

Hope for metal

[Experience](#), [Belief](#)



The book “ Melal “ by Robert Barclay takes place in 1981 in The Marshall Islands of the South Pacific. The people known as the Marshallese are the natives to these islands. Overtime other cultures began to settle on these islands also, such as the Spanish, Japanese, and Americans. Out of these three cultures the Americans were the most domineering and devastating to the Marshallese people. The Americans took over the Marshallese native land and forced all of them to live on one island in deplorable conditions. The Marshallese had their freedom revoked from them; they then had to live under the Americans rules.

Two of the Marshallese characters in this story who believes strongly in withholding many of the native Marshallese custom and traditions are Jebro and Rujen. These two characters portray great hope that they can sustain these important aspects of their culture. Hope starts with believing in something one desires can happen. Sparks of hope are revealed throughout this story through the character Jebro. Jebro’s hope comes from believing that he can continue on the traditions of his native culture, so that the traditions will not be lost.

He believes he can do this by teaching important Marshallese traditions to younger Marshallese, and Americans who take an interest in learning. “ Maybe on one of your days off I can swing by with a boat and we’ll go fish. The rules say we’re not supposed to stop over here, but I’m sure we’ll get away with it. You can show me how you knew where that school was gonna come up. Or did you use that magic finger of yours? Jebro nodded, smiling now. Okay we go fishing sometime, but if you want my secrets that are worth more than any boat you give me!

He laughed “(Barclay 253). I think this passage in the story shows that Jebro is realizing that not all Americans like Travis, are bad people. This gives him hope that he can begin to teach Americans about what is important to the Marshallese natives, so they can come to better understand some of the traditions that the natives value. Rujen’s hope in this story is derived from him finally acting on his beliefs in Part 3 of the story. This took place after Rujen tried to integrate for such a long time with the Americans, which lead Rujen into such an empty life he could no longer take it. He finally snapped and realized that he is a Marshallese and should stop pretending to be something he is not. “ Yokwe, he said, he drove the knife down. That was when blood came up from the mouth of the mermaid on Good Friday, 1981 “(Barclay 262). I think this is Rujen’s first sign that he has belief that there is still hope for the Marshallese. Rujen performed this act of killing the dolphin, because the Marshallese people believe that it is bad luck to not kill any dolphin that came into the lagoon.

This is Rujen’s way of standing up for the traditions and culture he was brought up in. If Rujen did not perform this task, the Americans were going to make it a law that it was illegal to kill dolphins. The fact that Rujen got away with this task, gives all Marshallese people hope that their traditions can still be performed. The second sign of Rujen’s hope in this story is shown in the following passage, “ How could a Marshallese be trespassing on a Marshallese island? The ticket filled Rujen with an unbearable loathing of the ignorant man who had written it.

He waved the ticket in front of Oly's face, nearly slapping him with it. Maybe you better pay me fifty bucks! You pig "(Barclay 271). In this passage Rujen is standing up for the Marshallese people in hope of reclaiming the land that had been taken from them. " I like it when boys like yours go trespassing on the outer islands. All boys should go if they have the chance, instead of just lying around and drinking. He slapped Lazarus's knee. Maybe we all should go, Alfred said.

We should go live on those islands and tell the Army to shoot their missiles at Ebeye instead! Kinoj and the others, not laughing, seemed to be giving Alfred's proposal serious thought" (Barclay 279). I think that this passage shows that a lot of the Marshallese agrees with Rujen. They have hope that if all the Marshallese stick together and try to take their land back over, that they will be successful. The Marshallese has real hope that they can believe in. Hope that there belief's and traditions will be carried on for many generation's.

If they stick together, I think that they can be successful in gaining their lives back. I believe the Americans and Marshallese will find a common ground and live happily together, and share the land. They are two different cultures, but many different cultures co-exist. People to have different beliefs and values and we can all learn from one another. If in the South Pacific everyone was governed by the same laws, and was treated equally I feel that the quality of life would drastically improve for the natives in that region.