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CAT 1A

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TA: Audrey Hope (Monday 8 am discussion)

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Are you the girl?

A girl was walking through a college campus, not to a class, but to explore her new school, what she believed to be her new home. Why would a student take time out of her studies to explore a school that she had already visited many times? That's easy to answer. It's because this girl is not used to being outside of her childhood home. She was a typical suburban girl. Same home, same school, same friends, same routine, but now she attends a school outside of the neighborhood she grew up in for seventeen years, and that in itself was enormously frightening to this girl. She was used to being around people with the same ethnicity and culture as her and her family, but now, she finds it difficult to find one person that even looked like her. So in an effort to try to feel more at home, this girl wandered the school to find a community resource center, one that was specified to her ethnicity. She wandered and wandered the school, taking in the smell of the trees, the sound of birds chirping in the air, the feeling of the rocks beneath her feet, fellow students laughing and smiling. She was in awe at the beauty of the school, of how much she hadn't seen in the tours. She continued to wander until she came across the community center she was looking for. When she saw it she was in awe again, not by the beauty of it, but by the horror of it. It was disrespected with racial slurs written in chalk across the floor. Ever been so close to home but felt like you could not be further away from it? This was the feeling that began to overwhelm the girl. At that moment, she no longer considered the school her home, and

she just wanted to go home. It wasn't until she heard students and professors comment about the racism, the horror, the disgust that was displayed on that community center that that girl realized she wasn't alone. That she didn't need people the same ethnicity or raised in the same culture as her to feel at home. She just needed to know that she was not alone, and that in itself, is where home truly is.

This story shows the campus climate that I have experienced at UCSD, and if you happened to associate yourself with the girl, then chances are, you have experienced some sort of racism, prejudice, or bias at UCSD, whether it was individually aimed at you or collectively aimed at a group you associate yourself with. In addition, I realized something truly eye opening when I saw that community center. That we are as equally united as we are divided, not just as a school, but also as a community. Whether this division has become more noticeable because of the recent absurd election, I'm not sure. But what I am sure about is that there has always been a division between people, whether it because of race, intellect, ethnicity, culture, place of origin or all of those combined and more.

This adds to Kong's analysis of the Compton Cookout because she was stating what all of us do not want to admit. There is racism on this campus, and there has been for quite some time. For example, what really shocked me when I was reading Kong's analysis was when she described the noose that was hung on the seventh floor of the Geisel Library intended as a threat following the controversy over the Compton Cookout. What Kong also analyzed was that there was unity on this campus as well, and she demonstrated this by her mentioning of the students and professors who stood in protest of this racism and how some of the protestors wants were met by the administration at UCSD. However, Kong later reveals how even the administration was bias in that it majorly focused on blacks, not focusing on and even exposing the exclusion of

the Chicano/a's, Native Americans, the LGBT community, and especially the Asian community. This reveals the bias that blacks get the worst of the racism that occurs, but they don't. They equally get as much racism as the Chicanos, Native Americans or LGBT, but nobody gets as much rhetoric at UCSD as the Asian community. This is due to them not being seen as a minority since they are all grouped together. Some of us have even been subject to these biases of Asians. For example, from personal experience, you can't come visit UCSD and not think to yourself "Wow, there are Asians everywhere". Unfortunately, they are stuck with the biases of "Model minority" in which they're seen as better, smarter, and more of a model minority, for example "Asian? Oh they must be an engineer"; and the bias of "yellow peril" in which one perceives that ethnic group as a threat, for example "I only didn't get into that engineering major because there are so many Asians" or " Why are there so many Asians? They should all just go back to China where they belong". These two myths and biases of Asians being a "model minority" and a "yellow peril" makes life difficult at UCSD for them even though they make up about forty-nine percent of the student body. This is what Kong wanted people to understand from the reading. So as a whole, the reading did not change my view of UCSD because I already knew about the racism on campus ever since the Chicano/a resource center was disrespected. However, I also already knew that we were united as well when my CAT professor immediately addressed that disrespect in lecture, and the horror she saw that came with it and described how we can fix problems like this and learn to accept one another by becoming more aware of a person's situation before succumbing to our preset biases and prejudices. Ultimately, I see the campus climate as fair, it's neither purely good, nor purely bad, and this is due to my experiences on this campus. Someday, I hope to see the full beauty of the campus that I awed about when initially beginning my wandering around its trees.