

SHORT STORY AMERICA

ON THE MAKALOA MAT

JACK LONDON

Unlike the women of most warm races, those of Hawaii age well and nobly. With no pretence of make-up or cunning concealment of time's inroads, the woman who sat under the hau tree might have been permitted as much as fifty years by a judge competent anywhere over the world save in Hawaii. Yet her children and her grandchildren, and Roscoe Scandwell who had been her husband for forty years, knew that she was sixty-four and would be sixty-five come the next twenty-second day of June. But she did not look it, despite the fact that she thrust reading glasses on her nose as she read her magazine and took them off when her gaze desired to wander in the direction of the half-dozen children playing on the lawn.

It was a noble situation—noble as the ancient hau tree, the size of a house, where she sat as if in a house, so spaciouly and comfortably house-like was its shade furnished; noble as the lawn that stretched away landward its plush of green at an appraisalment of two hundred dollars a front foot to a bungalow equally dignified, noble, and costly. Seaward, glimpsed through a fringe of hundred-foot coconut palms, was the ocean; beyond the reef a dark blue that grew indigo blue to the

horizon, within the reef all the silken gamut of jade and emerald and tourmaline.

And this was but one house of the half-dozen houses belonging to Martha Scandwell. Her town-house, a few miles away in Honolulu, on Nuuanu Drive between the first and second "showers," was a palace. Hosts of guests had known the comfort and joy of her mountain house on Tantalus, and of her volcano house, her *mauka* (mountainward) house, and her *makai* (seaward) house on the big island of Hawaii. Yet this Waikiki house stressed no less than the rest in beauty, in dignity, and in expensiveness of upkeep. Two Japanese yard-boys were trimming hibiscus, a third was engaged expertly with the long hedge of night-blooming cereus that was shortly expectant of unfolding in its mysterious night-bloom. In immaculate ducks, a house Japanese brought out the tea-things, followed by a Japanese maid, pretty as a butterfly in the distinctive garb of her race, and fluttery as a butterfly to attend on her mistress. Another Japanese maid, an array of Turkish towels on her arm, crossed the lawn well to the right in the direction of the bath-houses, from which the children, in swimming suits, were beginning to emerge. Beyond, under the palms at the edge of the sea, two Chinese nursemaids, in their pretty native costume of white *yee-shon* and-straight-lined trousers, their black braids of hair down their backs, attended each on a baby in a perambulator.

And all these—servants, and nurses, and grandchildren—were Martha Scandwell's. So likewise was the colour of the skin of the grandchildren—the unmistakable Hawaiian colour, tinted beyond shadow of mistake by exposure to the Hawaiian sun. One-eighth and one-sixteenth Hawaiian were they, which meant that seven-eighths or fifteen-sixteenths white blood informed that skin yet failed to obliterate the modicum of golden tawny brown of Polynesia. But in this, again, only a trained observer would have known that the frolicking children were aught but pure-blooded

white. Roscoe Scandwell, grandfather, was pure white; Martha three-quarters white; the many sons and daughters of them seven-eighths white; the grandchildren graded up to fifteen-sixteenths white, or, in the cases when their seven-eighths fathers and mothers had married seven-eighths, themselves fourteen-sixteenths or seven-eighths white. On both sides the stock was good, Roscoe straight descended from the New England Puritans, Martha no less straight descended from the royal chief-stocks of Hawaii whose genealogies were chanted in *meles* a thousand years before written speech was acquired.

In the distance a machine stopped and deposited a woman whose utmost years might have been guessed as sixty, who walked across the lawn as lightly as a well-cared-for woman of forty, and whose actual calendar age was sixty-eight. Martha rose from her seat to greet her, in the hearty Hawaiian way, arms about, lips on lips, faces eloquent and bodies no less eloquent with sincereness and frank excessiveness of emotion. And it was "Sister Bella," and "Sister Martha," back and forth, intermingled with almost incoherent inquiries about each other, and about Uncle This and Brother That and Aunt Some One Else, until, the first tremulousness of meeting over, eyes moist with tenderness of love, they sat gazing at each other across their teacups. Apparently, they had not seen nor embraced for years. In truth, two months marked the interval of their separation. And one was sixty-four, the other sixty-eight. But the thorough comprehension resided in the fact that in each of them one-fourth of them was the sun-warm, love-warm heart of Hawaii.

The children flooded about Aunt Bella like a rising tide and were capaciously hugged and kissed ere they departed with their nurses to the swimming beach.

"I thought I'd run out to the beach for several days—the trades had stopped blowing,"

Martha explained.

"You've been here two weeks already," Bella smiled fondly at her younger sister.

"Brother Edward told me. He met me at the steamer and insisted on running me out first of all to see Louise and Dorothy and that first grandchild of his. He's as mad as a silly hatter about it."

"Mercy!" Martha exclaimed. "Two weeks! I had not thought it that long."

"Where's Annie?—and Margaret?" Bella asked.

Martha shrugged her voluminous shoulders with voluminous and forgiving affection for her wayward, matronly daughters who left their children in her care for the afternoon.

"Margaret's at a meeting of the Out-door Circle—they're planning the planting of trees and hibiscus all along both sides of Kalakaua Avenue," she said. "And Annie's wearing out eighty dollars' worth of tyres to collect seventy-five dollars for the British Red Cross—this is their tag day, you know."

"Roscoe must be very proud," Bella said, and observed the bright glow of pride that appeared in her sister's eyes. "I got the news in San Francisco of Ho-o-la-a's first dividend. Remember when I put a thousand in it at seventy-five cents for poor Abbie's children, and said I'd sell when it went to ten dollars?"

"And everybody laughed at you, and at anybody who bought a share," Martha nodded. "But Roscoe knew. It's selling to-day at twenty- four."

