

Lilo a Ho'okahua

(lost and found)

Part 1

Diana

April 14, 1973

The seven Bob-Whites of the Glen were gathered at Diana Lynch's house to celebrate Jim Frayne's and Brian Belden's Spring Break, which took place the week before Sleepyside Junior-Senior High School's Spring Break. Although many of their college classmates traveled south to Florida for a few days of sun and surf, Brian and Jim preferred to visit their families and friends at home.

Diana and Jim had gone to the Lynches' kitchen to bring out platters of sandwiches, chips, dip, and soft drinks. A lively game of gin rummy was in progress, with Trixie, Honey, Mart and Dan playing, when the talk turned to the hula recital in which the three girls would be performing. They had been fortunate enough to get into a class taught by a college student who had danced the hula for many years in her home state of Hawai'i.

"So, what kind of costumes are you wearing for the dance?" Brian asked. He was flipping through Diana's record collection, in hopes of finding the latest album from Paul McCartney and Wings.

Honey had made the girls' mu'u mu'u costumes herself, but Brian and Jim had not seen them. In fact, Honey had suggested that they should surprise the boys. The graceful, flowing dresses were currently hanging in the closet of Honey's former governess, now estate manager for her family, Miss Margery Trask.

"Brian, you know perfectly well that we're not going to tell you! You'll have to wait and see." Trixie lay down all seven cards in her

hand with a flourish. “Set of four and run of three. I win this hand!” She chortled with glee.

Her brother Mart, eleven months older, was holding a fan of nearly twenty cards, which he slapped onto the table in frustration. The cards had not favored him so far that night. While Trixie gathered the cards and prepared to reshuffle them, he began to tease her. “Well, I, for one, intend to sit far in the back of the audience. I don’t want to be anywhere close when Trixie tumbles off the stage this time.”

“Mart, Trixie is a very good dancer, and nothing like that will happen.” Tactful Honey placed her hand on Trixie’s arm.

Trixie smacked the stack of cards down and glared at her brother, who was now standing and doing a parody of a hula dance.

“Then maybe you’d better not come at all,” she snapped.

“Cut it out, Mart,” Brian admonished his brother.

“Dude, I think they’ll be great! I can’t wait to see them. Are you wearing grass skirts, Honey?” Dan Mangan’s dark eyes sparkled.

Diana, followed by Jim, entered the terrace just in time to see Trixie’s red face and flashing blue eyes, as well as Mart’s dance. Her lips set in a firm line, but her voice was honey-sweet as she said, “Mart, I wish you’d come out to Mummy’s rose garden with me for a minute. She can raise any kind of houseplant, but these roses are giving her fits, and she’s afraid they’ve got some kind of disease.” She set down a platter of sandwiches and a large bowl of chips, and placed a hand on his arm. “You know so much about roses from helping your mom, I’m sure you’ll know what’s wrong. