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Dramatic Publishing

NOTHING IS THE SAME

By

Y YORK



Dramatic Publishing

Woodstock, Illinois • England • Australia • New Zealand

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for Jane Campbell

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“First produced by Honolulu Theatre for Youth”

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The story of the play is original—these characters and their stories are invented—but the world of the play and the fabric from which it is stitched comes from the people who talked to me for this project.

Sadao Honda was the first respondent to tell me about the pleasures of “the river,” more formally known as Lake Wilson, diving from railroad ties into the cool waters of the artificial lake. Howard Oda told the students of Wahiawa Elementary School about the “gas mask test,” and Edith Gima demonstrated its use. Albert Montalbo and Henry Lee told about shining shoes: Albert told about the GI who bought him an inner tube; Henry told about sneaking into the army. Betty Tucker told about the house searches to make sure nobody had more than two hundred dollars on hand. Gladys Otsuji told me about her father checking the water supply. Hiroko Yamaki told me about peewee, and later, Gilbert and Edith Gima gave me peewee lessons, and Gilbert cut up a broom handle for us so we could play. Gilbert told me about his father’s farm. Edith told us about doing laundry, while Henry and Ruth told about laundry service, which in 1941 was far more labor-intensive than any modern American child can imagine. One respondent told me about his father’s year-long internment on Sand Island. Another’s father and grandfather were sent to camps on the mainland. Several people told me about relatives’ experiences in Korea, living under Japanese rule. Everyone told stories about life in Hawai’i, in Wahiawa, prior to 1941, and after, when they survived under a cloud of fear;

they told about hatred, and forgiveness and love, joys and triumphs, both large and small.

I am grateful for the experience of talking to the respondents. I am grateful for the opportunity to write the play, and to HTY and the TCG-Pew Charitable Trust for their faith in me and their support during the two years I worked on the project. I am grateful to the Kennedy Center and New Visions/New Voices for bringing my Hawai'i team to D.C. for a workshop. I am grateful to Yokanaan Kearns for fixing my grammar and to Noel Bragg for his faith in the project. I am grateful for the support of the Arizona Memorial for twice helping to mount the play in Honolulu, and to The Oki Foundation for its support in Seattle. For me, from this experience, I am not the same. From my deepest best self, *thank you, gracias, arrigato, kamsahamnida, salamat*, and in the language of our hosts, *mahalo*.

respondents

Edith Gima, Gilbert Gima, Sadao Honda, Henry Lee,
Mr. & Mrs. Albert Montalbo
and their daughter, Kathy Marzan,
Howard Oda, Gladys Otsuji, Ruth Mack, Betty Tucker
and Hiroko Yamaki.

PRODUCTION HISTORY

In May 2003, a very rough first draft of *Nothing Is the Same* was read for the fourth- and fifth-grade students and their teachers at Wahiawa Elementary School on Oah`u, Hawai`i. In May 2004, a draft was workshopped and read at New Visions/New Voices at the Kennedy Center in Washington, D.C. In September 2004, Honolulu Theatre for Youth premiered the play at Richardson Theatre on Fort Shafter on O`ahu with the following artistic team:

George BULLDOG
Bobi. JANICE TERUKINA
Mits. JASON KANDA
Daniel REB BEAU ALLEN

Director MARK LUTWAK
Set Designer ALFREDO LISTA GARMA
Costume Designer CASEY CAMERON
Lighting Designer JOHN PARKINSON
Sound Designer BABATUNJI HEATH
Properties Designer SARA WARD
Stage Manager ROLINDA EMCH

In September 2005, HTY remounted the play for O`ahu audiences and brought that production to Seattle Children`s Theatre for an extended run. The personnel changes were as follows:

Bobi. JACQUIE C.Y. YANG
Mits TROY APOLSTOL

Lighting GEOFF KORF
Stage Manager MATHIAS MAAS

NOTHING IS THE SAME

A Play in Two Acts
For 3 Men and 1 Woman

CHARACTERS:

GEORGE (male) Filipino heritage

BOBI (female) Korean heritage

MITO (male) Japanese heritage

DANIEL (male) Korean heritage

All are eleven years old.