"I sold mine from the steamer by wireless—at twenty even," Bella continued. "And

now Abbie's wildly dressmaking. She's going with May and Tootsie to Paris."

"And Carl?" Martha queried.

"Oh, he'll finish Yale all right—"

"Which he would have done anyway, and you *know* it," Martha charged, lapsing charmingly into twentieth-century slang.

Bella affirmed her guilt of intention of paying the way of her school friend's son through college, and added complacently:

"Just the same it was nicer to have Ho-o-la-a pay for it. In a way, you see, Roscoe is doing it, because it was his judgment I trusted to when I made the investment." She gazed slowly about her, her eyes taking in, not merely the beauty and comfort and repose of all they rested on, but the immensity of beauty and comfort and repose represented by them, scattered in similar oases all over the islands. She sighed pleasantly and observed: "All our husbands have done well by us with what we brought them."

"And happily . . ." Martha agreed, then suspended her utterance with suspicious abruptness.

"And happily, all of us, except Sister Bella," Bella forgivingly completed the thought for her.

"It was too bad, that marriage," Martha murmured, all softness of sympathy. "You were so young. Uncle Robert should never have made you."

"I was only nineteen," Bella nodded. "But it was not George Castner's fault. And

look what he, out of she grave, has done for me. Uncle Robert was wise. He knew George had the far-away vision of far ahead, the energy, and the steadiness. He saw, even then, and that's fifty years ago, the value of the Nahala water-rights which nobody else valued then. They thought he was struggling to buy the cattle range. He struggled to buy the future of the water- -and how well he succeeded you know. I'm almost ashamed to think of my income sometimes. No; whatever else, the unhappiness of our marriage was not due to George. I could have lived happily with him, I know, even to this day, had he lived." She shook her head slowly. "No; it was not his fault. Nor anybody's. Not even mine. If it was anybody's fault—" The wistful fondness of her smile took the sting out of what she was about to say. "If it was anybody's fault it was Uncle John's."

"Uncle John's!" Martha cried with sharp surprise. "If it had to be one or the other, I should have said Uncle Robert. But Uncle John!"

Bella smiled with slow positiveness.

"But it was Uncle Robert who made you marry George Castner," her sister urged.

"That is true," Bella nodded corroboration. "But it was not the matter of a husband, but of a horse. I wanted to borrow a horse from Uncle John, and Uncle John said yes. That is how it all happened."

A silence fell, pregnant and cryptic, and, while the voices of the children and the soft mandatory protests of the Asiatic maids drew nearer from the beach, Martha Scandwell felt herself vibrant and tremulous with sudden resolve of daring. She waved the children away.

"Run along, dears, run along, Grandma and Aunt Bella want to talk."

And as the shrill, sweet treble of child voices ebbed away across the lawn, Martha, with scrutiny of the heart, observed the sadness of the lines graven by secret woe for half a century in her sister's face. For nearly fifty years had she watched those lines. She steeled all the melting softness of the Hawaiian of her to break the half-century of silence.

"Bella," she said. "We never know. You never spoke. But we wondered, oh, often and often—"

"And never asked," Bella murmured gratefully.

"But I am asking now, at the last. This is our twilight. Listen to them! Sometimes it almost frightens me to think that they are grandchildren, *my* grandchildren—I, who only the other day, it would seem, was as heart-free, leg-free, care-free a girl as ever bestrode a horse, or swam in the big surf, or gathered *opihis* at low tide, or laughed at a dozen lovers. And here in our twilight let us forget everything save that I am your dear sister as you are mine."

The eyes of both were dewy moist. Bella palpably trembled to utterance.

"We thought it was George Castner," Martha went on; "and we could guess the details. He was a cold man. You were warm Hawaiian. He must have been cruel. Brother Walcott always insisted he must have beaten you—"

"No! No!" Bella broke in. "George Castner was never a brute, a beast. Almost have I wished, often, that he had been. He never laid hand on me. He never raised hand to me. He never raised his voice to me. Never—oh, can you believe it?—do, please,

sister, believe it—did we have a high word nor a cross word. But that house of his, of ours, at Nahala, was grey. All the colour of it was grey and cool, and chill, while I was bright with all colours of sun, and earth, and blood, and birth. It was very cold, grey cold, with that cold grey husband of mine at Nahala. You know he was grey, Martha. Grey like those portraits of Emerson we used to see at school. His skin was grey. Sun and weather and all hours in the saddle could never tan it. And he was as grey inside as out.

"And I was only nineteen when Uncle Robert decided on the marriage. How was I to know? Uncle Robert talked to me. He pointed out how the wealth and property of Hawaii was already beginning to pass into the hands of the *haoles*" (whites). "The Hawaiian chiefs let their possessions slip away from them. The Hawaiian chiefesses, who married haoles, had their possessions, under the management of their haole husbands, increase prodigiously. He pointed back to the original Grandfather Roger Wilton, who had taken Grandmother Wilton's poor *mauka* lands and added to them and built up about them the Kilohana Ranch—"

"Even then it was second only to the Parker Ranch," Martha interrupted proudly.

"—And he told me that had our father, before he died, been as far- seeing as grandfather, half the then Parker holdings would have been added to Kilohana, making Kilohana first. And he said that never, for ever and ever, would beef be cheaper. And he said that the big future of Hawaii would be in sugar. That was fifty years ago, and he has been more than proved right. And he said that the young haole, George Castner, saw far, and would go far, and that there were many girls of us, and that the Kilohana lands ought by rights to go to the boys, and that if I married George my future was assured in the biggest way.

"I was only nineteen. Just back from the Royal Chief School—that was before our girls went to the States for their education. You were among the first, Sister Martha, who got their education on the mainland. And what did I know of love and lovers, much less of marriage? All women married. It was their business in life. Mother and grandmother, all the way back they had married. It was my business in life to marry George Castner. Uncle Robert said so in his wisdom, and I knew he was very wise. And I went to live with my husband in the grey house at Nahala.

