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A Letter To You, Ku'u Mo'opuna

NANEA LO

POLS 304 (Indigenous Politics—Nā Ko'oko'o)

Mentor: Dr. Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua

Artist Statement

I wrote this poem on the island of Moloka'i on a *huaka'i* (journey) to this place. I went with a group of amazing individuals of a cohort for a Political Science course in Indigenous Politics called Nā Ko'oko'o, taught by Professor Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua. In essence the class served as the Ko'o which means to support so the class as a whole is meant to *kāko'o* one another like the walking stick *ko'oko'o*. We spent a week on Moloka'i in where we were challenged to dig deep into our experience there and formulate spoken word, poems, and to articulate our feelings and emotions. In this poem that I created during my time there I reflect on my future generations that will come before me. My knowledge of what I know now about my heritage and nation and what they will know and future generations will know. It is a love line I created for them to know how much I love them, our ancestors, and Hawai'i.

A LETTER TO YOU, KU'U MO'OPUNA

Aloha e ku'u nā mo'opuna,

Your futures are **BRIGHT**.

Generationally we as a people have been suppressed.

Neglected and ashamed of who we are.

YOU'VE KNOWN THE OPPOSITE,

Grown to know your culture, beliefs, and language.

Continue to make me PROUD.

Guide and hānau the coming future generations.

As you know, to be Hawaiian is to be POLITICAL.



I am a Native Hawaiian, scholar, activist, feminist, and woman. I come from the Kingdom of Hawai'i that is currently occupied by the United States of America. During Spring 2015 and Summer 2015 I was a part of a Political Science class on Nation Building. This course was comprised of a cohort of amazing individuals, and together we were Nā Ko'oko'o, lead by Dr. Noelani Goodyear-Ka'ōpua. During this time we traveled on a *huaka'i* (journey) to Moloka'inuiāhina (the island of Moloka'i) for the summer. We were challenged as a group as well as individually to think about what nation building of Hawai'i means to us. In this poem I am writing a love letter to my grandchildren. Aloha wau iā'oe e ku'u Hawai'i. Aloha 'Āina a mau a mau. #letthemalwaysremember #ea #thehawaiiankingdomstillexists #'aloha'āina #baelife #perpetuatehawaiianculture

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So stand for and defend aloha . . . 'āina, your ancestors, history, and love.

Aloha 'āina is the truth and it is SACRED.

Always protect your 'ohana.

NEVER FORGET WHO YOU ARE AND WHERE YOU CAME FROM.

In aloha you will always find **RIGHTEOUSNESS**.

Do not be afraid of going against the grain.

For you are **RESILIENT, STRONG, INSIGHTFUL**.

You've been descended from a long line of **WARRIORS**.

ARM YOURSELF WITH YOUR GENEALOGY,

With historical context that we have left our legacy for you to **PERPETUATE**.

Engage in writing, education, debates, and protests in TRUTHS YOU BELIEVE IN

As I have done, as what our ancestors have done

We are here because of them, because of me, **BECAUSE OF YOU**.

Without your leo we will not live.

Some people have said that Hawai'i will be a better place when Hawaiians
no longer stand in the way of progress.

THIS HAS BEEN PROVEN TO BE WRONG.

Because without us there is no Hawai'i.

Even those people must know, must have known, will know.

Because of us,

That without us—Kānaka Maoli,

This won't . . . this will no longer be Hawai'i.

E HO'OLOHE KU'U MO'OPUNA in what I am telling you.

BE PROUD, LIVE, PERPETUATE, AND HOLOMUA!

YOU ARE MY EVERYTHING.

YOU ARE EVERYTHING.

WE ARE EVERYTHING.

I love you e ku'u mo'opuna always and **FOREVER!**