TIME-LOCATION:

Wahiawa, Hawai'i, located near Wheeler Air Force Base and Schofield Barracks on the northern side of O'ahu. December, 1941, to March, 1942.

Note on the language. This is written in Hawai'i-Creole English, which is much more accessible aloud.

See pronunciation tips and definitions on page 53.

ACT ONE

SCENE ONE

(A churchyard. Early morning. GEORGE draws a circle in the dirt with a stick. BOBI enters.)

BOBI. Hey, George, look dis, look dis.

GEORGE. Go home, Bobi.

BOBI. You gotta look dis.

GEORGE. I tink I hear your mahdah calling you.

BOBI. You nevah guess what I get.

GEORGE. You right, I nevah guess—I nevah like guess.

BOBI. I get one cateye.

GEORGE. Whachu did to your cat?!

BOBI. Look at um. *(She shows him a marble.)*

GEORGE *(impressed)*. Ho!

BOBI. Good, yeah?

GEORGE. *Nice* dis. But not from your cat—

BOBI. No, but from one noddah cat.

GEORGE. Look like one marble, dis.

BOBI *(caught)*. Look little bit like dat. Dis *cateye* wen start out his life in da eye of one god—

GEORGE. I not going listen—

BOBI. One dark night in Africas...da ground shake wid fire...errybody stay shaking in dea beds, nobody come out fo see what shake da ground or make da fire. Den when da sun come out and errybody feel safe, onacounta

get light again, errybody go outside and find one tall black cat god. (*Triumphantly.*) Dis eye come from dat god was made outta stone.

GEORGE. ...Sound more like da hist'ry lesson on Egypt Miz Hirogashi wen give.

BOBI (*caught*). Sound little bit like dat.

GEORGE. Come on—we play marbles—

BOBI. No. You play fo keeps. I no can lose um.

GEORGE. You like play wid da guys, you gotta *take da risk*. Us guys take da risk. Lass cheer my Christmas keenie, was one good marble.

BOBI. *Was* one good marble.

GEORGE. I coulda kepp um in my pocket, nevah show, if I scared. If I too scared fo put um in play. Too scared fo *take da risk*.

BOBI (*mocking him*). Yeah. You wen take da risk all right—you wen *lose* dat good marble. Mits get um now.

GEORGE. Yeah, but I *took da risk*.

(*Enter MITS, he has overheard them.*)

MIT. "Samurai nevah take his eye off da marble."

GEORGE. Hey, Mits.

MIT. "Samurai know da enemy marble going *make* die dead." You ready fo play, George?

BOBI. *I* ready. I get one new kine marble.

MIT. Show me.

BOBI (*showing*). No can touch um.

MIT. Nice cateye, dat.

GEORGE. You wen see dem before?

MIT. Castner's store got um.

GEORGE. "Eye of one god." Bobi, you such a liar.

BOBI. You nevah believe um, so no count as one lie.

MIT. Cost one quarter, dem.

BOBI (*impressed*). Ho— Expensive da present.

GEORGE. Dis your birfday?

BOBI (*caught*). ...I don know.

GEORGE. Bobi...whachu wen do?

BOBI. Dis my Christmas present. I wen open um.

GEORGE. Hala! You going get lickens.

BOBI. Was going die from da wrapped-present disease.

Could hear someting calling me from inside da box.

“Come get me, come play wid me, I lonely.” I going put um back before Christmas. Das why I no can take da risk. My fahdah see dat empty present box, I get lickens fo sure.

GEORGE. Fo’get her, Mits. We go play.

MIT. Who wen draw dis circle?

BOBI. George wen draw um.

MIT. All *hamajang*, dis. (*MIT* picks up a stick to redraw the circle.) Gotta concentrate when you draw da circle.

