

BOG BOY: It's all right, I like your voice. (*Silence. Quiet.*) We were the sacrifice.

SAM: You and Bran.

(*Silence.*)

BOG BOY: Together. It was a noble death, they said. That's what they told us. (*Grim.*) Didn't feel very noble.

The Honorable Urashima Taro

Coleman A. Jennings

This classic Japanese folktale tells of a young fisherman, Urashima Taro, who saves a wise old sea turtle from hunters. In reward, the turtle carries the young man to a wondrous undersea kingdom, where the fisherman is crowned a prince. In time, though, the fisherman must decide whether to remain in his new world and never grow old, or return to the world from which he came.

Five Males (and one nonspeaking part)

In the opening scene of this play, three young boys run onto a beach to discover a large sea turtle washed ashore. Shortly Taro and his little boy arrive and confront the boys, who have been taunting the turtle.



Long ago. The shore of Shikoku, an island of Japan, near a little fishing village and the mountains and valleys of the ocean depths. Japanese music is playing as the audience enters the theater. There is no curtain, only screens upstage, painted to suggest a beach locale. As the house-lights dim, the Japanese music cross-fades to ocean sounds. The Turtle is "washed" ashore, settles at stage center, his back to the audience. The Three Boys run on stage, excited about going to the beach.

BOY THREE: The boats will be back soon!

BOY ONE: Hurry!

BOY TWO: I'll race you to the water!

BOY THREE: Look!

BOY TWO: Look what's on the beach! (*The Boys gather around the Turtle.*)

BOY ONE: I wonder how long he's been here?

BOY THREE: He must have been washed ashore.

BOY TWO: Look, how big he is!

BOY ONE: Yes, he is.

BOY THREE: Let's play with him.

BOY TWO: Watch out!

BOY ONE: Hit him!

BOY THREE: Let's take him to the village.

BOY ONE: No. No.

BOY TWO: (*Picking up a stick.*) Let me hit him!

BOY ONE: Make him stick out his head.

BOY TWO: Watch out, he'll bite you!

BOY THREE: How old is he?

BOY TWO: Who cares?

BOY ONE: Let's kill him.

BOY THREE: No, just turn him on his back.

BOY TWO: Wait! Here comes a boat.

BOY ONE: Who is it?

BOY THREE: It looks like Urashima Taro.

BOY ONE: It is Taro!

BOY THREE: (*Starting to leave.*) Let's go!

BOY TWO: Wait. I'm not afraid of Urashima Taro.

BOY THREE: But he will be angry with us!

BOY TWO: It's none of his business what we do. Who cares what he says?

BOY ONE: Does Taro own the sea or the beach?

BOY TWO: No. No!

BOY THREE: No, but he does care for the animals and sea creatures!

(Taro and his son, Kimo, are now near the shore.)

BOY TWO: If he is so kind to sea creatures, why does he catch fish every day?

BOY THREE: He catches fish for his family to sell in the market place.

(Taro and Kimo leave their imaginary boat in the shallow water and approach the boys.)

TARO: Boys, what are you doing?

BOY TWO: Nothing.

TARO: What do you have there?

BOY TWO: A turtle we found on the beach!

TARO: But, what are you doing with it?

BOY ONE: Nothing. Just playing!

TARO: You have a strange way of playing. Why are you so cruel?

BOY TWO: We can do whatever we like! We found him. He's ours now.

TARO: (*Crossing to the Turtle.*) The turtle belongs to the sea.

BOY TWO: He should stay in the ocean if he doesn't want to be caught. He belongs to us, and we can kill him, if we want.

TARO: Why would you be so unkind to a poor creature?

BOY ONE: Look at your baskets! You catch and kill fish every day. Why shouldn't we kill an old turtle?

TARO: It is right to take the turtle if you are hungry, but you are teasing and hurting him.

BOY ONE: Look at him; he's old. Who cares if he lives?

TARO: You needn't kill him just because he is old. Think what a wonder it is to live so long — maybe even as long as three men!

BOY THREE: Yes, let's not kill him.

TARO: You do not need the turtle for food. Let's make a trade. We will give you some fish for him. Kimo, the fish. (*Kimo brings a small net of fish to Taro.*)

BOY ONE: We could use the fish.

BOY TWO: Why are you listening to him?

BOY ONE: We will do what we please. Leave us alone.

BOY TWO: Move out of the way!

(As the argument builds, Boy Two attempts to strike the

Turtle with the stick. Boy Three grabs his arm and holds him.)

TARO: (As he covers the Turtle with his body.) Wait! You must not kill him!

BOY TWO: Get away! He belongs to us!

TARO: (Angrily.) He belongs to no one. Now go home. (Pause, then firmly, but kindly.) Boys! Here are fish for your family. (Pause.) Go on. (Boy Two puts the stick down and exits with Boy One, without accepting any fish. Boy Three remains with Taro and Kimo.)

BOY THREE: I'm sorry. I hadn't meant to be so cruel. (Turns to leave.)

KIMO: I wonder how deeply he can swim.

BOY THREE: Maybe he's been on this beach before.

TARO: Let's help him return to his home.

KIMO: (As they help the Turtle into the "water.") He is big.

(Note: The actors never touch the Turtle. Keeping their hands approximately six inches from him, they create a stylized effect of grabbing the shell. The Turtle retains complete freedom of movement.)

TARO: Yes, my son, and he is handsome, too. Now he will be free. Be on your way, ancient one!

KIMO AND BOY THREE: (To the Turtle as he begins to exit into the sea.) Good-bye.

TARO: (As Boy Three starts to exit, calling him back.) Wait. (Offering him some fish.) Take these to your family.

BOY THREE: All of these?

TARO: Take them, and go along.

BOY THREE: Thank you for the fish. Good-bye, Kimo. Good-bye, Urashima Taro.

TARO AND KIMO: Good-bye.

Hula Heart

Velina Hasu Houston

Seven-year-old Sean "Kilo" Hauptmann, a multiethnic boy from Hawaii, moves to Southern California with his family, where he attempts to pursue his love of the popular Polynesian dance, the hula. Sean befriends Caleb, another boy who shares like traditions, but most of his new mainland acquaintances mock them. In the clash of pop culture and native traditions, Sean learns much about himself and his place in life.

Three Males and One Female

In the first scene below, Sean, who has been practicing hula and shaking bamboo rattles (*pu'ili*), encounters Julian, one of his new mainland classmates. Sean tries to explain the island traditions. In the second scene, Sean meets Caleb, another new classmate with whom he has more in common than not. The last scene brings Sean back in contact with Julian, who still is not ready to accept the island ways. (Note: You may want to research Hawaiian musical instruments and vocabulary.)



JULIAN: What you doing, dude?

SEAN: (Grabs his *pu'ili* and conceals them behind his back.) Nothing!

JULIAN: Yeah? Don't you know this is a basketball court?

SEAN: Uh . . . I was just, ah, fooling around.

JULIAN: You're that new kid from Hawaii, huh? That loud shirt gives it away.

SEAN: It's an aloha shirt!