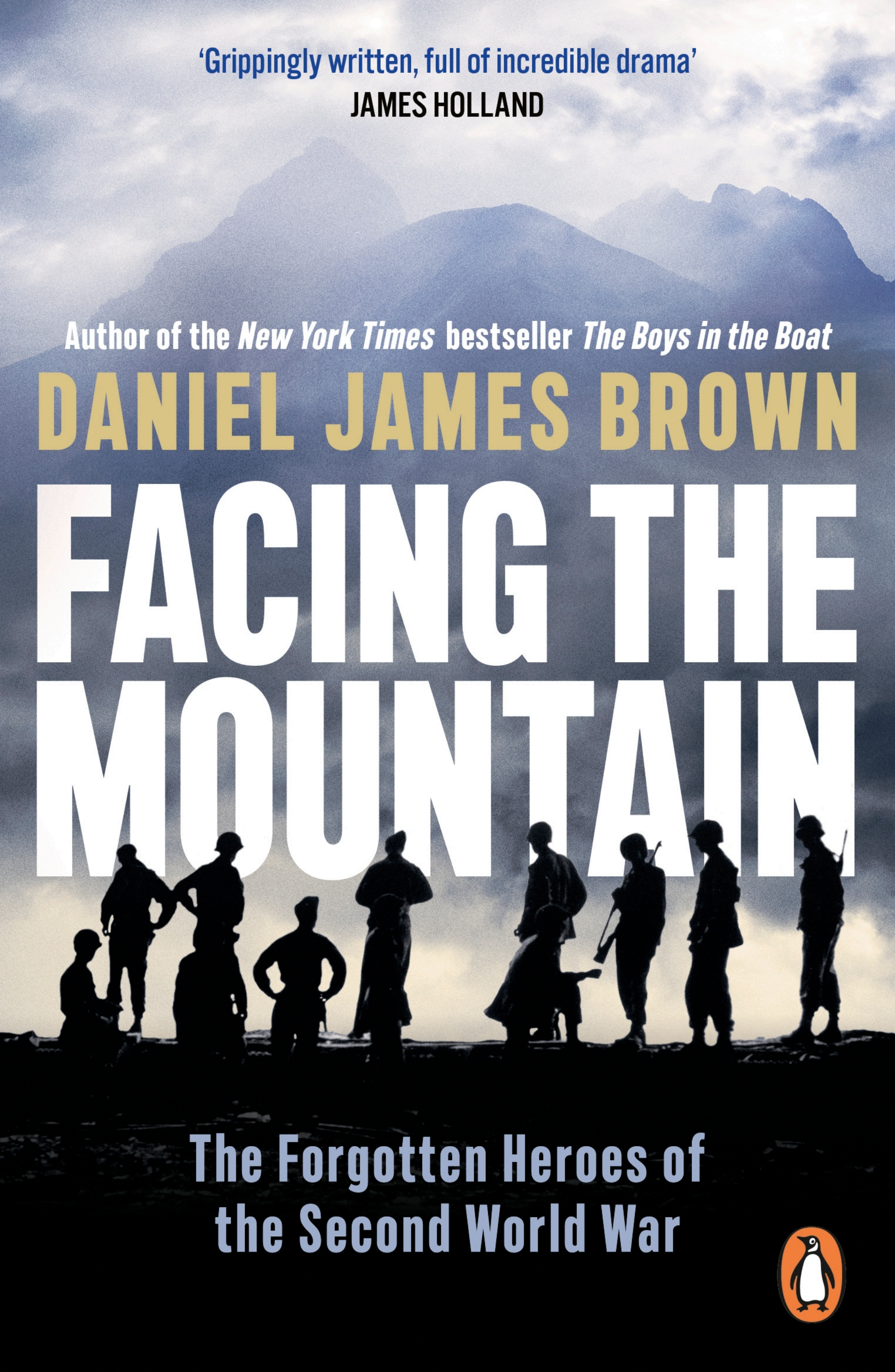

‘Grippingly written, full of incredible drama’
JAMES HOLLAND

Author of the *New York Times* bestseller *The Boys in the Boat*

DANIEL JAMES BROWN

FACING THE MOUNTAIN

The Forgotten Heroes of the Second World War

PENGUIN BOOKS

Facing the Mountain

‘My favourite kind of history book: grippingly written, full of incredible drama and focusing on individuals rather than numbers and statistics. The 442nd Nisei Regiment who fought so brilliantly up through Italy really were forgotten heroes of a forgotten campaign, but through painstaking research and brilliant storytelling, Daniel James Brown has put the flesh back on to these men. *Facing the Mountain* is a terrific book’ James Holland

‘Masterful and beautifully written. *Facing the Mountain* is truly revelatory – secret history at its very best. Daniel James Brown’s book tells of untold courage and sacrifice that should be celebrated and never forgotten’ Damien Lewis

‘Extraordinary . . . the author is to be congratulated for bringing to life the story of these “forgotten heroes” of the Second World War. I can see the movie already’ Saul David, *The Times*

‘This is the campaign diary of one of the most forgotten, and important, minorities in the Allied Forces in the Second World War. Japanese American soldiers and units fought across the Mediterranean, Western Europe and South East Asia, though more than 120,000 of their kin were detained as enemy aliens back home in the States. The book evokes the setting for desperate fighting with a terrific sense of location, and there are stories of heroism, danger, desperation and little deeds of common humanity – extraordinary actions by ordinary people, in the web of extraordinary times. The book is a wonderful testament to them all’ Robert Fox, author of *We Were There*

‘A masterwork of American history that will change the way we look at the Second World War. You don’t just read a Daniel James Brown story – you *go there*. *Facing the Mountain* is lump-in-the-throat territory, page after page’ Adam Makos, author of *A Higher Call*

‘Daniel James Brown has done it again. A must-read contribution to the history of the twentieth century. I’ll never look at the Second World War story in the same light’ Timothy Egan

‘*Facing the Mountain* arrives at the perfect time, to remind us of the true meaning of patriotism. In Daniel James Brown’s gifted hands, these overlooked American heroes are getting the glory they deserve. Read this book and know their stories’ Mitchell Zuckoff, author of *Lost in Shangri-La*

‘Riveting. *Facing the Mountain* is a book that is as much about the present as it is about the past. In it are vital lessons about courage, truth, justice and an abiding love of country. Drawing on impeccable historic research, the narrative movingly shines the light of history on prejudice and discrimination and the unfinished struggle for a more just future’ Ann Burroughs, President and CEO of the Japanese American National Museum

‘This virtuoso history weaves together the experiences of Japanese American soldiers fighting in Europe and their interned families back in the US to create an illuminating and spirited portrait of courage under fire’ *Publishers Weekly*, starred review

‘A must-read. You will not be able to put it down’ Scott Oki

‘A deft and ambitious storyteller’ *New York Times Book Review*

‘Daniel James Brown tackles this important story with the same impressive narrative talent and research that made *The Boys in the Boat* an enduring bestseller . . . The centrepieces of *Facing the Mountain* are the wrenching, on-the-ground descriptions of battles fought by the 442nd in Europe . . . Every reader will admire the resilience that allowed these soldiers to create communities within the internment camps and to play such a pivotal role in the defeat of the Nazis’ *BookPage*

‘*Facing the Mountain* is more than just the story of a group of young men whose valour helped save a country that spurned them; it’s a fascinating, expertly written look at selfless heroes who emerged from one of the darkest periods of American history – soldiers the likes of which this country may never see again’ *NPR*

‘Brown combines history with humanity in a tense, tender and well-researched study of the lives disrupted and disregarded by misperceptions and misinformation. Ain’t no mountain high enough to keep young men such as Rudy Tokiwa of Salinas; “Kats” Miho of Kahului, Hawaii; Fred Shiosaki of Spokane, Washington; and Gordon Hirabayashi of Seattle from doing what is morally right’ *San Francisco Chronicle*

‘Rich storytelling and deep historical research about the Japanese American experience are the essence of *Facing the Mountain.* Although the book graphically describes the horrors of battle, it spotlights stories of heroism and endurance’ *Christian Science Monitor*

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Daniel James Brown is the number one *New York Times* bestselling author of *The Boys in the Boat*, *The Indifferent Stars Above* and *Under a Flaming Sky*. He has taught writing at San José State University and Stanford University. He lives outside Seattle.

FACING THE MOUNTAIN

THE FORGOTTEN HEROES OF THE SECOND WORLD WAR

DANIEL JAMES BROWN

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First published in the United States of America by Viking 2021
First published in Great Britain by Viking UK 2021
Published in Penguin Books 2022
001

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Printed and bound in Great Britain by Clays Ltd, Elcograf S.p.A.

The authorized representative in the EEA is Penguin Random House Ireland,
Morrison Chambers, 32 Nassau Street, Dublin D02 YH68

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN: 978–0–241–35660–9

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To Kats and Rudy and Fred and Gordon

And all those who held aloft the light of liberty

And led us over the mountain

when the darkness came

You know, to me, I felt all the guys who didn't make it, I hope they're watching from heaven so that they, too, can enjoy and say, "Look what we have done."

