

Silence
Forty years of silence
Forty years of anger, grief, pain
Shackled in the hearts of
Issei, nisei, kibe.

Many died in silence.
Some by their own hands
Some by others.

Today
The survivors
Stood tall, strong, proud.
Issei, nisei, kibe all vowed
No more enryo, giri, gaman
Shattering the silence.

Today
The survivors
Cried redress, restitution, reparations

for
a father detained in five
prisoner of war camps
for the crime of being Japanese
and joined his loved ones
in yet another barbed wire compound
then returned home to die at seventy-two
rebuilding his life in San Francisco

for
a mother whose demons drove her
to hammer her infant to death
now skipping merrily after
butterflies in the snow

for
a brother, honor student,
class president, star athlete
now sitting alone on the edge
of a cot in a sleazy Seattle hotel room
rocking, rocking

for
the fourteen year old girl
mother to the children of Petersburg
orphaned by the FBI seizure of
all Japanese adults
now agonizing in guilt
of having detoured the jailhouse
too ashamed at the sight of her father
waving desperately

for
the baby whose whimpers
were silenced forever in a
camp hospital
the hakujin doctor who never came
was a father of a son killed
in the Pacific

Silence
Silence, no more

.....no more.