

## A Significant Event

I was a mere girl of seven when my family and I were lured from our comfortability. I spent my first crucial learning years on Guam, the cozy little island I called home, at least for the first several years of my life. When family members manipulated us into thinking that my aunt was gravely ill, that's the time we left. That was when we moved to Arizona.

The landscape was brown, dusty, and had little to no greenery. The ground was rough with dirt and rocks for every step. I began to miss the trees, storms, and the constant sight of water from back home. The landmass, here, was substantial and the winter temperature was a bit excruciating as I grew up in an area with a constant median of humid weather. Arizona was foreign to me. The mainland was more different than I expected it to be. Hawaii was one thing when thinking of statehood, but the movies made me think of some fairytale life. Except that thought was entirely different from the realities my family and I experienced.

Once welcomed into the house my family and I would use as lodgings for the next few months until they'd kick us out, I noticed the infinite amount of pictures that filled the walls. The long, dark hallways reminded me of horror movies I would try to avoid watching with my parents. The banter of my cousins outside the bedroom door was quite loud, but at the same time, there was a distilled silence in the air from time to time. The atmosphere was still, in a way you could barely tell a family lived there.

I remember the absence of light in my parents' eyes, though. It was quite apparent that it wasn't what they expected Arizona to be like for us. Our room in the house was quaint and had a small window. The full sized bed the four of us would share took up most of the room. I don't remember much of this time but I do remember the sadness I felt. I missed the salty smell of the ocean, the sand beneath my feet, and the smiles my brother would display.

The culture shock was evident, but I think that food was the biggest change. On Guam, you could find authentic food from all types of Asian cultures, along with our customary island foods. The continuous meals of American food were inconsistent from what I grew up with. Of course, American fast food on American territories existed, but they still tasted different.

These memories were what I held onto in order to make it through this time, especially when people looked at me like I didn't belong here. Others treated me like an extraterrestrial, as I can recall multiple people asking me if I knew what McDonalds was.