RUDY TOKIWA
MARCH 24, 2002

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FOREWORD

Twenty-five years ago, in 1995, before Google or smartphones, I spearheaded a group of inspired volunteers in an effort to interview, digitally preserve, and share the personal stories of our Japanese American ancestors incarcerated during World War II. We named the project Densho, a Japanese term meaning “to leave a legacy for future generations.” At the time, my father said, with a pained expression, that this was a bad idea. Community members just wanted to forget the war years and the suffering.

This began a long discussion with a man who rarely told me what to do. At the end of the conversation, I told him I hoped he understood, but I *had* to do this project. This part of American history was barely taught in schools, and too many people had never even heard about the incarceration of 120,000 Japanese Americans. Those who lived through the experience were dying. We needed to hear and record their stories. When my father saw that I was really going to start interviewing people, he said there was something I needed to know: “There are deep divisions in the community that people won’t want to talk about. Be sensitive and don't judge based on what you think you know. Life can change quickly."

In the years following that conversation, my father became my best adviser. He even agreed to be interviewed and often became an important liaison between Densho and Japanese American elders who were hesitant to share their stories.

Twenty years later, I stood on a sunny, outdoor stage at the Seattle Center to accept a Mayor's Arts Award for Densho's work preserving and sharing this history. As I scanned the audience for my eighty-eight-year-old father, who had come with me, I stood in front of the iconic Horiuchi mural, a seventeen-foot-high-by-sixty-foot-wide brightly colored glass mosaic created by the well-known Japanese American artist Paul Horiuchi. Through an interview I had done six years earlier with Paul's widow, Bernadette, I knew that Paul had had a hard time getting work as a Japanese American while they lived in Wyoming. The family was so poor, in fact, that when they visited relatives incarcerated at the Minidoka concentration camp in Idaho, Bernadette was envious of the children there who at least had warm food, shelter, and milk to drink. I remember feeling uneasy hearing Bernadette talk about wishing to live in this American concentration camp. Then I realized even more deeply how difficult those years must have been for her family. My father was right to tell me to listen and not judge.

When I turned away from the mural and faced the audience, my eyes caught the graceful lines of the Yamasaki Arches; five hundred-foot-high Gothic arches were created by the former Seattle architect Minoru Yamasaki for the 1962 Seattle World's Fair. They were supposed to be a temporary installation. However, they were so beautiful they became a permanent and historic landmark. Ironically, two of Yamasaki's other creations, these meant to be permanent, the Twin Towers in New York City, were destroyed by terrorists on September 11, 2001. In the days and months that followed, I remembered how horrified Japanese Americans felt as we watched Muslim and Arab Americans being feared, shunned, and seen as the enemy, echoing the Japanese American experience during World War II. Then I remembered my father's words: "Life can change quickly."

At the ceremony, Seattle's mayor introduced the work of Densho and then me. I began by dedicating the award to my father, but the whole time I was talking, I was searching the crowd for his face. I finally saw him waving from the third row back, off to the side. I'm guessing he sat in an out-of-the-way place so he wouldn't take a seat from a VIP, not knowing he was the most important person there that day.

When I returned to my seat on the stage, I sat next to another honoree, Daniel James Brown, a gentle, soft-spoken man being recognized for his book about the University of Washington crew, *The Boys in the Boat*. His book was a favorite of mine, and I admired his rich storytelling and historical research. We connected easily as we learned we both had worked at Microsoft at the same time and both had left to pursue our passions. Dan then told me he had long been interested in the experiences of Japanese Americans during World War II and was thinking about them as he considered ideas for his next book. Just before the program ended, we exchanged business cards and promised to stay in touch.

Five years later, I am now writing the foreword to the book that came, at least in part, from that conversation. Dan and I have now spent hours together, along with the Densho historian Brian Niiya, sharing story ideas and suggestions to make the book as historically accurate and authentic as possible, using Densho's oral history collection and other rich repositories in Hawaiʻi and California. I've watched as Dan and his wife, Sharon, spent years researching and traveling to build a full picture of the Japanese American experience during the war. At some point, my time with Dan and Sharon became opportunities for me to sit back and learn. I loved hearing the stories about the lives and letters of the chaplains of the 442nd. I cherished learning more about Fred Shiosaki, Rudy Tokiwa, and Gordon Hirabayashi, men who had generously spent hours with me when I conducted their oral histories and whose stories are now part of Dan's book.

When Densho began, I dreamed the stories we collected would humanize and educate others to stand against injustices. *Facing the Mountain* comes to us during a time of deep unrest, a time when our empathy for others is so needed to guide the choices we will make. This book will open hearts. Thank you, Dan.

Tom Ikeda

Tom Ikeda is executive director of Densho, a Seattle-based nonprofit dedicated to collecting, preserving, and sharing Japanese American history and promoting social justice and equity.

AUTHOR'S NOTE

In April 1946, in the aftermath of World War II, George Orwell wrote, "Political language—and with variations this is true of all political parties, from Conservatives to Anarchists—is designed to make lies sound truthful and murder respectable."

The events at the heart of this book richly illustrate the point. When the American government removed tens of thousands of Japanese Americans from their homes and incarcerated them in remote, desolate camps, it wrapped those actions in language calculated to filter, soften, obscure, and distort a number of hard and uncomfortable facts. Military and political leaders called the forced removal of citizens an "evacuation." They called the parents of those citizens, most of whom had lived in the United States for decades, "enemy aliens." They called the fairgrounds and racetracks where both citizens and their parents were first confined behind barbed wire "assembly centers." They called the more permanent facilities where more than a hundred thousand people lived out the war crammed into spartan barracks in desert wastelands "relocation centers." Almost without exception, the news outlets of the day adopted this language, and the authors of history books over the subsequent decades echoed it.

To tell a truthful story, one must use truthful language, so I have endeavored in this book to replace these euphemisms with more honest language. For example, I sometimes refer to the facilities I mention above as "concentration camps." Nobody should for a moment take this to mean that I equate them in any way with the horrific death camps and slave-labor camps of Nazi Germany, places like Auschwitz and Dachau. Nothing in modern history equates with the terrible reality of those places. But the fact remains that the "assembly centers" and "relocation centers" were indeed American concentration camps by any reasonable definition of that term.

I have also worked to be accurate and honest when re-creating conversations. Any dialogue I present here is taken directly from transcripts of interviews or other primary sources, and so it is faithful not only to the words spoken but also to the speaker's manner of speaking. I bring this up here, in part, because a number of the people you will meet in these pages spoke the Hawaiian creole known throughout the islands simply as pidgin. To the uninitiated, this language may sound coarse or even ignorant. It is neither. It is simply the warm, familiar language that has grown up in the cultural melting pot that Hawaiʻi is, combining words and expressions from English, Portuguese, Hawaiian, Cantonese, Japanese, Korean, Tagalog, and a bit of Spanish as a practical means of communicating across ethnic and linguistic boundaries. It ties together the larger Hawaiian *ʻohana*, or family. And, as you will see, it plays a role in the story that follows.

DJB

PROLOGUE

We made the sacrifices. It was a sense of "Hey, I earned this. It's not that you owe me. It's this—that we have earned this."

FRED SHIOSAKI

One of the many pleasures of writing a book like this is meeting the extraordinary people who have lived the story you are telling. Usually, you meet them only virtually, through the letters or diaries or video recordings they have left behind. Occasionally, if you are lucky, you get to meet them in person.

Such was the case on a typically splendid Hawaiian afternoon in 2018 when my friend Mariko Miho ushered me into the Maple Garden Restaurant in Honolulu's McCully-Moʻiliʻili neighborhood. The place was loud with the clattering of dishes and lush with warm aromas arising from a buffet arrayed along one wall. Most of the people lined up at the buffet were there for the midweek, midday senior discount. We were there for the company.

Mariko led me to the back of the restaurant where half a dozen white-haired gentlemen, all in their nineties, were sitting at two large round tables, surrounded by their wives and sons and daughters. Mariko introduced me. Everyone smiled and waved a bit shyly and then resumed their conversations. Mariko seated me next to two of the gentlemen and introduced them to me as Roy Fujii and Flint Yonashiro. They were veterans of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team (RCT). During World War II, the regiment had fought the fascist powers in Europe so valiantly that they had emerged from the war as one of the most decorated units in American history. Roy and Flint had known and cared for each other for at least seventy-five years. They had fought together, lost friends together, bled together, been through hell together.

Soon, they were both regaling me with stories, and I was flinging questions at them. Roy patiently explained how to adjust the elevation settings on a 105-millimeter howitzer. They both talked about the terrifying sound of incoming artillery shells, about handing out candy bars to starving children in Italy, about swimming in the Mediterranean, and about picking their way through deadly minefields in Germany. I pulled out some maps, and soon both men were hunched over them, eagerly comparing notes, pointing out features of some terrain in France—mountains they had climbed, river crossings where friends had died. We talked for an hour or more, and through it all they were both so bright-eyed and clearheaded and vibrantly alive that you might have thought them twentysomething rather than ninetysomething. It was easy to see the eager, audacious, good-hearted young men they had once been.

When lunch was over and the veterans began to push their chairs away from the tables, family members scrambled for walkers and canes. Daughters who were themselves in their sixties or seventies rushed to help their fathers stand up. Sons cleared aisles for wheelchairs. When Roy Fujii rose to stand, he wobbled just a bit. A chair stood between him and the door, and it wasn't clear that he saw it. Faster than I could have, ninety-four-year-old Flint Yonashiro sprang to his feet, sprinted around the table, pushed the chair out of the way, steadied Roy, and handed him his cane.

