndrome, which makes reading high contrast black text on a white background difficult and laborious. By using specific color-tinted glasses, I am able ease the difficulty in reading, thus removing the barrier and giving me a more optimistic view of the future.





The Long Road

Jason Galisa-Thompson

My footsteps can be heard clearly in the cool of the morning, as I walk this paved street. The sound gets lost in the lush trees that surround the length of these twenty three miles. In the dull and cloudy light of the morning I can see the darkened bark of the trees cutting patterns into the ever changing horizon. Their outstretched arms reach overhead, tunneling this path and the dark browns that blend so beautifully against the hypnotizing green canopy. Spots of hazy blues and grays peer in at me. With every gust of wind the brittle branches above me shift into a blur of light and dark greens, revealing the sky above. I close my eyes and smile, letting the breeze pass through me. It acts like a filter, cleaning the spots from my soul and

giving me hope. The sky is always so inviting here, as though whispering to me, "Breathe friend. The world is so vast."

I pick up the pace as the sun comes up over the mountain ridge. Though its presence is stifled by the lingering winter clouds smeared across the canvas of sky, the morning sun's glow has such a mystical way of brighten-

ing a dark sky. The morning dew glistens, platinum and golden, on the street as the light finds its way in. It is both inviting and hopeful, like the treasures of yesterday, today, and tomorrow. It's strange how something so natural can give me such a euphoric feeling, but that feeling quickly fades as I pass the park where I meet her.

The vast green fields divided by small rock walls bring back memories



of what used to be. It's a bitter sweet feeling seeing the place where we sat and spoke for hours under large oak trees, only able to see each other as the world washed away. I press my lips and my heart sinks at the sight of the black metal bars that surround that place now. The gate is bold in the break of the rock wall which bears a sign "Keep out!" It shouts as I trudge on passing the park. My eyes can only see the black of the road, its sides littered with "no parking" signs advising people not to linger here. I leave that place behind as the road continues, it's rough and worn pavement is cracked from the elements and from time.

My gaze shifts from the winding road to a familiar opening as the path curves inward from a ridge side. The cold steel guardrail protecting people from a beautifully devastating end curves inward following the road, separating the common from the extraordinary. The bright yellow exclaimed with a message of caution to those who dare face its rocky edge, but what a serene sight that awaited anyone who tempted his or her own fate.

A mere eight feet from the guardrail rests a rock on the edge of the cliff, where I had once found myself lying. Small shrubs lined its end, where the ridge dropped away, leaving only myself and the empty space around me. From there I was witness to a city covered in dark clouds as sheets of rain tumbled down on it. I could see the city lights shining through the rain, though they were muted, they still managed to glow their yellow hue which was tempered by the feelings I had imposed on them. I was ready to jump, I was ready to submit my will to the abyss, and I had never before felt that lost. It was right at that moment I heard a voice, though I couldn't make out the words, it was ever so alluring. I looked back from the edge of that cliff only to see the lights gleaming from around the other side of the bend. It was that melody which had



carried me back from the edge of the cliff. Now that cliff is nothing more than one of many majestic views, these twenty three miles has collected.

The newly paved path illuminated by lampposts is split in the center by a single yellow line. Its direction is stern and true, as it guides me through the beginning of this night. The canopy of trees disappears to an open starry sky, and a light rain. At the side of the road begins several buildings of different shapes and sizes. Piece by piece a town of houses, bookstores, and hideaway cafes appear. I continue carefully voiding the puddles gathering up under the rain. Looking into the buildings I can see its occupants are kept busy by their daily lives. New friends, knowledge, and experiences are to be had here. But for the time being I continue to walk dazzled by the lights which shimmer and sparkle in the rain. Coming to a stop at the edge of the town, I look down to see myself looking back up at me, surrounded by misshapen buildings and distorted lights. I watch myself for a second, as though it's a different me in a different time and place.

I visit this dream only for a minute before I realize that I've come to what appears to be the end of this long road. At the top of a hill the road widens, coming to a puzzle shaped end. Its rampart shaped edge is still made of the new material, and the lines painted in it are still fresh and bright. I stand near its border as a gust of renewing air chills the sweat on my brow.

Peering down I can see metal girders penetrating deep into the earth, a solid foundation for the new thoroughfare.

