



THOR, MAI KA

Mai Ka Thor is student attending the D.C. Everest Junior High school. She participated in the National History Day competition and went to nationals. Mai Ka is a great achiever. She loves her family and is blessed to be educated.

I many times feel like there are two sides of me. There's one side of me that's a Hmong daughter and another side of me that's an American girl. As an American girl, I seem to be quite outgoing and opinionated. But as a Hmong girl, I seem to be more conservative. I personally think that it is impossible for me to fully or completely be a Hmong girl or American girl.

I didn't feel a desire to be American until I began going to school. At school, I was around kids my age practically all day. And being a kid, you want to fit in with everyone. At that point in my life being American kicked in. Then I'd go home at the end of the day and be with my parents and brothers and sisters. And suddenly I wanted to be Hmong again.

When I was little, I used to think that the Hmong people were perfect and I was a part of the perfect race. Unfortunately for me, as I grew older, I slowly came to a realization that no race was perfect. The Hmong talk behind people's back as much as Muslims do. Hmong people fight as much as the African Americans do. The Hmong get into trouble as much as Caucasians do. No race is perfect.

At one point of my young life, I kind of felt ashamed of being Hmong because I was different from many of my classmates. I seemed and looked inferior to them. Why, I don't know exactly. Maybe it was my accent when I spoke English. Maybe it was the way I dressed. Maybe it was the people I was around. Maybe it was the so little knowledge I had about things, which seemed to my classmates as everyday things. To this day I'm still not really sure.

But now I am proud to be who I am. I am just an ordinary girl who has two ways of life and is trying to juggle and balance them. That's just me.

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