It was a small thing, but I'll never forget it. It summed up in a gesture everything I have learned about not only those half a dozen men but thousands more just like them. For three-quarters of a century, all across the country, they have been coming together—at luncheons and dinners and *lūʻau*, in homes and restaurants and veterans' halls—needing to be in one another's presence again, needing to show again how much they love one another, needing to take care of each other, as brothers do. As they left the restaurant that afternoon, strangers made way for them, and a hushed reverence washed over the room. All of us knew that they would not be with us much longer, and all of us wished that were not so. And that is why I have set out here—with a great deal of help from some of them, and from their sons and daughters and friends and compatriots—to tell you their remarkable story as best I can.

Some came from small towns, some from big cities. Some hailed from family farms in the American West, some from vast pineapple and sugarcane plantations in Hawaiʻi. By and large, they had grown up like other American boys, playing baseball and football and going to Saturday afternoon matinees. They performed in marching bands on the Fourth of July, went to county fairs, ate burgers and fries, messed around under the hoods of cars, and listened to swing tunes on the radio. They made plans to go to college or work in the family business or run the farm someday. They eyed pretty girls walking down school corridors clutching books to their chests, making their way to class. They studied American history and English literature, took PE and shop classes, looked forward to their weekends. And as the holiday season approached in 1941, it seemed as if the whole world lay before them.

But within hours of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, all that changed. Within days, the FBI was banging on their doors, searching their homes, hauling their fathers away to undisclosed locations. Within weeks, many of them would watch as their immigrant parents were forced to sell their homes for pennies on the dollar and shutter businesses that they had spent decades building. Within months, tens of thousands of them or their family members would be living in barracks behind barbed wire or have family members who were.

For all their essential Americanness, the traumatic events of that December brought back into focus something they had always known: their place in American society remained tenuous. Millions of their countrymen regarded them with an unfettered animosity born of decades of virulent anti-Asian rhetoric spewing forth from the press and from the mouths of politicians. Local ordinances regulated where they could and could not live. Labor unions routinely barred them from employment in many industries. Proprietors of businesses could, at will, ban them from entering their premises. Public facilities were sometimes closed to them. State laws prohibited their parents from owning real estate. In many states they were not free to marry across racial lines. Their national government prohibited their parents from becoming citizens.

And they knew this, too: their lives, their very identities, were inevitably bound to their roots. The values that their parents had bestowed on them—the manner in which they approached others, the standards by which they measured success, the obligations they felt, the respect they owed to their elders, the traditions they celebrated, and a multitude of other facets of their individual and collective identities—were not things they could or would willingly cast aside. They were, in fact, things they cherished.

Because many of them had relatives living in Japan, they had seen the storm clouds growing over the Pacific long before most other Americans had. And they knew immediately on that first Sunday in December 1941 that straddling two worlds now suddenly at war would challenge them in ways that would shake the foundations of their lives.

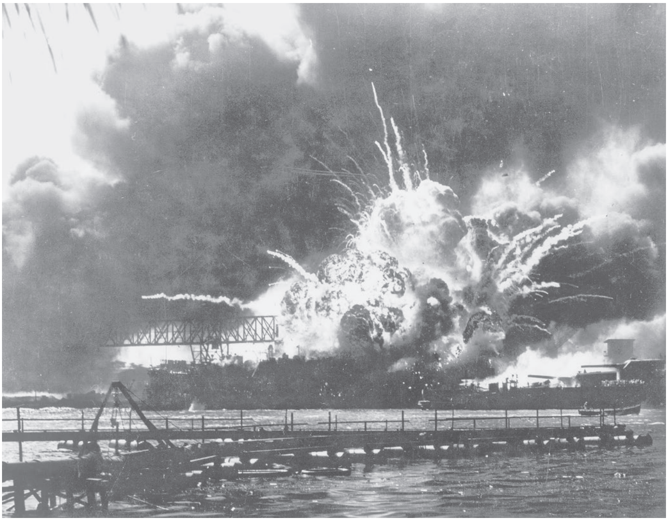
For those young men there was no obvious path forward, no simple right way or wrong way to proceed with their lives. Some of them would launch campaigns of conscientious resistance to the deprivation of their constitutional rights. Others—thousands of them—would serve, and some would die, on the battlefields of Europe, striving to prove their loyalty to their country. Scores of their mothers would dissolve into tears as they saw grim-faced officers coming in past barbed-wire fencing bearing shattering news. But by the end of their lives almost all of them—whether they fought in courtrooms or in foxholes—would be counted American heroes.

At its heart, this is the story of those young men—some of the bravest Americans who have ever lived, the Nisei warriors of World War II, and how they, through their actions, laid bare for all the world to see what exactly it means to be an American. But it’s also the story of their immigrant parents, the Issei, who like other immigrants before them—whether they came from Ireland or Italy, from North Africa or Latin America—faced suspicion and prejudice from the moment they arrived in America. It’s the story of how they set out to win their place in American society, working at menial jobs from dawn to dusk, quietly enduring discrimination and racial epithets, struggling to learn the language, building businesses, growing crops, knitting together families, nurturing their children, creating homes. It’s the story of wives and mothers and sisters who kept families together under extreme conditions. It’s the story of the first Americans since the Cherokee in 1838 to face wholesale forced removal from their homes, deprivation of their livelihoods, and mass incarceration.

But in the end it’s not a story of victims. Rather, it’s a story of victors, of people striving, resisting, rising up, standing on principle, laying down their lives, enduring, and prevailing. It celebrates some young Americans who decided they had no choice but to do what their sense of honor and loyalty told them was right, to cultivate their best selves, to embrace the demands of conscience, to leave their homes and families and sally forth into the fray, to confront and to conquer the mountain of troubles that lay suddenly in their paths.

PART ONE

SHOCK



The USS *Shaw* explodes during the attack on Pearl Harbor

ONE

If I ever meet a Japanese soldier, I'm going to knock him down and kick him in the balls.

TED TSUKIYAMA
UNIVERSITY OF HAWAIʻI STUDENT
DECEMBER 7, 1941

Katsugo "Kats" Miho was one of those kids you just couldn't help but like. It didn't hurt that he was handsome. Even before he put on a uniform, the girls at the University of Hawaiʻi thought he looked pretty dreamy, almost like a movie star—"a Japanese Cary Grant," they said. Especially when he slicked back his hair and tossed you that easy, carefree smile of his. But it wasn't just his looks that drew people to Kats Miho. It was the hand he always extended to you, the look he gave you, the way it invited you in, the way it said, "Eh, let's get to know each other, let's talk story, let's get somethin' going."

There was a casual grace, a natural optimism, a happy-go-lucky assuredness to him that you just couldn't turn away from.

Early on the morning of December 7, 1941, he was in Honolulu, asleep at the Charles Atherton House, a stately shell-pink building that the YMCA operated as a dormitory for students at the university, though the place looked more like an English country manor house than a dorm. As the sun rose over Oʻahu that morning, Kats stirred in his bed, thinking about the day ahead. Ordinarily, he would have slept in late on a Sunday morning, but word among his friends was that there was an interesting new minister at the Church of the Crossroads just down the street. Better yet, he'd heard that a pair of particularly attractive sisters from the Big Island were going to be playing piano at the morning service. He and some buddies had decided to give the church a try. After church, he figured he would study for his last few exams and then start preparing to go home to Maui for Christmas break.

He couldn't wait to get home. His first semester at the university had been a great success. He'd joined the Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), made friends on campus and at Atherton House, was getting good grades, and was having the time of his life. But he missed his mother's cooking and the company of his siblings. And he was looking forward to hanging out on the beach with some of his old friends from Maui High, the ones who had gone from high school straight to work on the sugarcane and pineapple plantations. Maybe they'd play some barefoot football or have a cookout on the beach at Kīhei, the way they had when they were kids.

AT 6:26 THAT MORNING, just as Kats was beginning to wake up, the USS *Antares*, a navy cargo vessel, arrived in restricted water off Pearl Harbor, towing a five-hundred-ton steel barge. In the dim gray light of dawn, the skipper, Lawrence Grannis, noticed an odd cigar-shaped object in the water fifteen hundred yards off his starboard bow. Uncertain what he was looking at in the thin gray morning light, but suspecting that it might be some sort of strange submarine, Grannis radioed the nearby destroyer *Ward* and suggested that the ship's captain, William Outerbridge, and his crew investigate. At the same time, flying overhead in a navy PBY patrol plane, Ensign William Tanner also spotted the object. Thinking it was an American submarine in trouble, he dropped two smoke pots into the water near it to mark its position. The *Ward* turned toward the smoke and accelerated to twenty-five knots, bearing down rapidly on what soon everyone could see in the dawn light was indeed a submarine, but a very odd, very small one, definitely not American. At 6:45 the *Ward* opened fire and launched depth charges. The first shot missed, the shell sailing over the sub, but the second hit the vessel squarely at the intersection of the conning tower and the hull. Immediately the sub began to heel over and sink. Almost simultaneously one of the depth charges appeared to detonate directly under it and oil bubbled to the surface, confirming the kill. At 6:54, the *Ward* transmitted a message to Lieutenant Commander Harold Kaminski, the Fourteenth Naval District duty officer at Pearl: "We have attacked, fired upon, and dropped depth charges on a submarine operating in defensive sea areas."

