

# 2

## Hawai'i: Prelude to a Journey

Selina Tusitala Marsh  
for Haunani-Kay

you go then  
poppin' in bubble-gum jeans  
you, wrapped bubble-gum teen  
knowin' nothin'  
'bout no Hawaiians  
not living  
in Waikiki  
no more

you go then  
floating on two-buck sunshine  
courtesy of Longs  
one of a dozen stores stacked  
against a postcard beach  
within reach of King Kamehameha's  
you surface from under the slick of tourist

you go then  
buy five key rings for ten  
two hibiscus singlets for one  
free Hershey bars softening in the sun of  
Aloha Stadium fermenting  
red-tipped toes in jandals

TOURING PACIFIC CULTURES

pale chests in floral shirts  
necks noosed in fluorescent lei  
wrists handcuffed in gold, etched with black enamel  
detained by Reebok and Nike

you go then  
to finish in Hale Mānoa  
where student voices  
rise above smoking black bean stir-fry  
fa'alifu fa'i, tofu and udon noodles  
breezing open pavilions  
you go then  
to class to find friends  
kama'aina who surf and protest  
he is writing on Hawaiian land rights and kalo  
sings at the Royal Hawaiian  
for his fees  
she is writing on post-'80s sovereignty  
like waves lapping a broken shore  
we are one we  
are more she writes  
he is writing on wipe-outs of Kamehameha Schools  
surfs Sunset  
always goes for the barrel  
no matter how he gets worked

you go then  
and meet  
Pele's pen  
her black ink lava  
ever pricking the night

you go then  
to hula halau to  
the picket sign to the  
angry line outside parliament to  
Greevy's photo exhibition to the  
kalo plantation to  
the valley of stolen waters to the  
valley of ground bones and mortar to  
the majesty of Kilauea

you go then  
and smell embered Lincolns  
wrapped in kalo leaves  
wedged in creases  
of Pele-‘ai-honua  
eater of the land

This text is taken from *Touring Pacific Cultures*, edited by  
Kalissa Alexeyeff and John Taylor, published 2016 by ANU Press,  
The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.