

APPENDIX

Synopsis of Brian Castro's *Drift*

Brian Castro presents a character who is also the narrator of the novel, Bryan Stanley Johnson. The actual name is taken from the name of an English novelist, Byron Shelley. He comes to Tasmania to meet Emma McGann as he is very concerned about what she has written in her letters. She tells many stories related to the fate of the Aboriginal people during the horrible massacre of thousands of Aborigines in the so-called Black War. In her letters, she writes that many Aborigines suffered when the Europeans came to Tasmania in the nineteenth century. Their coming apparently caused a great destruction to the Aborigines. Many of them were tortured and the women were raped. Therefore, Johnson is curious and wants to find the truth behind that information.

As he travels to Tasmania, he visits Flinders Island. This Island is used by the Europeans to take care of the remaining Aborigines after the war. On the other hand, as said by Emma McGann, the Aborigines believe Flinders Island is their temporary home and that they are free people who will be housed, fed and

protected until they return to their homeland. But instead, the island becomes a prison and many become sick and died since there are famine, disease and torture. No one can escape from the prison; they are watched by the white. Some of them are caged and isolated.

When Bryan Stanley Johnson comes to Tasmania, he does not find Emma McGann, but he meets her brother, Thomas McGann. To his surprise, Thomas McGann is actually deputized to collect the remaining skeleton of the last Aborigine woman in Flinders Land from the British Museum. The skeleton is going to be buried in a sacred place back in Tasmania. The Aborigine woman is his great-great grandmother. Thomas tells Johnson in detail what actually happened to his great-great grandmother and his people. After having retrospection about the Aborigines, Johnson comes to have faith in what Emma has written in her letters.

Synopsis of Brian Castro's *Birds of Passage*

Seamus O'Young is an Australian orphan who suffers identity crisis because he is treated unfairly by the Australian society. He receives much racial discrimination only because he has a strange physical appearance which is not suitable for being Australian. Seamus is Australian but Chinese in appearance. Wherever he goes, he is always mocked with a certain name which is typical of Chinese names, some call him 'Ching Chong Chinaman' or even 'Bloody Chink'.

Even though his citizenship tells him that he is an Australian still the Australian people tend to regard him as an outsider. He never realizes that his

Australian-born Chinese citizenship makes him rejected by the white society for he always considers himself as part of the Australian society. All the problems about his identity confuse him and make him feel alienated in his own country.

Suffering from identity crisis, Seamus starts to search for his identity in culture. Accidentally, he finds a journal written by Lo Yu San, who came to Australia from Kwangtung in 1856 in search of gold. In fact, the two of them share the same experiences of being treated unjustly and alienated by the white society. Therefore, Seamus is so obsessed by the journal and he begins his quest by following the journal.

From the journal, Seamus finds out that the racial discrimination still happens in Australia although the journal itself is written 120 years ago. Since the Chinese people are different in physical appearance, the inexistence is considered a threat. Besides, the fact that they are very hardworking and willing to be paid lower than other Australian workers leads to a bigger hatred toward the Chinese people. As a result, much racial violence occurs during the gold rush period. The rejection of the Australian people toward Chinese people can also be seen through the massacre of Chinese people in the riot called Lambing Flat in 1861.

Biography of Brian Castro

Brian Castro was born in Hong Kong in 1950 of Portuguese, English, Chinese and Australian descent and came to Australia in 1961. He began publishing short stories from 1970 and is the author of the novels *Birds of Passage* (1983), joint winner of the Australian/Vogel literary award, *Pomeroy* (1990), *Double-Wolf* (1991), winner of the Age Fiction Prize and two Victorian

Premier's Awards, and *After China*, which won the Vance Premier Prize for Fiction at the 1993 Victorian Premier's Awards. He had been the recipient of a number of grants from the Literature Board of the Australia Council.