Kaminski, startled, hesitated, uncertain whether to believe it. There had been a number of false sightings of hostile submarines in recent months. On the other hand, the news from East Asia had been growing more troubling for weeks. He picked up a telephone and began what would turn out to be a protracted game of phone tag involving multiple officers as over the next hour news of the incident slowly worked its way up the chain of command toward Admiral Husband E. Kimmel, commander in chief of the U.S. Fleet and Pacific Fleet.

Meanwhile, just eight minutes after the *Ward* first dispatched its alarming news, at the army's Opana mobile radar site on the northern tip of Oʻahu, Private George Elliott peered down into the screen of his oscilloscope and couldn't quite believe what he was seeing—a large blip, larger than anything he had ever seen on the newfangled machine. It looked to him like something on the order of fifty or more incoming aircraft flying directly toward the island from the north, about 132 miles out. Alarmed, he asked the only other man on duty, Private Joseph Lockard, to take a look. Lockard peered into the scope, then checked the equipment to see if it seemed to be working correctly. He, too, had never seen anything like it, but he figured it was most likely American planes and not worth reporting. Elliott, however, picked up the phone and called the U.S. Army Air Corps' information center at

Fort Shafter. He was told to wait for someone to call him back. More minutes ticked by. At about 7:15, Lieutenant Kermit Tyler called back, reaching Lockard. Tyler, figuring that what Elliott and Lockard had seen was most likely a flight of B-17s he expected to arrive from the mainland that morning, told Lockard, “Don’t worry about it. It’s okay.” At about the same time, word of the *Ward*’s encounter with the small submarine finally reached Admiral Kimmel. Like Kaminski, he was dubious about the report’s veracity. He decided to do nothing for the moment, choosing to wait for confirmation.

There was, in fact, a flight of B-17s from California approaching Oʻahu that morning. But they didn’t produce the blip on the radar that Elliott and Lockard saw. The blip was the radar reflection of 183 Japanese warplanes. The navigators of those planes, adjusting the tuners on their radios, had just begun to hear Hawaiian music—the soft sound of steel-string guitars and ukuleles—over the growling of their engines. It was Honolulu’s radio station KGMB. At the request of the army, the station manager had agreed the evening before to stay on the air and keep the music playing all night. That way, the navigators of the incoming B-17s would be able to use the station’s signal to home in on the most direct route to the Honolulu area. Now the Japanese navigators began to do exactly that, following the music toward Pearl Harbor.

But they were still half an hour from reaching Oʻahu. At the Chuo Gakuin Japanese-language school on Honolulu’s Nuʻuanu Avenue, a Sunday school class was just getting under way, the teacher playing a piano, her students singing their school song. On the beach at Waikīkī, early morning swimmers laid towels on the soft coral sand and then waded out into the turquoise surf. For thirty minutes, coffee percolated in sunny kitchens, dogs wandered across deserted Sunday morning streets, the yellow blossoms of *hau* trees slowly opened, church bells rang, and mynah birds fussed and chattered among the fronds of palm trees as Pearl Harbor, its neighboring military bases, and the city of Honolulu went about the business of greeting another beautiful Hawaiian morning. Up at Atherton House, Kats Miho tossed aside his bedsheets, got up, and headed for the shower room.

For many survivors, what happened next on Oʻahu was frozen in time for the rest of their lives.

At first, they looked insignificant, like swarms of black insects drifting across the pale, early morning sky. But then they looped around over the sea and the mountains and started to descend, spiraling down in groups of five or six, dropping dark objects from their bellies, the objects making white plumes in the water. The brain, trying to make sense of it, couldn't quite. Sailors and officers, soldiers and civilians alike stopped what they were doing and peered into the sky and wondered the same thing—what on earth was this? Not insects, but planes, but why? Some stunt? Flyboys goofing off again? Some kind of kooky Sunday morning military exercise? But as the planes grew nearer, one by one they suddenly assumed the form of something horrific, something compounded of gray steel, sleek glass, and huge black roaring engines. They came in low, some not more than fifty or sixty feet off the water, coming right at ships, at buildings, at trucks and houses and men standing on runways with their mouths agape, maybe even at you if you were unlucky—growling, spitting fire, flashing by overhead, big red disks under their wings and on their flanks. Then the brain finally, reluctantly, got it.

Japanese Zeros struck first at Kāneʻohe Bay Naval Air Station, sixteen miles northeast of Pearl Harbor at 7:48, raking aircraft parked on the ground with machine-gun fire, setting them ablaze, then circling back through billowing clouds of black smoke, strafing anything else that presented itself, cars racing toward the scene, men scrambling across the field trying to find cover, even private residences. About seven minutes later, many more planes—high-altitude bombers, dive-bombers, torpedo planes—struck, almost simultaneously, the naval air station on Ford Island in the middle of Pearl Harbor, the marine air base at ʻEwa, Wheeler and Bellows Army Air Fields, Schofield Barracks, and Hickam Field just south of Pearl. At many of these locations, American aircraft were grouped together—lined up wingtip to wingtip—the better to guard them against potential sabotage. Arrayed thus, they made easy targets for the attackers, and within minutes the American ability to mount an effective air defense simply vanished in a maelstrom of flames, shattered glass, twisted metal, and scattered bodies. At Ford Island, as bombs exploded right outside his window, Logan Ramsey, in charge of the command center, sprinted to the radio room, yelling at the radioman to broadcast an uncoded message, one that would quickly reach all the way to Washington, D.C.: “Air raid. Pearl Harbor. This is no drill.”

Then the attackers wheeled their planes around and turned to the American fleet and their principal targets, seven enormous battleships lined up alongside Ford Island and an eighth, sitting helpless in dry dock. On the deck of one of those battleships, the USS *Nevada*, a military band was just striking up “The Star-Spangled Banner” for the 8:00 a.m. ritual of raising the American flag. Suddenly a Japanese torpedo plane roared in sixty feet off the water and sprayed machine-gun fire across the *Nevada*’s deck, somehow missing all the band members but shredding the American flag halfway up the pole. The band kept playing until the anthem was finished. Then, flinging their instruments aside, men scrambled for cover. It was about the last lucky break the Americans would get that morning.

On the USS *Oklahoma*, a sailor screamed over the PA system, “Man your battle stations! This is no shit!” But almost immediately two torpedoes punched into the port side of the ship in rapid succession, and the ship began to list. Then a third hit, and minutes later it rolled over entirely, trapping hundreds belowdecks, its great gray hull turned to the sky like the belly of a dead whale. At about the same time, seven torpedoes and two aerial bombs hit the USS *West Virginia,* and it began to sink rapidly, trapping and drowning another sixty-six men belowdecks. Within minutes all eight battleships and a number of other, lesser ships had been hit.

Then the worst of it. Sometime between 8:04 and 8:10, an armor-piercing bomb penetrated the foredeck of the already damaged USS *Arizona* and detonated perhaps a million pounds of high explosives in its forward ammunition magazine. A fireball engulfed the ship. A shock wave pulsed out across Pearl Harbor. Men were blown off the decks of nearby ships. The *Arizona*—nearly thirty thousand tons of steel—jumped ten or fifteen feet in the air, ruptured, and sank rapidly, leaving only its devastated superstructure above water. Within moments 1,177 of its crew were dead, nearly half the ultimate death toll for the day.

Everywhere, without waiting for orders, men scrambled to get their hands on whatever sorts of guns they could—.50-caliber machine guns, antiaircraft batteries, rifles, pistols, anything that might hurl some lead or steel into the sky. On the *New Orleans*, which had lost electrical power, Chaplain Howell Forgy urged on men trying to manually load the ship's five-inch guns, bellowing, "Praise the Lord and pass the ammunition!" As the flight of thirteen unarmed American B-17s from California approached Oʻahu, their astonished pilots found themselves frantically dodging and weaving, trying to avoid fire from Japanese Zeros and the wild barrages of friendly fire coming up from the ground.

A deadly hailstorm of Japanese bombs and misdirected American antiaircraft shells began to fall on civilian areas of Honolulu, setting fire to houses, crumpling cars, taking, all told, forty-nine civilian lives. At the Japanese-language school on Nuʻuanu Avenue, a shell hit the auditorium. The blast sent desks, school satchels, books, and children flying. Beneath the rubble, seven-year-old Nancy Arakaki began to bleed to death. Eight-year-old Jacky Hirosaki ran from the school to his grandmother's nearby restaurant, the Cherry Blossom, where another shell exploded in the street outside, sending shrapnel flying, killing Jacky, his father, his brother, and his two-year-old sister, Shirley.

By now, a second wave of 167 attack planes had lifted off from the Japanese carriers north of Oʻahu and were bearing down on the island. Over the next two hours the carnage continued to unfurl in the harbor and in Honolulu—a swirling kaleidoscope of horrors. On the smoldering hulk of the *Arizona*, a big, husky cook sitting, staring mutely at the stump of his leg. Sailors wandering like zombies on bloodied decks, naked and ghostly white, their clothes and skin burned from them. Men in the water, covered in black oil. Oil on the surface of the water burning, surrounding the men, closing in on them. Suffocating black smoke. Deafening concussions. From inside the *Oklahoma*, the sound of someone pounding on its hull, desperately trying to find a way out, finding none. At a hospital in Honolulu, ambulance drivers in blood-soaked uniforms carrying in moaning victims, their bodies blackened. In the hospital morgue, a little girl, barefoot, wearing a red sweater, clutching the burned-off end of a jump rope.