Stand like dis wid chor stick touching da ground, den go all da way round like dis, nevah move your arm—move your whole body in one circle. I *stay* da stick.

BOBI. You no look like da stick—

MIT. I *stay* da stick. I stay da circle.

BOBI. Ho! Dat one round circle now.

MIT (*bows, a sort of prayer*). “Today, I know I going lose my marbles. I know I going home wid no marbles.”

BOBI (*derisive*). Maybe you wen lose your marbles already... (*MIT* scowls at her.) I no mean nutting by dat.

MIT. Wea da ress, George?

GEORGE. Das all I wen bring today.

BOBI. Why? You too scared fo *take da risk*?

GEORGE (*a threat*). Bobi, you like stay or you like go?

BOBI. I like stay. Quiet, me... Quiet like one stone. Quiet like one still night. One Silent Night, me!

GEORGE. Talk talk alla time talking, you. (*He misses.*)
Shoots.

MIT. I go. Stand back. Samurai need plenny room fo shoot.

BOBI. Ho, you going lose, George.

MIT. “Samurai take up one marble, da marble come one extension of his arm. Da Samurai stay da marble.”
(*MIT shoots and wins.*)

GEORGE. Ho, I no like lose dat one.

BOBI. You like I make some distraction, George?

MIT. “Da Samurai no can hear da distracting talking talking from da noisy *wahine* on da sidelines.” (*MIT shoots and wins.*)

BOBI. Who da noisy *wahine*? I not noisy.

GEORGE. Ho, I no like lose dat one, too.

BOBI. Should nevah play fo keeps wid one Samurai.

MIT. “Da lass lass, very lass marble. Da marble stay one long way away from da shoota, but da Samurai no fear nutting. Take in air, let out air, ready fo shoot.” (*Shoots and wins.*)

GEORGE. I get no more.

BOBI (*disappointed*). Mits da winnah—errytime Mits da winnah—like one skipping record.

GEORGE. Mits, you going show me da Samurai kine?

MIT. No can. You Filipino— (*Proudly.*) —Samurai only Japanee.

(*Enter DANIEL.*)

DANIEL. Hey! Why you here, Mits? Not your church.

GEORGE. ...Not my church, too.

DANIEL. More your church den his church—Buddahhead.

MIT. Howzit, Daniel?

DANIEL. No talk wid me. Who wen make dis circle in my churchyard?

MIT. I wen make um.

DANIEL. Da minister going make you pray to Jesus, he see you here.

MIT. I going go before church time. Why you here so early, Daniel?

DANIEL. No ask me nutting, you. Go Japanese school, you, stay away from here. (*To BOBI.*) Da minister wen come yet?

GEORGE. Yeah, I wen see him come in before.

DANIEL. I here fo da sugah donuts. He put um out fo da pigeons. Dey real good and fresh. I going get um before da pigeons.

BOBI. Dey not fo da pigeons doze donuts—

GEORGE. Shut your mout, Bobi!

DANIEL. Da minister wen say dey fo da pigeons. Whachu talking about, mosquito?

BOBI. I talking about—

GEORGE. She talking about talking. She don know what she stay talking about.

DANIEL. She like get um, das why. Stay here, you. Da sugah donuts, dey mines. (*Exits.*)

BOBI. Ho! Dat guy, he no like you, Mits.

MIT. His fahdah Korean, das why— He hate da Japanese.

BOBI. My fahdah Korean—we no hate nobody.

GEORGE. Mean Daniel, das why.

BOBI (*realizing*). Hey—dey no more food, das why. He going eat da sugah donuts—

GEORGE. Yeah, you crazy or what? You was going tell how da minister put um out fo da poor kids. You call Daniel one poor kid, you going stay one dead kid.

MIT. I not scared him. Samurai not scared, das why.

GEORGE. Mits, I no care I not Japane. I like you show me da power.