"You remember it. No trees, only the rolling grass lands, the high mountains behind, the sea beneath, and the wind!—the Waimea and Nahala winds, we got them both, and the kona wind as well. Yet little would I have minded them, any more than we minded them at Kilohana, or than they minded them at Mana, had not Nahala itself been so grey, and husband George so grey. We were alone. He was managing Nahala for the Glens, who had gone back to Scotland. Eighteen hundred a year, plus beef, horses, cowboy service, and the ranch house, was what he received—"

"It was a high salary in those days," Martha said.

"And for George Castner, and the service he gave, it was very cheap," Bella defended. "I lived with him for three years. There was never a morning that he was out of his bed later than half-past four. He was the soul of devotion to his employers. Honest to a penny in his accounts, he gave them full measure and more of his time and energy. Perhaps that was what helped make our life so grey. But listen, Martha. Out of his eighteen hundred, he laid aside sixteen hundred each year. Think of it! The two of us lived on two hundred a year. Luckily he did not drink or smoke. Also, we dressed out of it as well. I made my own dresses. You can imagine them. Outside of the cowboys who chored the firewood, I did the work. I cooked, and baked, and

scrubbed—"

"You who had never known anything but servants from the time you were born!" Martha pitied. "Never less than a regiment of them at Kilohana."

"Oh, but it was the bare, naked, pinching meagreness of it!" Bella cried out. "How far I was compelled to make a pound of coffee go! A broom worn down to nothing before a new one was bought! And beef! Fresh beef and jerky, morning, noon, and night! And porridge! Never since have I eaten porridge or any breakfast food."

She arose suddenly and walked a dozen steps away to gaze a moment with unseeing eyes at the colour-lavish reef while she composed herself. And she returned to her seat with the splendid, sure, gracious, high-breasted, noble-headed port of which no out-breeding can ever rob the Hawaiian woman. Very haole was Bella Castner, fair-skinned, fine-textured. Yet, as she returned, the high pose of head, the level-lidded gaze of her long brown eyes under royal arches of eyebrows, the softly set lines of her small mouth that fairly sang sweetness of kisses after sixty-eight years—all made her the very picture of a chiefess of old Hawaii full-bursting through her ampleness of haole blood. Taller she was than her sister Martha, if anything more queenly.

"You know we were notorious as poor feeders," Bella laughed lightly enough. "It was many a mile on either side from Nahala to the next roof. Belated travellers, or storm-bound ones, would, on occasion, stop with us overnight. And you know the lavishness of the big ranches, then and now. How we were the laughing-stock! 'What do we care!' George would say. 'They live to-day and now. Twenty years from now will be our turn, Bella. They will be where they are now, and they will eat out of our hand. We will be compelled to feed them, they will need to be fed, and we will feed them well; for we will be rich, Bella, so rich that I am afraid to tell you. But I know

what I know, and you must have faith in me.'

"George was right. Twenty years afterward, though he did not live to see it, my income was a thousand a month. Goodness! I do not know what it is to-day. But I was only nineteen, and I would say to George: 'Now! now! We live now. We may not be alive twenty years from now. I do want a new broom. And there is a third-rate coffee that is only two cents a pound more than the awful stuff we are using. Why couldn't I fry eggs in butter—now? I should dearly love at least one new tablecloth. Our linen! I'm ashamed to put a guest between the sheets, though heaven knows they dare come seldom enough.'

"Be patient, Bella,' he would reply. 'In a little while, in only a few years, those that scorn to sit at our table now, or sleep between our sheets, will be proud of an invitation—those of them who will not be dead. You remember how Stevens passed out last year—free-living and easy, everybody's friend but his own. The Kohala crowd had to bury him, for he left nothing but debts. Watch the others going the same pace. There's your brother Hal. He can't keep it up and live five years, and he's breaking his uncles' hearts. And there's Prince Lilolilo. Dashes by me with half a hundred mounted, able-bodied, roystering kanakas in his train who would be better at hard work and looking after their future, for he will never be king of Hawaii. He will not live to be king of Hawaii.'

"George was right. Brother Hal died. So did Prince Lilolilo. But George was not *all* right. He, who neither drank nor smoked, who never wasted the weight of his arms in an embrace, nor the touch of his lips a second longer than the most perfunctory of kisses, who was invariably up before cockcrow and asleep ere the kerosene lamp had a tenth emptied itself, and who never thought to die, was dead even more quickly

than Brother Hal and Prince Lilolilo.

"Be patient, Bella,' Uncle Robert would say to me. 'George Castner is a coming man. I have chosen well for you. Your hardships now are the hardships on the way to the promised land. Not always will the Hawaiians rule in Hawaii. Just as they let their wealth slip out of their hands, so will their rule slip out of their hands. Political power and the land always go together. There will be great changes, revolutions no one knows how many nor of what sort, save that in the end the haole will possess the land and the rule. And in that day you may well be first lady of Hawaii, just as surely as George Castner will be ruler of Hawaii. It is written in the books. It is ever so where the haole conflicts with the easier races. I, your Uncle Robert, who am half-Hawaiian and half-haole, know whereof I speak. Be patient, Bella, be patient.'

"Dear Bella,' Uncle John would say; and I knew his heart was tender for me. Thank God, he never told me to be patient. He knew. He was very wise. He was warm human, and, therefore, wiser than Uncle Robert and George Castner, who sought the thing, not the spirit, who kept records in ledgers rather than numbers of heart- beats breast to breast, who added columns of figures rather than remembered embraces and endearments of look and speech and touch. 'Dear Bella,' Uncle John would say. He knew. You have heard always how he was the lover of the Princess Naomi. He was a true lover. He loved but the once. After her death they said he was eccentric. He was. He was the one lover, once and always. Remember that taboo inner room of his at Kilohana that we entered only after his death and found it his shrine to her. 'Dear Bella,' it was all he ever said to me, but I knew he knew.