A civilian home damaged during the Pearl Harbor attack

Many of the Japanese pilots brought their planes in so low that morning that people on the ground could see the pilots looking back at them, making eye contact, sometimes stone-faced, sometimes grinning, sometimes even waving at them as they passed overhead. And those pilots, looking down, could not help but see that the faces looking back up at them in astonishment looked, in many cases, very much like faces they might see back home in Japan.

In 1941, nearly a third of Hawaiʻi's residents were of entirely Japanese ancestry.* As the horrors of that day unfolded, they, overwhelmingly, reacted with the same stunned fury and outrage as other Americans. One U.S. soldier, Akiji Yoshimura, later summed up what many of them felt that morning, saying he felt "deep anguish and despair because the land that I had been taught to honor by my parents had committed an act of war against the country that I loved."

Ronald Oba—a senior at the ʻIolani School in downtown Honolulu—was enjoying a regular Sunday morning treat, pancakes, with his family, when he heard what he thought were fireworks. As the sounds grew louder, he revised his thinking. It must be military exercises. But when a much larger explosion shook the house and rattled the windows, Ronald jumped out of his chair, sprinted down Kauhale Street, jogged across the railroad tracks, and came to a stop on the eastern shore of Pearl Harbor, staring dumbfounded at the pillars of dense black smoke rising from Ford Island and, beyond that, the wreckage of the *Arizona*. As he stood there, trying to make sense of it, another series of explosions rocked Battleship Row. When one of the planes banked and headed directly toward Ronald, he saw the Rising Sun insignia of imperial Japan and thought, "The nerve of these guys! They're our ancestors and come and attack us like that!"

Seventeen-year-old Daniel Inouye was getting dressed, listening idly to the Hawaiian music that KGMB had been playing all night to guide in the B-17s, when announcer Webley Edwards broke in with a bulletin, screaming into the mic—"This is no test! This is the real McCoy! Pearl Harbor is being bombed by the Japanese! Get off the streets!" Defying the advice, Inouye rushed from his house in Honolulu's Moʻiliʻili neighborhood. He, too, saw the Rising Sun insignia on the wings of a Zero passing overhead and was immediately overwhelmed by a wave of anger and dread. “I thought my life was over,” he later said. But he got on his bike and raced to a first aid station at the Lunalilo School, where he would spend most of the next three days and nights helping treat the wounded and carrying the dead to the morgue.

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*In the 1940 U.S. census, there were 128,947 people of Japanese descent living on the islands out of a population of 423,330.

In the old plantation town of Waipahu on the north shore of Pearl Harbor, Flint Yonashiro, a high school student, heard planes roaring low overhead. He stepped from the small restaurant where his mother sold ice cream and saimin noodles just in time to see twin lines of bullets slamming into the ground in front of him, just missing him, chattering across pavement, kicking up dust, as a Japanese pilot fired on a nearby molasses storage tank, apparently mistaking it for a fuel tank. Flint watched the plane peel off, then stood mesmerized, horrified, and angry as enormous orange blossoms of flame erupted from across the water on Ford Island.

Jesse Hirata had been in the U.S. Army only five weeks when he heard the first radio bulletins that morning. He climbed into a friend’s car and headed for his base at Schofield Barracks, but the traffic was snarled up all over Honolulu. Frustrated, Private Hirata, not yet in uniform, stepped out of the car to get a better look at the chaos of Pearl Harbor. While he stood watching, a shore officer stuck a pistol in his ribs and yelled to his superior, “This is a Jap. What do I do with him?” Jesse swallowed the cusswords rising in his throat and explained that he was an American soldier. They sent him on his way. When he arrived at Schofield, he found another scene of chaos—young men in uniform running in every direction, asking what they should do, unloading ammunition from trucks, furiously digging slit trenches in the parade grounds. Jesse headed for his tent, which he found riddled with bullets. Two spent Japanese bullets lay in his bed. He and some others set up a water-cooled machine gun in an open field, pointed it at the sky, and then simply stared at it. None of them had any idea how to use it.

. . .

At Atherton House eighteen-year-old Takejiro Higa was serving breakfast in the cafeteria when a white woman suddenly burst into the room, shouting, nearly incoherent, “War, war, coffee, coffee!” Someone handed her a cup of coffee, but her hands were shaking so badly most of the coffee splashed out onto her saucer. “I just dropped my husband off at Pearl Harbor,” the woman stammered. Takejiro, not yet comprehending what was going on, looked at the other boys working in the cafeteria, shook his head, and said softly, “Eh, this wahine, I think little bit cuckoo, yeah?”

Upstairs, Kats Miho was shaving when a commotion erupted downstairs—a bunch of fellows yelling, heavy footsteps running down the stairs, radios blaring. Curious, he leaned over a balustrade and shouted down Atherton House’s open stairwell, “Eh, what’s going on down there?” Someone shouted back, “Put on the radio! Listen to the radio!” Someone else yelled, “We’re being attacked!”

By the time he got to a radio, Kats realized he could just make out a low rumbling off in the distance. He turned on the radio. An announcer was screaming something about Pearl Harbor. With shaving cream still on his face, Kats scrambled out onto the roof of Atherton House and looked northwest toward Pearl, where black pillars of smoke billowed high into the sky. Takejiro Higa and other boys from downstairs joined him on the roof, some clutching binoculars. They still weren’t quite sure what they were seeing until a shell fell much nearer, in the vicinity of Nuʻuanu Avenue, just a mile away. Corrugated iron roofs cartwheeled through the sky. Then a thud. A flash. Smoke. A crater. And a fire, as another shell landed right in front of Atherton House.

Kats raced back to the radio in time to hear another urgent bulletin. All ROTC cadets were to report to the University of Hawaiʻi gym immediately. He threw on his khaki uniform and sprinted across University Avenue and onto the campus, joining a stream of young men, many of them Japanese American, rushing toward the gym.

Inside, five or six hundred boys were milling around noisily in adrenaline-fueled mass confusion. At first nobody seemed to be in charge, but Kats elbowed his way through the crowd and tracked down his ROTC squad leader, a thirty-year-old University of Hawaiʻi football coach, Francis Aiwohi. Someone dragged in some crates of old 1903 Springfield bolt-action rifles packed in Cosmoline, a thick, sticky petroleum-based rust preventative. Aiwohi set his squad to wiping the smelly concoction from the guns. Then they began trying to figure out how to fit the firing pins into the rifles. More confusion. Their training had not yet progressed to the point that they had yet been allowed to handle weapons. From time to time, they heard Japanese aircraft roaring low overhead. Nobody knew what to expect next or what, exactly, was happening outside. Aiwohi handed each of them a total of five cartridges for his rifle.

Then word began to spread, rippling through the circles of boys sitting anxiously on the hardwood floor of the gym clutching their guns. Reports had come in that Japanese paratroopers wearing blue uniforms were landing on St. Louis Heights, the hills right above campus. They rushed out into a field, peered up the hill, and sure enough, they could just make out figures moving through the keawe trees up on the heights. Someone ordered the stunned young men to form a skirmish line, advance to the base of the hills, and prepare to repel an enemy assault. Kats Miho stood staring up the hill, clutching his rifle, aghast.

TWO

> *I remember that many times I prayed for white skin secretly in my childhood. . . . It was an unwritten understanding that "if you have yellow skin you cannot be promoted beyond a certain level—you must be kept in your place."*
>
> FUMIYE MIHO

Home, for as long as Kats could remember, had been the small hotel his family ran in the port town of Kahului on the island of Maui. Small as it was—and a bit rickety with termites relentlessly at work on its underpinnings—the Miho Hotel was nevertheless a happy home, a vibrant place, pulsing year-round with interesting visitors and lively conversations. It was a place where guests and family alike could enjoy home-cooked, Hiroshima-style Japanese dinners, bathe in a large wood-fire-heated *ofuro*, fall asleep to the sound of palm fronds rustling in the trade winds, and awaken in the morning to the shrill whistles of small, stout steam locomotives pulling the sugar trains through town.

Two stories tall, with fourteen small guest rooms, the hotel stood wedged narrowly between Toda's Drug Store and Ah Fook's Grocery on Kahului's wide Main Street. The family lived at the back of the hotel, in small rooms centered on a larger tatami room. In the center of the hotel was a small but lush, open-air courtyard, where Kats's mother, Ayano, grew spectacular orchids and other tropical flowers—sweet explosions of pink, lavender, and red set among dark green foliage.

Kats's father, Katsuichi—a thin, dapper man with an impeccably trimmed mustache—presided over the hotel. A school principal by training in Japan, he'd become a businessman only by necessity after immigrating to Hawaiʻi. He studied Buddhism and Shintoism and the teachings of Confucius earnestly. He thought deeply about life. He spoke his opinions boldly and seldom shrank from controversy. Maui's large Japanese community held him in high esteem, and he spent most of his time bustling around town—one or another of his adult children driving him because his own driving was so erratic as to be life threatening—tending to community affairs, distributing a Japanese-language newspaper, cultivating Japanese culture, keeping the old ways alive. That was important to Katsuichi—staying in touch with family back home, celebrating Obon to honor his ancestors, conducting himself as he had been brought up to conduct himself.

