

Jack Ryan
English 2XL
Section 4
PV Lyric CM #2

“Somewhere Over the Rainbow” by Israel Kamakawiwo’ole

Israel Kamakawiwo'ole's rendition of "Somewhere Over the Rainbow" is one of the most poetic songs I've ever heard. The song initially appeared in *The Wizard of Oz*, but Kamakawiwo'ole took the song and made it his. It is about a special place, a utopia, a perfect state of mind that exists "over the rainbow, way up high." Many people interpret this place as some sort of heaven, which is exactly what I believe it refers to.

A year or two ago, a beloved teacher at my old school, Mrs. Harvey, passed away from a heart attack at a very young age. It was extremely tough for everyone, because she was the helper teacher for very sensitive second graders and because she was such a great person in general. The funeral was packed, and it was certainly poetic the way everyone came together to mourn the loss of a wonderful woman. At the very end of the funeral, a brilliant pianist played "Somewhere Over the Rainbow," and it was one of the most beautiful and emotional renditions of the song I have ever heard. From then on, I have never heard that song the same way. Every time I hear it, I think of Mrs. Harvey and what a wonderful person she was. She was a great role model, and certainly lived a poetic life.

This song is not only poetic because of its very wonderful and complex message, but it also has immense personal meaning to me as well. I think anybody who has experienced a loss can relate to the beauty of this song. At the end of the day, we live our lives to the fullest in order to reach this place that is over the rainbow when we pass away. We live our lives doing God's will so that we may one day be with him, and that is why the song has so much meaning.