

This is for the stars

and all the darkness between them, under them, and beyond them.

For all the secrets they hold.

For all the evil they have seen and kept quiet through the night.

This is for the hurt

and for the poor

who have remembered their worth has no price tag.

This is for the bending road that does not end.

This is for the days that we spend

complaining about not having enough time.

For the heart broken internee

with no money to buy a ring

so he dug up a baseball diamond out of the rough.

This is for the cracked bats, dirty pinstripes

and the feeling of freedom laughing in the face of imprisonment.

This is for my childhood major league idols,

and for the fact that none of them were Japanese.

This is for the word hero, and for the people who get to define it for us.

This is for the blazing sun and the crippling cold.

For the desert that forgives no one.

For the internees who forgave everyone.

For the Japanese-

that was never taught to the next generation.

For the traditional shadows casted behind the assimilated culture.

For the silence.

For the shouting evil.

For the man who would give a harbor of pearls just to end the war.

For the war.

For the guns.

Aimed at the children.

For the children.

For the children of the war torn

who had teeth like bullets.

Who had eyes like chambers where violence could get lost in.

This is for the 442nd,

who walked towards war for a president that tried to run them out of their home

For her ring finger that remained wrapped around the memory of her wedding

until death did them part.

For the index that never knew the trigger's name.

For the thumb that kept it all together.

For the middle finger perched like a bird without wings.

For the pinky that felt like an elder stuck inside the frame of the child.

This is for the flags that were proudly waved for the dawns early light.

For the light that never lasted long enough

For the blaring red rockets that still ring in the veteran's ear.

For the silence that feels like a bomb bursting in the thin air inside his chest.

For the shame that suggested a generation into keeping a secret.

For the American flag

stitched in red, blue, white, black and brown.

Wrapped around innocence like a wedding dress.

This is for the women who had no wedding dress.

Who did everything just to make the desert feel like a backyard.

The women who smiled hard.

Who made curry and miso soup like nothing had changed,
like they were still at home.

In California,

and Washington,

and Oregon,

Hawaii and Alaska.

For the west coast that saw a generation leave without a note.

For the heart.

For the mountain.

For the heart of the mountain.

For the horse stalls.

For the soldiers who stood tall.

For the soldiers who came back and for the ones who didn't.

For the fists

and all the fire that remained clinched.

Raised through the roof when the ground began falling.

For the canon ball and its ripple effects.

For the generations

who were handed down every genetic trait except their mother tongue.

For the high schooler

using her voice to help her grandfather's wounds heal.

For the telling the story.

For telling the story.

For being the story that has not yet ended.

For reliving the story every time they're asked, "Why can't you speak Japanese?"

For the belief that we can do better.

For the idea of progress.

For the history that doesn't repeat itself.

For the last time the government said this is the last time.

For the underserved, under represented and under estimated

all living under-sky and above ground.

This is for shining a light

so bright

and burning

that it can warm a frost bitten heart

into telling a story

that will be heard

by children

who are still among the stars.