He paid little heed to money. Extraordinarily generous, he wrote checks with abandon and with scant awareness of his account balance. He presided over the hotel, but it was Kats's mother who, by and large, ran the place. She watched the budget, paid the bills, supervised the small staff, and cooked the meals that made the Miho Hotel so popular with visiting businessmen from Honolulu and, occasionally, Tokyo.

Kahului was, for all practical purposes, a feudal town. Indeed, virtually all of Maui—with its vast sugarcane plantations—was a feudal fiefdom, ultimately owned and operated by the Baldwin family, descendants of Christian missionaries who had come to the island in the 1830s. The Baldwins had married into another missionary family, the Alexanders, and between the two of them the families had established a business and political dynasty that would effectively rule Maui well into the mid-twentieth century. They lived mostly apart from the rough-and-tumble life of Kahului, ensconced in several placid estates, mostly in Maui's tranquil up-country. They filled their leisure time playing polo, coddling their Pomeranian dogs, and feting one another and prominent visitors from the mainland with lavish *lūʻau* and rounds of golf at the Maui Country Club.

The Baldwins exerted their control over the island indirectly, through the corporate auspices of Alexander & Baldwin and its elaborate web of subsidiaries—principal among them the Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company and the Kahului Railroad Company. It was the latter of these, the KRR, that mattered most in Kahului. The town was located on Maui's principal deepwater port, and its business was stevedoring—mostly unloading vast quantities of sugar and pineapples from the KRR trains and then loading them onto mainland-bound freighters.

Like the plantations in the surrounding countryside, Kahului was physically divided into "camps," clusters of inexpensive houses owned by different subsidiaries of Alexander & Baldwin. As on the plantations, the camps were segregated along ethnic lines, and pretty much the only people who didn't live in them were white North Americans—haoles in the local vernacular. They lived in comfortable homes hidden behind tall hibiscus hedges along a stretch of white sand known to locals as Haole Beach.

The largest camps, in the center of town, belonged to the KRR and housed Japanese stevedores and their families. Other camps, on the outskirts, bore names hinting at the ethnicity or occupation of their residents. Raw Fish Camp, near the harbor, housed Portuguese fishermen. Alabama Camp was home to Black laborers from the Deep South. At Kolo Camp, Hawaiians lived, as much as they could, as their ancestors had, plying Kahului Bay in outrigger canoes, gathering in family groups to steam taro corms, and pounding poi on long, wooden slabs using ancient basalt pestles.

Along Main Street, the KRR allowed merchants—mostly Japanese and Chinese immigrants—to lease land and build private businesses like Ah Fook's Grocery, Toda's Drug Store, and the Miho Hotel. Owning such businesses made families like the Mihos "town people" rather than "camp people," and thus conferred on them a somewhat elevated social status. It was a precarious advantage, though. The leases on the land were short term, only month to month. The company could snatch them away at any time, for any reason, or for no reason at all.

The biggest of the big homes stretched out along Haole Beach belonged to William Walsh, manager of the KRR, manager in fact of everything and everyone in Kahului. The Mihos, like everyone in town, knew that if they wanted to stay in business for more than thirty days, they'd best not run afoul of Boss Walsh. Or, for that matter, his wife, Mabel.

Accommodations had to be made. Whenever the proprietor of the Kahului Theater, for example, knew that the Walshes might be coming to watch a movie, he sent ushers out into the street to watch for their arrival, working himself into a nervous sweat as he awaited them, refusing to start the film until they had arrived and were comfortably seated. Every New Year's Day, townspeople, the Mihos among them, brought offerings to the Walshes' big house down on the beach—a gallon of sake one year, the next year a dainty red lacquered dressing table that Mabel Walsh had admired in the lobby of the Miho Hotel. Paying a bit of tribute helped to safeguard the future.

THE STRATIFIED SOCIAL STRUCTURE of Kahului—and all of Maui—was replicated across the Hawaiian Islands. From the time the first white missionaries had arrived, the history of the islands had been all about the exploitation of the land and its people. Coming mostly from New England, missionaries like the Baldwin and Alexander families were imbued with the Puritan notion that wealth was an indicator of divine favor. By the late nineteenth century their children and grandchildren—while holding fast to that notion—were also embracing the tenets of social Darwinism, particularly the idea that the Anglo-Saxon race was naturally superior to other races and so best suited for controlling society.

As they and their descendants gained control of the land and began to plant sugarcane and pineapples, they quickly found that they were going to require a great deal of labor to work their fields. Given their view of the world, that meant finding people with darker complexions than their own to do the actual work. It was a view that defined race relations in the islands. The Honolulu businessman Walter Dillingham stated it bluntly in 1921, “When you are asked to go in the sun and into the canebrake away from the tropical breeze you are subjecting the white man to do something that the good Lord did not create him to do. If He had, the people of the world, I think, would have had a white pigment of the skin and not variegated colors.”

Initially, the planters turned to the native Hawaiians to work the fields. But there were far too few of them to meet the needs of the sprawling plantations. In 1853 a census of the Kingdom of Hawaiʻi had shown that Hawaiians made up 96 percent of the islands’ population. But by 1884, they made up only 50 percent. And by 1896, they constituted barely 25 percent. It wasn’t just that their numbers shrank but also that they were swamped by waves of immigrants whom the planters began to import, mostly from Asia—Chinese, Filipino, Korean, and Japanese contract laborers. By far the largest of those waves consisted of Japanese immigrants.

As the plantation system matured, the planters found it useful to play these ethnic groups off against one another. By segregating their housing into camps along racial lines, they adopted a kind of divide-and-conquer strategy, keeping their workforce from organizing in any meaningful way and fostering perceived resentments among the different groups as they competed for scant wages. It was an efficient, often ruthless system that enabled a small oligarchy of powerful families to wield enormous power over the lives of those who made them wealthy.

DESPITE THE DEEP RACIAL and economic inequities of life in Kahului, Kats Miho—like many of the camp kids he grew up with—had an exuberant childhood. Born in 1922, he was the baby of the family, the last of eight children, and much doted on by his older siblings, particularly his sister Fumiye and his brother Katsuaki.* The Miho Hotel was perpetually full of rambunctious young Mihos, all of them bursting with energy, optimism, and a determination to leave their mark on the world. They took much of their worldview from their father and from a central element of his philosophy—maintaining the right posture in the eternal dance between *giri* and *ninjo*. *Giri,* one's obligation to follow the strict rules and norms of society, often clashed with *ninjo*, one's natural feeling of warmth and compassion for fellow humans. Much in life, Katsuichi taught his children, depended on exhibiting both qualities, each in the correct measure, each at the correct time. But perhaps equally, the Miho kids modeled their behavior on their father's disregard for another widely held Japanese tenet, *otonashi*, the necessity of keeping one's place, remaining quiet, avoiding the appearance of knowing too much or voicing too many opinions. The Miho kids were all about getting involved, voicing their opinions, taking charge. And keeping their place was the last thing they intended to do.

In this happy milieu, Kats grew up mostly shoeless and carefree. One of his principal pleasures, in fact, was playing football barefoot, Hawaiian style. The games were wild affairs, boys scrabbling with one another in swirling clouds of red Maui dust, without benefit of helmets or pads or shoes. During the summers he sometimes had to arise at 2:00 in the morning to work in the cane fields, hoeing weeds or cutting cane until 2:00 in the afternoon and counting himself lucky if he earned a dollar for the twelve hours of work. But on weekends he spent long happy days and evenings on Maui's coral-sand beaches with his Boy Scout troop. There the boys threw themselves into the warm surf with abandon, wrestled in the water, lingered in the waves until well after dark, then cooked corned beef and cabbage over campfires. They strummed ukuleles and guitars, sang, gazed up at the vast night sky of Hawaiʻi, and talked quietly and confidentially as the surf pounded the sand just beyond the flickering light of their fires, speaking now not in their proper school English but in the language they had always spoken among themselves, their easy, natural Hawaiian pidgin. When they couldn't get to the beach, they fished for *manini*, yellow surgeonfish, under the pier in Kahului Harbor, using bent pins for hooks, or they gathered little sand crabs that their mothers would coat with batter and drop into hot sesame oil to make sweet, crunchy tempura.

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*All told, Kats had four older brothers—Katsuto (born and raised in Japan), Katsuro, Katsuso (who went by Paul), and Katsuaki. Their father had given them all names beginning, like his own, with "katsu," as a means of expressing the familial loyalty they owed to him and to one another.

On weekdays Kats attended Kahului's public, English-language school. In the afternoons he attended Japanese-language school, where he struggled without much success to learn his parents' language but took a deep interest in *shushin*, Japanese ethics. On Sundays, the Miho family put on shoes, dressed up in fancy clothes, and went to the Kahului Union Church, where they sang songs with lyrics like "Jesus loves me, this I know." After the services they walked down the street to the Buddhist temple, where a priest in robes beckoned them in. They removed their shoes and sat on tatami mats while the priest, to everyone's amusement, sometimes led them in singing, "Buddha loves me, this I know."

