

NICOLE, WHAT
GENERATION
ARE YOU?

IT WAS DURING MY
ANNUAL PHYSICAL
THIS SUMMER...

I'M A FOURTH GENERATION
JAPANESE AMERICAN.

OH, WELL I GUESS IT
DOESN'T REALLY
PERTAIN TO YOU, BUT
DO YOU KNOW THE
STEREOTYPES OF
EACH GENERATION?
I JUST LEARNED THEM
TODAY.

NO. WHAT ARE THEY?

THE FIRST GENERATION
WAS HARD-WORKING,
THE SECOND WAS
SUCCESSFUL AND THE
THIRD GENERATION
WAS SPOILED.
INTERESTING, RIGHT?

YES, DR. YOUNG.

WELL, ANYWAYS,
NOW YOU LEARNED
SOMETHING NEW!
I HAVE TO GO
CHECK ON THE NEXT
PATIENT, SO I HAVE TO
GET GOING, BUT
GOOD LUCK IN COLLEGE.
STUDY HARD!

...WAIT... WHAT ABOUT THE FOURTH GENERATION?



THE NISEI WERE THE ONES WHO WERE FIRST CONSIDERED TO BE U.S. CITIZENS HAVING BEEN BORN ON AMERICAN SOIL. THE NISEI STRUGGLED TO PURSUE THEIR EDUCATION. MANY ESTABLISHED THEIR OWN BUSINESSES AND PRACTICES. THEY WERE ABLE TO MAKE A COMFORTABLE LIVING FOR THEMSELVES AND FOR THEIR CHILDREN.

THE ISSEI WERE THE ONES WHO FIRST CAME TO THE ISLANDS FROM JAPAN TO EARN MONEY. AROUND THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY JAPAN'S AGRICULTURAL ECONOMY TOOK A PLUNGE. THE ISSEI STRUGGLED AND WORKED HARD TO MAKE A LIVING AND TO SUPPORT THEIR FAMILY.



THE SANSEI WERE THE ONES WHO WERE LABELED AS THE "SPOILED GENERATION". THEY REAPED THE BENEFITS OF THEIR PARENTS' AND GRANDPARENTS' HARD WORK AND LABOR. THE INEQUALITIES AND STRUGGLES THE PREVIOUS GENERATIONS HAD TO FACE WERE OBLISCURED BY MATERIALISM AND THE COMFORT OF BEING "MIDDLE CLASS" FOR THE SANSEI.



...SO WHERE DID THAT LEAVE THE YONSEI?

WHERE DO I FIT IT?

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE A FOURTH GENERATION JAPANESE AMERICAN?



THEY HAD SIX CHILDREN...



MY GREAT GRANDPARENTS WERE ORIGINALLY FROM HIROSHIMA.



MY GREAT GRANDFATHER CAME TO THE BIG ISLAND TO WORK ON A SUGAR PLANTATION IN A SMALL TOWN CALLED PAHALA.

MY GREAT GRANDMOTHER WAS A PICTURE BRIDE.

MY GRANDMOTHER WAS THE FOURTH OLDEST. SHIZUE NEKOBA.



THEY WERE POOR. THEIR PARENTS WORKED LONG HOURS ON THE FIELDS, SO THEY ALL HAD TO HELP OUT AT HOME.



SHE SET OUT FOR OAHU...



AFTER HIGH SCHOOL, MY GRANDMOTHER LEFT HOME.



HONOLULU

IN 1935,
SHE ATTENDED
THE MARGARET
DIETZ COMMERCIAL
SCHOOL IN
HONOLULU.



SHE WANTED TO MAKE
HER OWN BUSINESS
AND SUPPORT HERSELF.

MY GRANDMOTHER
WAS STRONG
WILLED AND
AMBITIOUS...

WHILE MOST WOMEN HER
AGE WERE GETTING
MARRIED,
MY GRANDMOTHER
WAS FOCUSED ON SCHOOL.

SHE WAS WORKING
AS A SECRETARY
WHEN PEARL HARBOR
WAS BOMBED BY THE
JAPANESE ON
DECEMBER 7TH, 1941.

...AND BECAUSE OF THAT
NOT MANY MEN APPROACHED HER.

WHEN SHE HEARD
THE U.S. GOVERNMENT
SUSPECTED
THEM OF BEING
SPIES... OF BEING THE
"ENEMY", SHE PACKED
UP HER JAPANESE
THINGS...AND
BECAME A "TRUE"
AMERICAN.

DID YOU HEAR?
THE LEADERS
IN THE JAP
COMMUNITY
WERE PICKED UP
BY THE GOVERNMENT

THEY'RE CALLIN' 'EM
TRAITORS.
I HEAR ON THE
MAINLAND
ALMOST ALL OF
THEM HAVE
DISAPPEARED.
WE CAN'T HAVE THAT
HAPPEN HERE THOUGH!
THINK OF THE ECONOMY.
MOST OF MY WORKERS
ARE JAPS.
THEY WORK HARD.
DON'T KNOW WHAT
I'D DO WITHOUT 'EM.