BOBI. I show, George. (*Tries to move like MITS.*) “Ho, I one Samurai me—”

MIT. Hey—no can!... I show—little bit I show. (*Demonstrates.*) Look dis. Dis marble on da ground, all separate dis one. But when I pick um up—no more separate. Da marble wen come one parta da arm—connected tru da eye.

(There is the far-off sound of rumbling. They look toward the sound. They are initially surprised and quite indignant.)

BOBI. Look dea.

GEORGE. Da army stay making maneuvers.

BOBI. Hey, not allowed.

GEORGE (*to planes*). ...Hey...whachu doing?

BOBI (*shouts to planes*). Go home. No can fly today. Dis Sunday.

GEORGE. How come dey’s flying here? Dey supposed to go da oddah ways.

MIT. Close, dey coming. Low, too.

BOBI. Hey, look dea. Da army wen paint one red circle on da airplane. Too real dat kine. (*The sound of bombs.*)

...Hey, what dey stay doing—? *(To planes.)* Whachu stay doing?!

GEORGE. Hey, no shoot ovah here. You stupid, you stupid—

BOBI. He coming, he coming—we going *make* we going *make*.

(More bombs and shooting. While the others duck, MITS raises his arms toward the approaching airplane. The plane veers and recedes in the distance. MITS is frozen, his arms raised.)

DANIEL *(entering)*. Dey going ovah da houses! I going check my house! *(DANIEL exits. BOBI throws her marble toward the planes.)*

BOBI *(crying)*. You buggahs, you flying buggahs. *(BOBI exits. The sound of bombs and planes in the distance continues. GEORGE picks up BOBI's marble.)*

GEORGE. Bobi— *(But she is gone; he pockets the marble.)* Hey, Mits, take down your arms. *(GEORGE pulls MITS to the ground.)* We wait here til *pau* da bombs. Mits, you not breathing.

MITs *(gasps)*. George. Why dey wen do dat? Why da army bomb us?

GEORGE. You crazy? Dey not da army. Dey da Japanese.

SCENE TWO

(The churchyard, one week later, Sunday. BOBI enters looking for her cateye.)

BOBI. Wea you stay hiding? Wea you stay hiding? I like put chu back in your box before Christmas. *(She gives up, starts to play.)* “Giant monstas in da sky breathing fire ova da land. Da peoples try fo run, try fo hide, but get too many monstas spitting too much fire. Try fo trow rocks, try fo pray— Monstas more strong den rocks, more strong den gods. Houses burn down wid fire, boats sink, plenny peoples die. Da res stay scared da monstas going come back and—” *(She makes bomb noises.)*

(GEORGE enters.)

GEORGE. You going scare da kids.

BOBI. No kids. Errybody wen go already. Your church ovah, too?

GEORGE. We nevah wen go mass. My mahdah stay too scared fo leave da house. Dey all stay sleeping now, so I wen sneak out.

BOBI. My mahdah scared da baby going come early.

GEORGE. She okay?

BOBI. She okay. No baby. Ho—one crying baby going make me *lolo*... I so sicka dat house. Nevah go outside fo one week. Was going kill my sistah if one more hour stuck inside wid her. She talk talk, alla time talking.

GEORGE. Jus like da oddah sistah.

BOBI. ...Whachu mean? I da oddah sistah.

GEORGE. Nevah mind.

BOBI. Hey, George, da soldiers from Wheeler wen shoot down one plane.

GEORGE. I know dat!

BOBI. Yeah, but you don know dey wen bury da Japanese pilot inside da cemetery.

GEORGE. No can.

BOBI. Can. Dey no tell wea onacounta dey scared some Wahiawa peoples going dig um up and “desecrate da body.”

GEORGE. What dat mean, “desecrate da body”?

BOBI. ...Make *shishi* on um?

GEORGE. Wahiawa peoples no “desecrate” nutting.