"And I was nineteen, and sun-warm Hawaiian in spite of my three- quarters haole blood, and I knew nothing save my girlhood splendours at Kilohana and my

Honolulu education at the Royal Chief School, and my grey husband at Nahala with his grey preachments and practices of sobriety and thrift, and those two childless uncles of mine, the one with far, cold vision, the other the broken-hearted, for-ever-dreaming lover of a dead princess.

"Think of that grey house! I, who had known the ease and the delights and the ever-laughing joys of Kilohana, and of the Parkers at old Mana, and of Puuwaawaa! You remember. We did live in feudal spaciousness in those days. Would you, can you, believe it, Martha—at Nahala the only sewing machine I had was one of those the early missionaries brought, a tiny, crazy thing that one cranked around by hand!

"Robert and John had each given Husband George five thousand dollars at my marriage. But he had asked for it to be kept secret. Only the four of us knew. And while I sewed my cheap *holokus* on that crazy machine, he bought land with the money—the upper Nahala lands, you know—a bit at a time, each purchase a hard-driven bargain, his face the very face of poverty. To-day the Nahala Ditch alone pays me forty thousand a year.

"But was it worth it? I starved. If only once, madly, he had crushed me in his arms! If only once he could have lingered with me five minutes from his own business or from his fidelity to his employers! Sometimes I could have screamed, or showered the eternal bowl of hot porridge into his face, or smashed the sewing machine upon the floor and danced a hula on it, just to make him burst out and lose his temper and be human, be a brute, be a man of some sort instead of a grey, frozen demi-god."

Bella's tragic expression vanished, and she laughed outright in sheer genuineness of mirthful recollection.

"And when I was in such moods he would gravely look me over, gravely feel my pulse, examine my tongue, gravely dose me with castor oil, and gravely put me to bed early with hot stove-lids, and assure me that I'd feel better in the morning. Early to bed! Our wildest sitting up was nine o'clock. Eight o'clock was our regular bed-time. It saved kerosene. We did not eat dinner at Nahala—remember the great table at Kilohana where we did have dinner? But Husband George and I had supper. And then he would sit close to the lamp on one side the table and read old borrowed magazines for an hour, while I sat on the other side and darned his socks and underclothing. He always wore such cheap, shoddy stuff. And when he went to bed, I went to bed. No wastage of kerosene with only one to benefit by it. And he went to bed always the same way, winding up his watch, entering the day's weather in his diary, and taking off his shoes, right foot first invariably, left foot second, and placing them just so, side by side, on the floor, at the foot of the bed, on his side.

"He was the cleanest man I ever knew. He never wore the same undergarment a second time. I did the washing. He was so clean it hurt. He shaved twice a day. He used more water on his body than any kanaka. He did more work than any two haoles. And he saw the future of the Nahala water."

"And he made you wealthy, but did not make you happy," Martha observed.

Bella sighed and nodded.

"What is wealth after all, Sister Martha? My new Pierce-Arrow came down on the steamer with me. My third in two years. But oh, all the Pierce-Arrows and all the incomes in the world compared with a lover!—the one lover, the one mate, to be married to, to toil beside and suffer and joy beside, the one male man lover

husband—"

Her voice trailed off, and the sisters sat in soft silence while an ancient crone, staff in hand, twisted, doubled, and shrunken under a hundred years of living, hobbled across the lawn to them. Her eyes, withered to scarcely more than peepholes, were sharp as a mongoose's, and at Bella's feet she first sank down, in pure Hawaiian mumbling and chanting a toothless *mele* of Bella and Bella's ancestry and adding to it an extemporized welcome back to Hawaii after her absence across the great sea to California. And while she chanted her *mele*, the old crone's shrewd fingers *lomied* or massaged Bella's silk-stockinged legs from ankle and calf to knee and thigh.

Both Bella's and Martha's eyes were luminous-moist, as the old retainer repeated the *lomi* and the *mele* to Martha, and as they talked with her in the ancient tongue and asked the immemorial questions about her health and age and great-great-grandchildren— she who had *lomied* them as babies in the great house at Kilohana, as her ancestresses had *lomied* their ancestresses back through the unnumbered generations. The brief duty visit over, Martha arose and accompanied her back to the bungalow, putting money into her hand, commanding proud and beautiful Japanese housemaids to wait upon the dilapidated aborigine with *poi*, which is compounded of the roots of the water lily, with *iamaka*, which is raw fish, and with pounded *kukui* nut and *limu*, which latter is seaweed tender to the toothless, digestible and savoury. It was the old feudal tie, the faithfulness of the commoner to the chief, the responsibility of the chief to the commoner; and Martha, three-quarters haole with the Anglo-Saxon blood of New England, was four-quarters Hawaiian in her remembrance and observance of the well-nigh vanished customs of old days.

As she came back across the lawn to the hau tree, Bella's eyes dwelt upon the

moving authenticity of her and of the blood of her, and embraced her and loved her. Shorter than Bella was Martha, a trifle, but the merest trifle, less queenly of port; but beautifully and generously proportioned, mellowed rather than dismantled by years, her Polynesian chiefess figure eloquent and glorious under the satisfying lines of a half-fitting, grandly sweeping, black-silk *holoku* trimmed with black lace more costly than a Paris gown.