My shoulders feel heavy, my feet are tired, yet I am eager to carry on. Standing there quietly I can hear a murmur of the metropolis on the horizon, focusing my stare I can see it illuminating brilliantly. Its tall

building filled with endless possibilities, new jobs, and new people. Shifting



my eyes to the east I see that there are endless fields of the country side. Stout white houses enveloped in the dim glow of the rising sun, where families reside, successfully looking after and passing on life to their children. Finally, to the west there is a harbor where the ocean sings lullabies of foreign lands, its wharf caressing ships that will see places I can only dream of.

I stand there quietly taking in the view, but not long from now I will travel back to the start of this road. Reliving past thoughts, and dreaming of future events all whilst I live in the present. I visit this place in my mind often, and how I feel when I think of all this is beyond astonishing. Where this road will lead, there is no way of knowing, but I'm positive that the end of it will be far more exciting than the thought of the end.



Who am I?

Jesica Gacusan

For our final project that we had to do in Art 223, we had to find a social issue that we are facing right now. For example drugs, alcohol, our race, weight...etc. There are many social issues that we face. I chose to do a self portrait. I know that many of us look at ourselves in the mirror and dislike how we look. Some people ask, why am I too tall, too short, or too fat. They ask, "why am I the way I am?"

Well for my social issue, I ask, "Why has god created me this way?"

The reason why I ask this is because I know many of us out there who are disabled would feel the same way as I feel.

Someone Misunderstood

Timothy S. Crooke

A life that will be misunderstood.
A life that can never be seen.
A life of a man that questions to be.

It's a terrible thing, to have a life,
and to know that it will always
be kept from this world.

A life out of balance.
A life now in solitude.
A life now in silence.

It's a terrible thing, to yearn for a life,
and to know it will never be there.

A life now starved for affection.
A life now left with no words.
A life filled with sorrow.

It's a terrible thing, to need to see life,
but to know that it will never come back.

A life shallow and bare.
A life that was not done.
A life now left with no one to share.

It's a terrible thing, to want to save a life,
and to know it's already too late.

A life now left alone.
A life that we will never know.
A life story that will be left un-told.

It's a terrible thing, to know a life
and to know it was gone too soon.

A life that will not age.
A life that will not grow.
A life that was lost before it's time to let go.

It's a terrible thing, that no one will ever seem to know this man.
One set of footprints that no longer roam this land.

Poverty

Victor Raquel, Jr.

I have a shirt, shorts, and no footwear. I have been deprived from food for days that I can literally feel the crevices between my ribs. All I have is milk that I found in the trash two weeks ago and it tastes sour. I know it's spoiled but I have no choice but to keep myself hydrated or I'll faint. The only time I'll have food is when people in the neighborhood take out the trash and that only happens every Thursday night.

I don't even have a roof for shelter but a damped cardboard box to cover me when rain pours. I haven't even showered ever since it last rained because I have no access to water around my area where everyone is so greedy. People around the neighborhood even told me that they could smell my body odor from 10 feet away like I excessively sprayed a new fragrance throughout my whole body. My teeth are rotten and yellow and my gums aren't able to hold them into place because they're slanted. Soon, I wouldn't be able to speak a word.



Product of Assimilation

Nicholas Dela Rosa-Tabilisma

What connection do I have there?
Why should I see my home?
I don't speak the language. I'm unfamiliar with the land.

Even though my blood is pure,
I can't help but have a disconnect
with my history and lineage.
What is this culture to me?

How can I say that I am Ilocano?
When I don't know how to say
that I am Ilocano.
Does that make me American?

Why did I have to become so
immersed in a place that
was once foreign
to my grandparents?

Who was it that said
not knowing culture
meant having a better life?
Why couldn't I have both?

Now I have to journey back.
I must learn what happened in the past
refurbish the voice of my tongue,
and acquaint myself with what was lost.

A Winter's Night

Jennifer Mercado

My destination finally in view— I drop a gear
and slow. I was born in the country
whilst the fields were dusted with white.
I reach behind my seat and grab the bags of gifts.
I run to the porch from the snow-pelting sky.
Inside, my mother offers a drink.

Now that I'm of age: "Sure, I'll have a drink.
Have to open the trunk and get the rest of my gear."
I have a quick look at the sky.
I've been away too long from this country,
from overseas sending all kinds of gifts.
The inside of the trunk gets polka-dotted white.