Once a month or so, trucks drove through town preceded by rattling drummers and young men distributing leaflets announcing Japanese silent films to be played out in the cane fields that evening. On those warm Maui nights, Kats and his brother Katsuaki crawled through the cane on their bellies to avoid detection, quietly swatting away cane spiders the size of their hands, then slithered under canvas barriers to watch the movies. The films—usually samurai movies like *The Forty-Seven Ronin* and *The Treasury of the Loyal Retainers*—flickered on white sheets while professional "movie talkers," or *benshi,* narrated them in Japanese with dramatic flourishes. Most of the Japanese was lost on the Miho brothers, but watching the films, they absorbed elements of a warrior tradition that would eventually serve them in ways they could not yet imagine.

It was the Maui County Fair, though, that Kats dreamed about and

The Miho kids on Maui: (*left to right*) Paul, Kats, Fumiye, Katsuaki

anticipated all year long. Like fairs on the mainland, it was a feast for the senses, with the lowing of cows and squealing of piglets, the smoky scent of barbecue and grilled onions, the wheezing melodies and shrill whistles of a steam-powered carousel. There were amateur boxing matches, trapeze artists, horse races, livestock exhibitions, and dog shows. Kids gobbled popcorn and hot dogs, guzzled cold Coke and root beer, and sank their faces into pink swirls of cotton candy.

But this wasn't Iowa. Along with the cotton candy, Kats and his friends clutched paper cones of shave ice, served Japanese style, with a scoop of sweet bean paste at the bottom of the cup. Instead of funnel cakes, they lined up for Portuguese malasadas fresh out of hot oil and dusted with cinnamon and local sugar. They scooped the sweet orange flesh out of ripe papayas. In the agricultural exhibits they eyed mounds of mangoes and pineapples and *'uala*, Okinawan purple sweet potatoes. At the sugarcane exhibit, wicked-sharp cane knives flashed in the sun as young men raced to see who could cut the most seed cane in a set period of time.

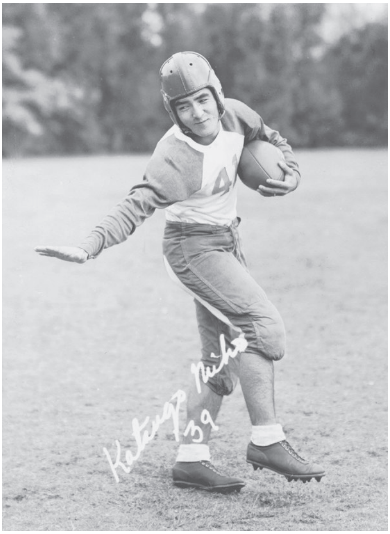
The fair also offered Kats a unique pleasure, one that would affect him later in life. Nearly all the sideshow people—the Bearded Lady, the World's Tallest Human, the Contortionist, Freckles the Clown, the Man with Two Stomachs—stayed at the Miho Hotel, drawn by Ayano's cooking and a desire to stay concealed from the townspeople lest they give them a free show.

They were kind to Kats. For hours at a time, they sat around card tables among the orchids in the hotel's garden courtyard, smoking cigarettes, playing dominoes, sipping sake, and regaling Kats with tall tales of carnival life. The Man with Two Stomachs demonstrated how he could swallow objects and regurgitate particular items on demand. The Bearded Lady confided that she was not, actually, a lady at all. The World's Tallest Human, an affable kid from Memphis, Willie Camper, proudly showed Kats his size 33 shoes and how he could hold a dozen eggs, unstacked, in the palm of his twelve-inch-long hand. At first, Kats thought the sideshow guests were funny, something to snicker about later with his friends down on the beach, but as he matured, and they kept coming back to the hotel each year, Kats soon came to empathize with them. Seeing the world through the eyes of "freaks," understanding their humanity, feeling the warmth of their goodwill toward him, added to what Kats had learned from his father about treating others with compassion.

It was when he entered Maui High, though, that Kats really came into his own. Located in the foothills of Mount Haleakala, Maui's massive shield volcano, where the trade winds kept things cool most days, the school was an improbable-looking place, its graceful, vine-covered California mission-revival architecture rising monumentally out of a vast sea of sugarcane like the temple of a lost civilization. And it was a kind of temple. Every school morning, hundreds of students arrived at a flagpole in front of the school, many of them walking in barefoot from the plantations on dusty footpaths among the cane fields. A corps of buglers summoned them to gather in a circle. They put their hands over their hearts and recited the Pledge of Allegiance as the American flag was slowly raised. Then they ascended a grand staircase to the main campus and trooped off to their first classes of the morning.

And the classes were exceptional. Aside from its architecture, what made Maui High special was its faculty. Inspired young teachers from the mainland taught Homer, English literature, Latin, astronomy, philosophy, cellular biology, and world history to the sons and daughters of plantation workers and railroad officials alike. The curriculum was so rich that even some of the Baldwin children enrolled, forsaking the usual practice among the planters of sending their children to private boarding schools on the mainland.

Right from the start, Kats threw himself enthusiastically into the life of the school. He played football—now with a uniform, a helmet, and proper shoes with cleats. He joined clubs, performed in plays, and got involved in student government, where he quickly discovered that he had a knack for public speaking and leadership. For the next four years, he spoke his opinion loudly and boldly in class discussions. He reached out and formed connections. And by his senior year he found himself wielding a gavel as the president of a student body of just over a thousand students. His friends, amused and impressed by his success, took to calling him Prezi.



Kats Miho at Maui High

After graduating, Kats spent a year working as a maintenance man at the Maui Pineapple cannery in Kahului to save up some money. In the fall of 1941—following in the footsteps of his older siblings Katsuaki and Fumiye—he moved to Honolulu, enrolled at the university, and moved into Atherton House.

And that's how he came to be there on the morning of the day that would change everything he had ever known, that would shut down the Miho Hotel, separate his parents, cost him a brother, isolate his sister, challenge his identity, and send him halfway around the world deep into the landscape of a nightmare.

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The news had gotten around that my father was going to be taken soon after. And so my father was all prepared and he was dressed in his coat and tie. They had these gun bayonets. They said, "Hey! You are arrested! Come with us!" And they just grabbed him. Oh, we were all so scared, and we didn't know what to do.

LAURA IIDA MIHO

In 1941, there were forty-five million radios in the United States, and on any given Sunday most of them were likely to be turned on. Radio programming was enormously popular throughout the country, particularly on Sunday afternoons, after church, when life offered working Americans an opportunity to finally sit down, pick up some knitting needles or a newspaper or a panful of peas in need of shelling, and enjoy a broadcast. But when the first bulletins about Pearl Harbor came crackling across the airwaves that day, whatever they had been doing, whatever they had been listening to, faded instantly into insignificance for millions of Americans and their allies around the world. In Los Angeles and in Omaha, in London and in Toronto, people leaned closer to their radios, beckoned others to gather around, and listened intently. In those first few minutes, most of them understood that whatever else the news signified, it meant that a generation, their generation, was about to be defined forever.

ONE OF THE RADIOS TURNED on that day was in a small apartment over a small commercial laundry in a beaten-down neighborhood called Hillyard, on the shabby side of Spokane, Washington.

Hillyard was a rough-hewn place, a mile or so of old brick storefronts and small, wood-frame houses squatting on weedy lots alongside the sprawling five-hundred-acre rail yard of James J. Hill's Great Northern Railway. With a roundhouse capable of holding twenty locomotives at a time, massive sheds for the manufacture and repair of more locomotives, enormous tanks for storing oil, a lumber mill for making railroad ties, gravel pits, machine shops, and rows of boxcars with their wheels removed and converted into cheap housing for workers, the Great Northern yard was a bedlam of clanging steel, shrieking whistles, and engines belching steam, day and night. It was a world of grime and grease and grit, of soot and sweat, of perpetually soiled overalls and grubby work shirts—the kind of place that needed a laundry nearby.

Just half a block from the yard, the Hillyard Laundry occupied the downstairs portion of a narrow two-story building on East Olympic Avenue. The laundry's busy proprietors, Kisaburo and Tori Shiosaki, were at their ease that morning after another long week of work. Six days a week, the Shiosakis arose well before dawn to begin their sixteen-hour workdays, firing up the laundry's huge boilers, operating the whirring extractor that spun most of the water out of hundreds of pounds of wet clothes and bedsheets, wrestling the still wet laundry into two large electric dryers, pulling it all out, and then ironing, shaking, and folding it, until it was finally time to open the shop at 7:00 a.m. and greet the day's first customers.

Most of the Shiosakis' customers, indeed most of Hillyard's residents, were recent immigrants—mainly German, Irish, Scandinavian, or Italian laborers, the majority of whom worked for the Great Northern in one capacity or another. A few were Japanese, from a colony of railroad workers who lived in the boxcars on the other side of the tracks in a place called Dogtown, the only place in the Spokane area that could be called a step down from Hillyard. Whichever side of the tracks they came from, their customers were almost universally fond of the Shiosakis, whom they called Kay and Mrs. Kay, monikers that the pair liked and happily embraced for themselves. Pretty much everyone in town enjoyed stopping in for a few minutes to exchange pleasantries and a bit of morning gossip with Kay and Mrs. Kay before they dropped off their laundry and got on with their day's work.