And as both sisters resumed their talk, an observer would have noted the striking resemblance of their pure, straight profiles, of their broad cheek-bones, of their wide and lofty foreheads, of their iron-grey abundance of hair, of their sweet-lipped mouths set with the carriage of decades of assured and accomplished pride, and of their lovely slender eye-rows arched over equally lovely long brown eyes. The hands of both of them, little altered or defaced by age, were wonderful in their slender, tapering finger-tips, love-lomied and love-formed while they were babies by old Hawaiian women like to the one even then eating *poi* and *iamaka* and *limu* in the house.

"I had a year of it," Bella resumed, "and, do you know, things were beginning to come right. I was beginning to draw to Husband George. Women are so made, I was such a woman at any rate. For he *was* good. He *was* just. All the old sterling Puritan virtues were his. I was coming to draw to him, to like him, almost, might I say, to love him. And had not Uncle John loaned me that horse, I know that I would have truly loved him and have lived ever happily with him—in a quiet sort of way, of course.

"You see, I knew nothing else, nothing different, nothing better in the way of men. I came gladly to look across the table at him while he read in the brief interval

between supper and bed, gladly to listen for and to catch the beat of his horse's hoofs coming home at night from his endless riding over the ranch. And his scant praise was praise indeed, that made me tingle with happiness—yes, Sister Martha, I knew what it was to blush under his precise, just praise for the things I had done right or correctly.

"And all would have been well for the rest of our lives together, except that he had to take steamer to Honolulu. It was business. He was to be gone two weeks or longer, first, for the Glens in ranch affairs, and next for himself, to arrange the purchase of still more of the upper Nahala lands. Do you know! he bought lots of the wilder and up-and-down lands, worthless for aught save water, and the very heart of the watershed, for as low as five and ten cents an acre. And he suggested I needed a change. I wanted to go with him to Honolulu. But, with an eye to expense, he decided Kilohana for me. Not only would it cost him nothing for me to visit at the old home, but he saved the price of the poor food I should have eaten had I remained alone at Nahala, which meant the purchase price of more Nahala acreage. And at Kilohana Uncle John said yes, and loaned me the horse.

"Oh, it was like heaven, getting back, those first several days. It was difficult to believe at first that there was so much food in all the world. The enormous wastage of the kitchen appalled me. I saw waste everywhere, so well trained had I been by Husband George. Why, out in the servants' quarters the aged relatives and most distant hangers-on of the servants fed better than George and I ever fed. You remember our Kilohana way, same as the Parker way, a bullock killed for every meal, fresh fish by runners from the ponds of Waipio and Kiholo, the best and rarest at all times of everything . . .

"And love, our family way of loving! You know what Uncle John was. And Brother Walcott was there, and Brother Edward, and all the younger sisters save you and Sally away at school. And Aunt Elizabeth, and Aunt Janet with her husband and all her children on a visit. It was arms around, and perpetual endearings, and all that I had missed for a weary twelvemonth. I was thirsty for it. I was like a survivor from the open boat falling down on the sand and lapping the fresh bubbling springs at the roots of the palms.

"And *they* came, riding up from Kawaihae, where they had landed from the royal yacht, the whole glorious cavalcade of them, two by two, flower-garlanded, young and happy, gay, on Parker Ranch horses, thirty of them in the party, a hundred Parker Ranch cowboys and as many more of their own retainers—a royal progress. It was Princess Lihue's progress, of course, she flaming and passing as we all knew with the dreadful tuberculosis; but with her were her nephews, Prince Lilolilo, hailed everywhere as the next king, and his brothers, Prince Kahekili and Prince Kamalau. And with the Princess was Ella Higginsworth, who rightly claimed higher chief blood lines through the Kauai descent than belonged to the reigning family, and Dora Niles, and Emily Lowcroft, and . . . oh, why enumerate them all! Ella Higginsworth and I had been room-mates at the Royal Chief School. And there was a great resting time for an hour—no *luau*, for the *luau* awaited them at the Parkers'—but beer and stronger drinks for the men, and lemonade, and oranges, and refreshing watermelon for the women.

"And it was arms around with Ella Higginsworth and me, and the Princess, who remembered me, and all the other girls and women, and Ella spoke to the Princess, and the Princess herself invited me to the progress, joining them at Mana whence they would depart two days later. And I was mad, mad with it all—I, from a

twelvemonth of imprisonment at grey Nahala. And I was nineteen yet, just turning twenty within the week.

"Oh, I had not thought of what was to happen. So occupied was I with the women that I did not see Lilolilo, except at a distance, bulking large and tall above the other men. But I had never been on a progress. I had seen them entertained at Kilohana and Mana, but I had been too young to be invited along, and after that it had been school and marriage. I knew what it would be like—two weeks of paradise, and little enough for another twelve months at Nahala.

"And I asked Uncle John to lend me a horse, which meant three horses of course—one mounted cowboy and a pack horse to accompany me. No roads then. No automobiles. And the horse for myself! It was Hilo. You don't remember him. You were away at school then, and before you came home, the following year, he'd broken his back and his rider's neck wild-cattle-roping up Mauna Kea. You heard about it—that young American naval officer."

"Lieutenant Bowsfield," Martha nodded.

"But Hilo! I was the first woman on his back. He was a three- year-old, almost a four-year, and just broken. So black and in such a vigour of coat that the high lights on him clad him in shimmering silver. He was the biggest riding animal on the ranch, descended from the King's Sparklingdow with a range mare for dam, and roped wild only two weeks before. I never have seen so beautiful a horse. He had the round, deep-chested, big-hearted, well-coupled body of the ideal mountain pony, and his head and neck were true thoroughbred, slender, yet full, with lovely alert ears not too small to be vicious nor too large to be stubborn mulish. And his legs and feet were lovely too, unblemished, sure and firm, with long springy pasterns that made him a

wonder of ease under the saddle."

"I remember hearing Prince Lilolilo tell Uncle John that you were the best woman rider in all Hawaii," Martha interrupted to say. "That was two years afterward when I was back from school and while you were still living at Nahala."