Leaving behind a flurry of white,
I finally receive my drink
as the family cheerfully exchanges gifts.
"Did you drive here all the way in first gear?"
asks my smart little brother. "I just got back to the country
as the setting of the sun darkened the sky."

For two nights shall we share the same sky.
I grip my cup 'til my knuckles turn white.
I can't believe how I've missed this country.
Gaining degrees of heat per drink,
my perception loosens gear by gear.
I've lost all my gifts.

Where are all my gifts?
I raise my half-empty glass to the sky.
At this point, I've lost most every gear
in my head. For a moment I'm seeing white.
Ah! The ceiling. I suppose I've had too much to drink.
As I lay on the floor, I remember each country.

I've visited many a country.
I crawl to where lay my cheeky gifts.
I stop to take a sip of my drink.
"How dare you run away from me!" The sky
has cleared and left the ground white.
I stagger outside having lost in my head every gear.

Soon my gear will be shipped to another country.
I'll leave the white pastures— at hand, my gifts.
I sit looking up at the sky and take a sip of my drink.

Hoku and the Dragon

Ray Stanchfield

In a time of peril, a young boy is separated from his true love when his village sends him on an impossible quest to save their dying island. His adventures bring him face to face with the ferocious beast responsible for endangering his people. A story of young love and perseverance in the eyes of insurmountable odds.

This piece is research for the dragon's character design. I tried to capture tension in complete chaos with the feeling of hope right in the middle. I used strong diagonals in the waves to achieve this. The unity comes from the flowing curved lines of the entangled serpents pulling the diagonal waves together. I hope to nurture this idea into an animation short, and if it is well received, then on to a full length animation.





Curve Ball of Life

Nicholas W. Russell

Baseball breaks your heart. It is designed to break your heart. The game begins in the spring, when everything else begins again. It blooms in the summer, filling the afternoons and evenings. As soon as the cold rain and snow comes, the game stops and leaves you to face the fall alone.

I stood at my position in the outfield of the rustic Bill Meyer Stadium in upper Knoxville, Tennessee. The air was crisp, the trees were changing color, and the sun was retreating slowly below the horizon even earlier than the day before. Fortunately for me, the flood lights were energized and had enough power to clear the field of pesky shadows that could ruin my view of the batter.



At sixteen, this was my standard evening scene. Other teenagers spent every second after school driving their parents crazy while I spent mine at the baseball field. People

would ask me what I did in the winter when there was no baseball. I simply told them, “I stare out the window until spring.”

Dedicated to my one love, baseball, I had grown accustomed to watching down the path that the ball traveled into the strike zone from my position. Eleven years of experience had enhanced the skill required for judging the exact trajectory a ball will travel given its position after release from the pitcher’s hand.

This particular pitch was high and inside. I came up onto the balls of my feet and waited a split-second to watch this curve ball sink dramatically

beneath the batter's flailing lumber, but this was not the case. I didn't see the distinct wobble of the curve ball that I was expecting.

"Oh, no!" I exclaimed fearfully. The ball hung in the air like a fat grape waiting to be pounded into cheap wine. "INSIDE!" I screamed, describing the position of the pitch to the fielder beside me.

This set in motion a shift, deeper and farther to the left side of the field. As I moved, I watched the ball make contact with the enemy bat. The unmistakable crack of the bat told me I was right to travel deeper into the outfield to improve my chances at snagging this one.

The ball had left the bat and I pursued my angle to intercept. My heart pounded underneath the all-star jersey that I wore so proudly. I charged, barreling towards the fence behind me. Suddenly, my front cleat hit dirt. Hitting dirt in the grassy outfield only means one thing to an outfielder; this is the warning track. Bill Meyer Stadium's warning track told me I had two steps to slow down before the fence abruptly stopped me. With my long running strides, I adjusted quickly and made a leaping-grab over the fence to rob my enemy of his home run and end this triple overtime nightmare.

I plucked the grape and pulled it back to my side of the fence. The force of my collision with the unforgiving pole and chain link fence put me down onto the cold ground. Adrenaline rushed through me, coinciding with an outcry of cheers from spectators in the stands, but my job was not over yet. The runner on second must only stay on the bag until the ball is caught; at that point, he could make his dash to third or even onward to home plate to win the game.