BUT STILL,
I'D FEEL SAFER
IF THEY WERE
ALL GONE.
YOU CAN'T BE SURE
WHICH ONE'S ARE
TRAITORS.
CAN'T TELL IF
THEY'RE AMERICAN
OR JAPANESE...


THAT SAME YEAR,
MY GRANDMOTHER
CHANGED HER NAME
FROM SHIZUE NEKOBA
TO CAROLE NEKOBA.

Carole



I HEAR YOU'VE
OPENED UP A PRINTING
BUSINESS. WOULD YOU
BE INTERESTED
IN DOING THE BOOKING
FOR OUR RADIO STATION?
I WORK FOR KZOO.
WE'RE GOING TO BEGIN
BROADCASTING IN
A COUPLE WEEKS.
OUR PLAN IS TO MAKE
PROGRAMS SPECIFICALLY
FOR THE JAPANESE
COMMUNITY HERE.

BUSINESS
LETTER
SERVICES



BECAUSE HAWAII'S
LABOR FORCE CONSISTED
MAINLY OF JAPANESE
AND JAPANESE AMERICANS,
THE U.S. GOVERNMENT
COULDN'T INTERN THEM
ALL. THEY ONLY INTERNED
THE ONES CONSIDERED
TO BE "LEADERS" WITHIN THE
JAPANESE COMMUNITY.
MY GRANDMOTHER WASN'T
INTERNED, BUT MANY OF
HER FRIENDS WERE DRAFTED
INTO THE ARMY.

AFTER THE WAR,
MY GRANDMOTHER
OPENED UP HER
OWN PRINTING
BUSINESS.



BUSINESS
LETTER
SERVICES

SHE CALLED IT
"BUSINESS
LETTER SERVICES".
IT WAS A SMALL
SHOP ON QUEEN
STREET IN
HONOLULU.

MY GRANDFATHER WAS ALSO A SECOND GENERATION JAPANESE AMERICAN. HE WAS BORN ON THE BIG ISLAND IN A SMALL TOWN CALLED KEALAKEKUA IN SOUTH KONA. HE WAS EIGHT YEARS OLDER THAN MY GRANDMOTHER.



MY GRANDFATHER WAS A CAREFREE MAN. HE WAS EASYGOING AND HAD AN UNSATISFIABLE WANDERLUST. HE RARELY STAYED IN ONE PLACE FOR LONG...



CAROLE,
LET'S GET MARRIED.



MY GRANDMOTHER AND GRANDFATHER WED IN 1947.



THEY HAD TWO GIRLS. MY MOTHER, AND HER OLDER SISTER WHO WAS SEVEN YEARS OLDER THAN HER.

MY GRANDMOTHER ENROLLED HER IN JAPANESE CLASSES AFTER SCHOOL, BUT MY MOTHER WOULD SKIP CLASS AND GO STRAIGHT HOME. MY GRANDMOTHER NEVER KNEW THOUGH.

MY GRANDMOTHER STRUGGLED TO SUPPORT BOTH MY MOTHER AND HER SISTER. MY MOTHER WAS OFTEN LEFT HOME ALONE.



AFTER SCHOOL, MY MOTHER WOULD CLEAN THE ENTIRE HOUSE HERSELF. SHE AND HER SISTER TOOK CARE OF THE HOUSEWORK.

SINCE MY GRANDMOTHER HAD TO WORK, DURING THE SUMMERS, SHE'D SEND MY MOTHER OFF TO PAALUO ON THE BIG ISLAND TO STAY WITH HER AUNTY.



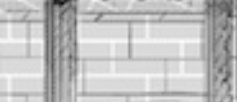
MY MOTHER ALWAYS TELLS ME ABOUT HOW SHE'D WEAR A YUKATA AND GO TO THE BIG OBON FESTIVAL AT THE END OF SUMMER.



MY MOTHER AND
HER OLDER SISTER
TOOK CARE OF THEMSELVES
GROWING UP,
AND WHEN MY MOTHER
ENTERED HIGH SCHOOL,
SHE BECAME MORE
REBELLIOUS.




SHE WORE
FALSE EYELASHES
TO MAKE HER EYES
LOOK BIGGER.
SHE BLEACHED
HER HAIR AND WENT
TANNING AT
THE BEACH.



MY MOTHER
GREW UP IN THE 70s.





HOW CAN YOU
GET THESE KINDS
OF GRADES?!
YOU SHOULD
BE STUDYING
HARDER!

WHAT? IT'S JUST
A D IN JAPANESE.
I DON'T EVEN
LIKE THE CLASS,
AND BESIDES,
WHEN WOULD
I EVER NEED
TO USE JAPANESE?!
WE LIVE IN AMERICA!
EVERYONE SPEAKS
ENGLISH!