"Lilolilo said that!" Bella cried. Almost as with a blush, her long, brown eyes were illumined, as she bridged the years to her lover near half a century dead and dust. With the gentleness of modesty so innate in the women of Hawaii, she covered her spontaneous exposure of her heart with added panegyric of Hilo.

"Oh, when he ran with me up the long-grass slopes, and down the long-grass slopes, it was like hurdling in a dream, for he cleared the grass at every bound, leaping like a deer, a rabbit, or a fox-terrier—you know how they do. And cut up, and prance, and high life! He was a mount for a general, for a Napoleon or a Kitchener. And he had, not a wicked eye, but, oh, such a roguish eye, intelligent and looking as if it cherished a joke behind and wanted to laugh or to perpetrate it. And I asked Uncle John for Hilo. And Uncle John looked at me, and I looked at him; and, though he did not say it, I knew he was *feeling* 'Dear Bella,' and I knew, somewhere in his seeing of me, was all his vision of the Princess Naomi. And Uncle John said yes. That is how it happened.

"But he insisted that I should try Hilo out—myself, rather—at private rehearsal. He was a *handful*, a glorious handful. But not vicious, not malicious. He got away from me over and over again, but I never let him know. I was not afraid, and that helped me keep always a *feel* of him that prevented him from thinking that he was even a jump ahead of me.

"I have often wondered if Uncle John dreamed of what possibly might happen. I know I had no thought of it myself, that day I rode across and joined the Princess at Mana. Never was there such festal time. You know the grand way the old Parkers had of entertaining. The pig-sticking and wild-cattle-shooting, the horse-breaking and the branding. The servants' quarters overflowing. Parker cowboys in from everywhere. And all the girls from Waimea up, and the girls from Waipio, and Honokaa, and Paauilo—I can see them yet, sitting in long rows on top the stone walls of the breaking pen and making *leis* (flower garlands) for their cowboy lovers. And the nights, the perfumed nights, the chanting of the mele and the dancing of the hulas, and the big Mana grounds with lovers everywhere strolling two by two under the trees.

"And the Prince . . ." Bella paused, and for a long minute her small fine teeth, still perfect, showed deep in her underlip as she sought and won control and sent her gaze vacantly out across the far blue horizon. As she relaxed, her eyes came back to her sister.

"He was a prince, Martha. You saw him at Kilohana before . . . after you came home from seminary. He filled the eyes of any woman, yes, and of any man. Twenty-five he was, in all-glorious ripeness of man, great and princely in body as he was great and princely in spirit. No matter how wild the fun, how reckless mad the sport, he never seemed to forget that he was royal, and that all his forebears had been high chiefs even to that first one they sang in the genealogies, who had navigated his double-canoes to Tahiti and Raiatea and back again. He was gracious, sweet, kindly comradely, all friendliness—and severe, and stern, and harsh, if he were crossed too grievously. It is hard to express what I mean. He was all man, man, man, and he was all prince, with a strain of the merry boy in him, and the iron in him that would have

made him a good and strong king of Hawaii had he come to the throne.

"I can see him yet, as I saw him that first day and touched his hand and talked with him . . . few words and bashful, and anything but a year-long married woman to a grey haole at grey Nahala. Half a century ago it was, that meeting—you remember how our young men then dressed in white shoes and trousers, white silk shirts, with slashed around the middle the gorgeously colourful Spanish sashes— and for half a century that picture of him has not faded in my heart. He was the centre of a group on the lawn, and I was being brought by Ella Higginsworth to be presented. The Princess Lihue had just called some teasing chaff to her which had made her halt to respond and left me halted a pace in front of her.

"His glance chanced to light on me, alone there, perturbed, embarrassed. Oh, how I see him!—his head thrown back a little, with that high, bright, imperious, and utterly care-free poise that was so usual of him. Our eyes met. His head bent forward, or straightened to me, I don't know what happened. Did he command? Did I obey? I do not know. I know only that I was good to look upon, crowned with fragrant *maile*, clad in Princess Naomi's wonderful holoku loaned me by Uncle John from his taboo room; and I know that I advanced alone to him across the Mana lawn, and that he stepped forth from those about him to meet me half-way. We came to each other across the grass, unattended, as if we were coming to each other across our lives.

"Was I very beautiful, Sister Martha, when I was young? I do not know. I don't know. But in that moment, with all his beauty and truly royal-manness crossing to me and penetrating to the heart of me, I felt a sudden sense of beauty in myself—how shall I say?—as if in him and from him perfection were engendered and conjured within myself.

"No word was spoken. But, oh, I know I raised my face in frank answer to the thunder and trumpets of the message unspoken, and that, had it been death for that one look and that one moment I could not have refrained from the gift of myself that must have been in my face and eyes, in the very body of me that breathed so high.

"Was I beautiful, very beautiful, Martha, when I was nineteen, just turning into twenty?"

And Martha, three-score and four, looked upon Bella, three-score and eight, and nodded genuine affirmation, and to herself added the appreciation of the instant in what she beheld—Bella's neck, still full and shapely, longer than the ordinary Hawaiian woman's neck, a pillar that carried regally her high-cheeked, high-browed, high chiefess face and head; Bella's hair, high-piled, intact, sparkling the silver of the years, ringleted still and contrasting definitely and sharply with her clean, slim, black brows and deep brown eyes. And Martha's glance, in modest overwhelming of modesty by what she saw, dropped down the splendid breast of her and generously true lines of body to the feet, silken clad, high-heeled-slippered, small, plump, with an almost Spanish arch and faultlessness of instep.