Tori and Kisaburo Shiosaki at work in the Hillyard Laundry

But that December Sunday was a day for resting up, for Kisaburo to sit back, read the *Spokane Spokesman-Review*, and enjoy a few of the big White Owl cigars that he favored. It was a cold, mostly clear day in Hillyard, not quite freezing, but just on the edge of it. The snow from a storm the week before had mostly melted, but the streets were still icy, the ground rock hard, the vegetation in James J. Hill Park over on Nebraska Avenue brown and withered. Driven by a chilling north wind, a few high clouds scudded rapidly across a nearly white sky. Small as it was—just two bedrooms, a sitting room, and a kitchen—the apartment over the laundry was pleasant, cozy, and warm, the wet heat rising from the big boilers downstairs, steaming up the windows. And it was full of the usual comfortable Sunday morning smells—eggs frying, toast browning, tea brewing on the stove. If she had time, Tori Shiosaki thought she might go downtown to the Methodist Mission Church in Spokane to visit with some of the Japanese ladies there. After a week of struggling to communicate with her customers in English, she always enjoyed being able to speak Japanese.

The Shiosakis' seventeen-year-old son, Fred, had turned the radio on. He wasn't really looking forward to the next morning. The school week usually dragged for Fred. He was a competent but not particularly enthusiastic student at John R. Rogers High. He was vice president of the school's photography club and popular on the track team, but he really lived for his weekends, particularly his Saturdays. His Saturday mornings, like his weekday mornings, began at dawn with chores, mostly cutting and splitting the seemingly endless supply of firewood required for the boilers, but by afternoon he was free to play baseball with his friends in one of the town's many vacant lots, take photographs around town, ride his bike down to the Rialto Theater on Diamond Avenue to catch a matinee western, or wander among the sagebrush and ponderosa pines up in Spokane's dry, dusty hills, plinking at tin cans with his .22 rifle.

At five feet six, Fred was a slight, bespectacled young man, light-skinned with a tendency to pink up in the cheeks when the weather turned cold or he got excited. He had a twinkle in his eye, a ready smile, a surprisingly hearty laugh, and a ready willingness to poke fun at himself. He was polite and courteous as a first instinct. In a tough town like Hillyard—and it was a very tough town, particularly if you were a kid trying to hold your own out on its potholed streets—he looked at first glance like someone you could steamroll, pick a fight with, and walk away a winner. More than a few Hillyard boys had made that calculation over the years, and nearly all of them had quickly come to regret it.

For all his genuine good nature, Fred had a core of steel. If someone tried to take advantage of him, the politeness melted away in an instant. He wound up in so many scuffles that his father threatened to stop buying him new eyeglasses if he kept coming home with smashed pairs. At fifteen dollars a pair, it was straining the family budget. More often than not, the fights arose because in the ethnic stew of Hillyard race and ethnicity were often a bully's first and most potent line of attack. Fred would not abide being bullied, and above all he would not abide being called a Jap. It didn't matter a whit how big the boy hurling the epithet at him was. Defiance would rise in Fred like a cobra. With narrowed eyes and a clenched jaw, he would hiss out the first cussword he could think of, clench his fists, and go at the offender in a flash. He didn't always win, but he never backed down.

AT 11:30 A.M., Fred was listening to the opening of *The World Today*, a regular CBS news show, when an agitated voice abruptly broke into the broadcast: "Go ahead, New York!" Then a different voice, the show's anchor, John Charles Daly, was suddenly on the air. This voice was urgent, crackling through the speaker: "The Japanese have attacked Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, by air, President Roosevelt has just announced." Fred looked up, startled, trying to comprehend it. Daly went on, "The attack also was made on all naval and military activities on the principal island of O'ahu."* Fred called to his father in the next room, "Hey, Pop. The Japanese have attacked Hawaii." Fred's parents, his brother Floyd, and his sister, Blanche, all gathered around Fred and the radio. His parents suddenly looked drawn, pale, tense. After listening for a while, Kisaburo murmured, "It's not going to last long." But he didn't look convinced, and Fred couldn't decipher what exactly his father meant. Why wouldn't it last long? Troubling thoughts began to worm their way through his mind: What would happen to the laundry? What would his friends and neighbors do? What would happen at school the next day?

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*Though Daly actually mispronounced the island's name as "Ohau."

As the noon hour passed, Fred put his homework aside unfinished and sat in front of the radio stunned as the word began to pour out, over and over again, sounding more and more venomous each time. "The Japs." "The dirty Japs." "The dirty yellow Japs." This time, though, the word wasn't coming from adolescent bullies on the streets of Hillyard; it was coming from adults, from stern-voiced news announcers, from military officials issuing emergency proclamations, from figures of respect and authority. It was serious, sober, cold, official, and it seemed to be coming from the heart of America itself.

For Fred's parents the word, and the tone, came as no surprise. They had traveled a long, hard road from their previous lives in Japan. Since arriving in America they had been mistreated often enough, heard the word hurled at them often enough to know that as friendly as their customers in Hillyard might be, much of the country had long since hardened its heart against people who looked like them. Now, instinctively, Tori Shiosaki pulled down the blinds on the apartment's two little upstairs windows looking out onto the mean streets of Hillyard.

IN JAPAN, it was already December 8 when word of the attack reached civilians going about their morning business. Kats Miho's sister Fumiye was in suburban Tokyo, standing in the classroom where she taught English at a women's college when another teacher, a young Russian named Miss Zabriaski, rushed into her classroom.

"Miss Miho, Miss Miho! War between Japan, America!"

Fumiye smiled and laughed her off. "No, no, that's just propaganda," she said, and went on teaching. Miss Zabriaski, with little English, looked exasperated, stuttered something in Russian, and ran from the room.

Fumiye—fed up with the racial discrimination she had faced growing up on Maui—had come to Japan in the spring of 1940, shortly after graduating from the University of Hawaiʻi. The impetus for the move had come when a famous Oxford-educated Buddhist scholar, Dr. Junjiro Takakusu, visited the university, saw Fumiye's extraordinary academic potential, and suggested that she enroll for graduate studies at Japan's most prestigious university, Tokyo Imperial. Fumiye had enthusiastically embraced the chance and set sail for Japan almost without a second thought. Only when she arrived in Yokohama did she discover that her new mentor had overlooked one crucial detail: women were not allowed to enroll at Tokyo Imperial. Nevertheless, she moved in with her older sister Tsukie and her husband, a dentist.

Fumiye threw herself into her new life. She found jobs teaching English part-time. She took advanced lessons in ikebana and dutifully wore kimonos for tea ceremony every Friday. She developed a deep interest in Kabuki. She stopped speaking English at home with Tsukie.* And she thrilled to the rhythms and opportunities of her new life. For the first time, she felt a fully fledged part of the society in which she lived, as if she truly belonged and would not be judged by her appearance or held back by her race.

She knew that tensions between the country where she had been born and the country where she chose to live were on the rise, but she paid little attention to the saber rattling that seemed to emanate every day from the Japanese press. It seemed like the hyperbolic rhetoric of old men, political men, and it seemed incomprehensible that her two worlds would collide in any real way. She knew too many good, kind people on both sides in both countries. So when Miss Zabriaski rushed into her classroom shouting about war that morning, Fumiye had immediately put it out of her mind and turned her attention to her students.

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*Tsukie had been born in Japan but had grown up on Maui and attended Maui High, where she went by Rosaline. But because Japanese-born immigrants could not become American citizens, she had returned to Japan in 1934.

But walking home that afternoon, she began to realize that something unusual was, in fact, going on. People were gathered in small knots on the streets, agitated, their conversations animated. As she passed open windows, she heard martial music blaring from radios. Lines had formed in front of shops selling more radios. People were smiling for a change. There was something electric in the air. Then she passed a radio airing an official bulletin from NHK, Japan's national broadcaster. Japan had "entered into a situation of war with the United States and Britain in the western Pacific before dawn." On a street corner she saw a shocking headline; apparently the entire U.S. Navy had been destroyed in Hawaiʻi.

Fumiye ran the rest of the way home, burst into the house, and fell into her sister's arms, the two young women sobbing, trying to comfort each other, quaking, wondering aloud and fearing silently what was happening to their parents and siblings back in Hawaiʻi.

DESPITE THE FLASHES on the radio, the news reached many people in the United States that day more slowly than one might have expected. Because it was a Sunday, many Americans were still at church or in movie theaters for early afternoon matinees. A few theaters flashed cards on the screen or made announcements over the PA systems, but many didn't. Thousands of moviegoers walked out into the light of day later that afternoon and were stunned to find newsboys shouting and holding up extra editions of the papers with banner headlines like the *Oakland Tribune*'s—JAPS DECLARE WAR; HAWAII BOMBED, HEAVY LIFE LOSS—or the *San Francisco Chronicle*'s simpler, four-inch-tall proclamation: WAR. For others, the news arrived by telephone as family members reached out to one another. Young women in telephone exchanges around the country worked frantically to make connections, but there were not nearly enough operators working on a Sunday afternoon to keep up with the load. In quiet neighborhoods, on farms and in towns, word traveled by mouth, directly from one neighbor to another,