I TOLD YOU
NOT TO BRING
HOME THOSE
KINDS OF BOYS!
WHY CAN'T YOU
JUST DATE A
NICE JAPANESE
BOY

WHY SHOULD
IT EVEN MATTER
IF HE'S JAPANESE
OR NOT? I
LIKE HIM!
WHO CARES
ABOUT HIS
ETHNICITY?
SHOULDN'T I BE
ABLE TO DATE
WHOEVER I WANT?!

Christine Yokota

日本語の試験

D

SHE ATTENDED
ROOSEVELT
HIGH SCHOOL
IN HONOLULU.

MY MOTHER OFTEN
FOUGHT WITH MY
GRANDMOTHER...



SHE WANTED
TO DATE. SHE
LIKE MUSIC,
FASHION, AND
MAKEUP.
SHE WASN'T
CONCERNED
WITH SCHOOL.
MY MOTHER WAS
YOUR TYPICAL
HIGH SCHOOL GIRL.




SHE BECAME INTERESTED IN JAPAN IN HER 20s FOR A FEW YEARS, AND FINALLY TOOK HER FIRST TRIP TO JAPAN WHEN SHE WAS IN HER EARLY 30s.

MY MOTHER GRADUATED FROM THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII, AND ENDED UP TAKING OVER MY GRANDMOTHER'S PRINTING BUSINESS.

SHE ALWAYS TELLS ME ABOUT HOW SHE REALLY LOVED JAPAN DURING THAT POINT IN HER LIFE...

...BUT WHENEVER I ASK HER WHAT HAPPENED, SHE ALWAYS SAYS IT NATURALLY FADED AWAY, LIKE MOST THINGS IN HER LIFE, AND THAT SHE'D MOVED ON FROM IT.



I GUESS I'LL NEVER REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT SHE MEANT BY THAT.

I WAS BORN
ON FEBRUARY 18TH
1993.



MY MOTHER HAD
ME IN HER LATE 30S
AND WE LIVED IN A
SMALL HOUSE IN
MANOA.





I REMEMBER
WHEN I WAS
YOUNG,
I'D OFTEN WATCH
KIKU, OUR
LOCAL JAPANESE
TV STATION,
WITH MY
GRANDMOTHER...



MY MOTHER WOULD
WORK LONG HOURS
TRYING TO SUPPORT
OUR FAMILY AND
WOULDN'T COME HOME
TILL LATE AT NIGHT SO
I'D STAY WITH MY
GRANDMOTHER, UNTIL
MY MOTHER FINISHED
WORK.

OF COURSE
I COULD
NEVER
UNDERSTAND
WHAT THEY
WERE SAYING...



...BUT I'LL NEVER FORGET
MY GRANDMOTHER'S
SLEEPING FIGURE ON
THE LIVING ROOM COUCH...





...IT'S NOT THE
BEST OF THEM, REALLY.

...IT'S THE
BEST, ABSOLUTELY
THE BEST.

...BUT EVERY NIGHT
MY GRANDMOTHER
WOULD STILL
TELL ME THE SAME
JAPANESE
CHILDREN'S
STORIES SUCH AS
MOMOTARO AND
URASHIMATARO
THAT SHE USED
TO TELL ME WHEN
I WAS A BABY. SHE
USED TO SING...



WHEN I GOT
A LITTLE OLDER,
I BEGAN
WATCHING TV
SHOWS LIKE
SAILOR MOON
AND CARD
CAPTORS,
SHOWS THAT
WERE ORIGINALLY
MADE IN JAPANESE
BUT DUBBED
IN ENGLISH.



... "MOMOTARO-SAN,
MOMOTARO-SAN,
OKOSHI NI TSUKETA
KIBIDANGO,
HITOTSU WATASHI
NI KUDASAI NE?
AGEMASHOU,
AGEMASHOU.
KORE KARA ONI NO
SEIBATSU NI
TSUITE KURU NARA
AGEMASHOU."



I GUESS YOU COULD SAY
IT BEGAN WITH MY GRANDMOTHER...
MY LOVE OF JAPAN AND ITS CULTURE.



WHEN I WAS IN
MIDDLE SCHOOL
MY MOTHER WAS
RARELY EVER
HOME.

HERE'S YOUR
OATMEAL,
GRANDMA.
DON'T FORGET
TO TAKE YOUR
MEDICINE.

THANK YOU.




MY
GRANDMOTHER
HAD A MINI
STROKE
WHEN I WAS IN
FIFTH GRADE.



HELP!! HELP!!

WHAT'S WRONG?!

I CAN'T MOVE!



THE STROKE
HAD AFFECTED
HER BRAIN,
AND AS A RESULT,
SHE WAS LATER
DIAGNOSED WITH
DEMENTIA.