"When one is young, the one young time!" Bella laughed. "Lilolilo was a prince. I came to know his every feature and their every phase . . . afterward, in our wonder days and nights by the singing waters, by the slumber-drowsy surfs, and on the mountain ways. I knew his fine, brave eyes, with their straight, black brows, the nose of him that was assuredly a Kamehameha nose, and the last, least, lovable curve of his mouth. There is no mouth more beautiful than the Hawaiian, Martha.

"And his body. He was a king of athletes, from his wicked, wayward hair to his ankles of bronzed steel. Just the other day I heard one of the Wilder grandsons

referred to as 'The Prince of Harvard.' Mercy! What would they, what could they have called my Lilolilo could they have matched him against this Wilder lad and all his team at Harvard!"

Bella ceased and breathed deeply, the while she clasped her fine small hands in her ample silken lap. But her pink fairness blushed faintly through her skin and warmed her eyes as she relived her prince-days.

"Well—you have guessed?" Bella said, with defiant shrug of shoulders and a straight gaze into her sister's eyes. "We rode out from gay Mana and continued the gay progress—down the lava trails to Kiholo to the swimming and the fishing and the feasting and the sleeping in the warm sand under the palms; and up to Puuwaawaa, and more pig-sticking, and roping and driving, and wild mutton from the upper pasture-lands; and on through Kona, now *mauka* (mountainward), "now down to the King's palace at Kailua, and to the swimming at Keauhou, and to Kealakekua Bay, and Napoopoo and Honaunau. And everywhere the people turning out, in their hands gifts of flowers, and fruit, and fish, and pig, in their hearts love and song, their heads bowed in obeisance to the royal ones while their lips ejaculated exclamations of amazement or chanted mele of old and unforgotten days.

"What would you, Sister Martha? You know what we Hawaiians are. You know what we were half a hundred years ago. Lilolilo was wonderful. I was reckless. Lilolilo of himself could make any woman reckless. I was twice reckless, for I had cold, grey Nahala to spur me on. I knew. I had never a doubt. Never a hope. Divorces in those days were undreamed. The wife of George Castner could never be queen of Hawaii, even if Uncle Robert's prophesied revolutions were delayed, and if Lilolilo himself became king. But I never thought of the throne. What I wanted

would have been the queendom of being Lilolilo's wife and mate. But I made no mistake. What was impossible was impossible, and I dreamed no false dream.

"It was the very atmosphere of love. And Lilolilo was a lover. I was for ever crowned with *leis* (wreaths) by him, and he had his runners bring me leis all the way from the rose-gardens of Mana—you remember them; fifty miles across the lava and the ranges, dewy fresh as the moment they were plucked, in their jewel-cases of banana bark; yard-long they were, the tiny pink buds like threaded beads of Neapolitan coral. And at the *luaus* (feasts) the for ever never-ending luaus, I must be seated on Lilolilo's Makaloa mat, the Prince's mat, his alone and taboo to any lesser mortal save by his own condescension and desire. And I must dip my fingers into his own *pa wai holo*i (finger-bowl) where scented flower petals floated in the warm water. Yes, and careless that all should see his extended favour, I must dip into his *pa paakai* for my pinches of red salt, and limu, and kukui nut and chili pepper; and into his *ipu kai* (fish sauce dish) of *kou* wood that the great Kamehameha himself had eaten from on many a similar progress. And it was the same for special delicacies that were for Lilolilo and the Princess alone—for his *nelu*, and the *ake*, and the *palu*, and the *alaala*. And his *kahilis* were waved over me, and his attendants were mine, and he was mine; and from my flower-crowned hair to my happy feet I was a woman loved."

Once again Bella's small teeth pressed into her underlip, as she gazed vacantly seaward and won control of herself and her memories.

"It was on, and on, through all Kona, and all Kau, from Hoopuloa and Kapua to Honuapo and Punaluu, a life-time of living compressed into two short weeks. A flower blooms but once. That was my time of bloom—Lilolilo beside me, myself on

my wonderful Hilo, a queen, not of Hawaii, but of Lilolilo and Love. He said I was a bubble of colour and beauty on the black back of Leviathan; that I was a fragile dewdrop on the smoking crest of a lava flow; that I was a rainbow riding the thunder cloud . . . "

Bella paused for a moment.

"I shall tell you no more of what he said to me," she declared gravely; "save that the things he said were fire of love and essence of beauty, and that he composed hulas to me, and sang them to me, before all, of nights under the stars as we lay on our mats at the feasting; and I on the Makaloa mat of Lilolilo.

"And it was on to Kilauea—the dream so near its ending; and of course we tossed into the pit of sea-surgings lava our offerings to *Pele* (Fire-Goddess) of maile leis and of fish and hard poi wrapped moist in the *ti* leaves. And we continued down through old Puna, and feasted and danced and sang at Kohoualea and Kamaili and Opihikao, and swam in the clear, sweet-water pools of Kalapana. And in the end came to Hilo by the sea.

"It was the end. We had never spoken. It was the end recognized and unmentioned. The yacht waited. We were days late. Honolulu called, and the news was that the King had gone particularly *pupule* (insane), that there were Catholic and Protestant missionary plottings, and that trouble with France was brewing. As they had landed at Kawaihae two weeks before with laughter and flowers and song, so they departed from Hilo. It was a merry

parting, full of fun and frolic and a thousand last messages and reminders and jokes. The anchor was broken out to a song of farewell from Lilolilo's singing boys on the

quarterdeck, while we, in the big canoes and whaleboats, saw the first breeze fill the vessel's sails and the distance begin to widen.