I quickly jumped to my feet and stepped to hurl the ball back into the infield where my cut-off man hopped up and down to give me a good target for my throw. The step and throw was just as I had rehearsed for years, yet my body fell straight to the earth and the ball rolled slowly out of the reach of my extended arm. The crowd went silent.

I warily moved to a standing position, grabbed the ball with my bare hand, stepped to throw, and again, down I went to the chilly ground. By



this time, everyone knew there was a real problem. I had not fallen the first time by mistake. Still, I made every attempt to gather my trembling legs into an upright position. I felt like a baby trying to stand-up for the first time: unsure where to place my weight on each leg.

The runner who had occupied second had made it completely around

the bases to score the run that ended the game. Players, coaches, fans, and parents all rushed to the now warm patch of grass that I occupied. They gathered into a circle, one and all curious as to what could be so damning to cause this true professional to diminish to the useless ground warmer that he had become.

I looked up and stated, “I’m fine, I just don’t know why when I stand up, I fall down.”

“Is it your ankle?” my coach asked. “Take off your cleats.”

I struggled reaching down, then I looked out toward everyone and quietly murmured, “I - I - I ca- can’t. I don’t know. I just can’t reach.”

A mother from the opposite team stepped forward out of the crowd and stated, “I’m a nurse, tell me why you can’t?”

I explained to her, “I have no pain anywhere. I think I just hit the fence a little hard and knocked myself silly.”

Meanwhile, my Pops hurriedly removed each cleat and cut the toe out of my sock with a pocket knife he always carried.

The helpful nurse then asked, “Can you wiggle your toes for me, honey?”

I wiggled each toe, to her surprise, and rotated my ankle to prove that I was fine. The crowd and nurse agreed and started to disperse while the coach and my Pops helped me to my feet. I took one quivering stride supported by two grown men and knew, without a doubt, that I wanted to be

put down. My step was very peculiar; something seemed to be loose.

“Put me down, put me down,” I grunted. “I’m not sure how I could have hurt it, but I think it’s my knee.”

My Pops pulled out that trusty blade he had used to cut through my sock and began cutting the knee high blouse of my white baseball pants. He filleted it down the outer side and pushed the flap open revealing my suspect knee. Neither of us nor the coach was prepared for what we saw.

I looked down and asked, “Why isn’t it bleeding?”

“That’s your kneecap!” the coach exclaimed.

I had managed to hit the fence in the one spot that could possibly hurt someone. Each pole of the fence had three clamps that were equally spaced from top to bottom. The bolts that held the clamps were supposed to be facing the outside of the park but the center clamp was different. The center clamp was just the right height to contact my knee in the mid-air jump I had made and combined with my force was just the right combination to nearly destroy my knee.

Emotion poured over me as I sat there with tears in my eyes while everyone asked again if I was okay. The tears were not from pain. They were not from seeing a part of the body that no one should ever see. They were not from losing the game. I was crying because the thought of not being able to play for even just one game crushed my world.

Thoughts continued to roll through my head and tears fell as I stared astonished at my open wound.

Pops said to me, “I know those aren’t tears of pain. If they were, you’d be squirming all over the place. It’s just baseball, and this is life.”

“Yeah, the crappy part of life,” I said stubbornly. “I was going to be looked at by the University of Tennessee.”



Pops replied, “Well son, life is what happens to you just when you’re making other plans. No one likes it.”

My life had seen its first curve ball and it was a nasty one. This curve had eternally sent away my hopes and dreams of going to college on an athletic scholarship. That night, I rode to the emergency room of University of Tennessee Medical Center and received thirty-six stitches across the top of my knee. The trauma to my knee and the surrounding tendons left my knee in an unrecoverable state for the next two years.

With my dreams of going to college set adrift, I graduated high school and then left for the Navy two weeks later.

Life really isn’t about the bad things that come our way, but rather what we make of the changes. One quote from professional baseball player, Jim Bouton, has anchored a place in my mind over the years. “A ballplayer spends a good piece of his life gripping a baseball, and in the end it turns out it was the other way around all the time.”

I pursued my career in the Navy with the same tenacity I pursued that ball at the fence. The curve ball of life showed its face over and over throughout the years, and I made sure to leap and grab it no matter what the cost.

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