BOBI. Dey do when dey mad. Was bad here da shooting, but da harbor was one disaster. Dey never had one chance, da ships. Da sky wen fill up wid planes, all dropping bombs. Had fire errywea you look, den black smoke fill da whole sky, and so loud could make you cry fo quiet. Lasted da whole day dat sound and nevah stop nighttime. Thousands of soldiers wen die right away. Da ships wen sink. Dey wen *huli*, belly side to da sky. Had men still alive in dea. Climb to da bottom of da ships, tap tap fo help, but no can—tap tap—

GEORGE. Shut your mout, Bobi— I not going listen—

BOBI. True, dis—we wen pray fo dem in church! Know what else? My sistah wen get one bullet hole in da middle her face.

GEORGE. You one mosquito buzzing round my head. I going swat you.

BOBI. I not one mosquito.

GEORGE. No, you one liar! I jus saw your sistah! She no more hole in her face. You alla time lie.

BOBI (*angry*). ...You bettah tell your fahdah, be careful when he go check da watah tower.

GEORGE. Why?

BOBI. He going get shot.

GEORGE (*scared*). Who going shoot my fahdah?

BOBI. Dey catch him outside nighttime, dey going shoot him.

GEORGE. We not Japanese.

BOBI. Da soldiers, dey don know dat. Korean, Chinese, *Filipino*, dey all look Japanese to da soldiers—

GEORGE. Den your fahdah da same, going shoot him, too!

BOBI. My fahdah not out nighttime! ...Dey all going know he Korean, he going tell errybody—

GEORGE. You don know nutting, Bobi. Erryting you say, plenny *shibai*.

BOBI. No call me Bobi. Go call me “Roberta.”

GEORGE. I not going call you dat.

BOBI. Das my name. Bobi short fo Roberta. Sound more American. Bobi sound more like some oddah place...Japan, meybe.

GEORGE. Go home. Go way.

BOBI. Dis my church. Whachu stay doing here?

GEORGE. ...Nevah mind.

BOBI. ...Mits not going meet chu fo marbles. No can wait fo Mits.

GEORGE. You don know nutting.

BOBI. Alla Japanese stay hiding. Police going arrest um, das why.

GEORGE (*shocked*). Not *Hawai`i*-Japanese. Police no can.

BOBI. Can. We not suppose to play wid Mits.

GEORGE. Who I going play wid?

BOBI. Me.

GEORGE. Fo’get it. You no *take da risk*.

BOBI. Mits stay one spy. He wen signal da pilot wid his arms in da air.

GEORGE. He nevah—he nevah— (*Approaching BOBI.*)

BOBI (*backing away*). Hey, I stay one girl—I stay one girl.

PRONUNCIATION TIPS AND DEFINITIONS

Where possible, words are written phonetically; however, it was often necessary to use English spelling for ease of reading.

R when it occurs at the end of a word is pronounced as a short “a.” Examples: *Better* is “bettah”; *more* is “moa”; *or* is “oa”; *hear* is “heah”; *father, mother* are “fahdah, mahdah.”

Where is “wea.”

Th is usually sounded as a “d.” *They, together, this* are “dey,” “togeddah,” “dis.” *Breathe* is “breed.” *Through* is “tru.”

When *you* or *your* follows a “d” or “t” sound, it’s “chu.” I going widchu. Whachu like get?

For Pronounced “foa,” written in the script as “fo,” often used in place of the preposition *to*.

Furo Japanese bathtub heated with firewood. The “r” sound is almost a “d.”

Get Have.

Hamajang Crooked, messed up.

Huli (Hoo lee) Turned over, upside down.

Like Want to.

Lolo Crazy.

Make (Mah kay) Dead, die.

Pau (Pow) Done, finished, over.

Shishi (Shee shee) Pee, tinkle.

Shibai (Shee bye) A lie.

Stay The verb form “to be.” Wea you stay? (Where are you?) I stay going. (I am going.)

Um It, him, or them.

Wahine (Wa hee nay) Girl, woman.

Wen Used to form past tense verbs; I wen look for you. (I looked for you.) Das all I wen bring today. (That’s all I brought today.)