"Through all the confusion and excitement, Lilolilo, at the rail, who must say last farewells and quip last jokes to many, looked squarely down at me. On his head he wore my *ilima* lei, which I had made for him and placed there. And into the canoes, to the favoured ones, they on the yacht began tossing their many leis. I had no expectancy of hope . . . And yet I hoped, in a small wistful way that I know did not show in my face, which was as proud and merry as any there. But Lilolilo did what I knew he would do, what I had known from the first he would do. Still looking me squarely and honestly in the eyes, he took my beautiful *ilima* lei from his head and tore it across. I saw his lips shape, but not utter aloud, the single word *pau* (finish). Still looking at me, he broke both parts of the lei in two again and tossed the deliberate fragments, not to me, but down overside into the widening water. Pau. It was finished . . . "

For a long space Bella's vacant gaze rested on the sea horizon. Martha ventured no mere voice expression of the sympathy that moistened her own eyes.

"And I rode on that day, up the old bad trail along the Hamakua coast," Bella resumed, with a voice at first singularly dry and harsh. "That first day was not so hard. I was numb. I was too full with the wonder of all I had to forget to know that I had to forget it. I spent the night at Laupahoehoe. Do you know, I had expected a sleepless night. Instead, weary from the saddle, still numb, I slept the night through as if I had been dead.

"But the next day, in driving wind and drenching rain! How it blew and poured! The trail was really impassable. Again and again our horses went down. At fist the

cowboy Uncle John had loaned me with the horses protested, then he followed stolidly in the rear, shaking his head, and, I know, muttering over and over that I was pupule. The pack horse was abandoned at Kukuihaele. We almost swam up Mud Lane in a river of mud. At Waimea the cowboy had to exchange for a fresh mount. But Hilo lasted through. From daybreak till midnight I was in the saddle, till Uncle John, at Kilohana, took me off my horse, in his arms, and carried me in, and routed the women from their beds to undress me and lomi me, while he plied me with hot toddies and drugged me to sleep and forgetfulness. I know I must have babbled and raved. Uncle John must have guessed. But never to another, nor even to me, did he ever breathe a whisper. Whatever he guessed he locked away in the taboo room of Naomi.

"I do have fleeting memories of some of that day, all a broken- hearted mad rage against fate—of my hair down and whipped wet and stinging about me in the driving rain; of endless tears of weeping contributed to the general deluge, of passionate outbursts and resentments against a world all twisted and wrong, of beatings of my hands upon my saddle pommel, of asperities to my Kilohana cowboy, of spurs into the ribs of poor magnificent Hilo, with a prayer on my lips, bursting out from my heart, that the spurs would so madden him as to make him rear and fall on me and crush my body for ever out of all beauty for man, or topple me off the trail and finish me at the foot of the *palis* (precipices), writing pau at the end of my name as final as the unuttered pau on Lilolilo's lips when he tore across my ilima lei and dropped it in the sea. . . .

"Husband George was delayed in Honolulu. When he came back to Nahala I was there waiting for him. And solemnly he embraced me, perfunctorily kissed my lips, gravely examined my tongue, decried my looks and state of health, and sent me to

bed with hot stove-lids and a dosage of castor oil. Like entering into the machinery of a clock and becoming one of the cogs or wheels, inevitably and remorselessly turning around and around, so I entered back into the grey life of Nahala. Out of bed was Husband George at half after four every morning, and out of the house and astride his horse at five. There was the eternal porridge, and the horrible cheap coffee, and the fresh beef and jerky. I cooked, and baked, and scrubbed. I ground around the crazy hand sewing machine and made my cheap holokus. Night after night, through the endless centuries of two years more, I sat across the table from him until eight o'clock, mending his cheap socks and shoddy underwear, while he read the years' old borrowed magazines he was too thrifty to subscribe to. And then it was bed-time—kerosene must be economized—and he wound his watch, entered the weather in his diary, and took off his shoes, the right shoe first, and placed them, just so, side by side, at the foot of the bed on his side.

"But there was no more of my drawing to Husband George, as had been the promise ere the Princess Lihue invited me on the progress and Uncle John loaned me the horse. You see, Sister Martha, nothing would have happened had Uncle John refused me the horse. But I had known love, and I had known Lilolilo; and what chance, after that, had Husband George to win from me heart of esteem or affection? And for two years, at Nahala, I was a dead woman who somehow walked and talked, and baked and scrubbed, and mended socks and saved kerosene. The doctors said it was the shoddy underwear that did for him, pursuing as always the high-mountain Nahala waters in the drenching storms of midwinter.

"When he died, I was not sad. I had been sad too long already. Nor was I glad. Gladness had died at Hilo when Lilolilo dropped my ilima lei into the sea and my feet were never happy again. Lilolilo passed within a month after Husband George. I

had never seen him since the parting at Hilo. La, la, suitors a many have I had since; but I was like Uncle John. Mating for me was but once. Uncle John had his Naomi room at Kilohana. I have had my Lilolilo room for fifty years in my heart. You are the first, Sister Martha, whom I have permitted to enter that room . . . "

A machine swung the circle of the drive, and from it, across the lawn, approached the husband of Martha. Erect, slender, grey-haired, of graceful military bearing, Roscoe Scandwell was a member of the "Big Five," which, by the interlocking of interests, determined the destinies of all Hawaii. Himself pure haole, New England born, he kissed Bella first, arms around, full-hearted, in the Hawaiian way. His alert eye told him that there had been a woman talk, and, despite the signs of all generousness of emotion, that all was well and placid in the twilight wisdom that was theirs.

"Elsie and the younglings are coming—just got a wireless from their steamer," he announced, after he had kissed his wife. "And they'll be spending several days with us before they go on to Maui."

"I was going to put you in the Rose Room, Sister Bella," Martha Scandwell planned aloud. "But it will be better for her and the children and the nurses and everything there, so you shall have Queen Emma's Room."

"I had it last time, and I prefer it," Bella said.

Roscoe Scandwell, himself well taught of Hawaiian love and love-ways, erect, slender, dignified, between the two nobly proportioned women, an arm around each of their sumptuous waists, proceeded with them toward the house.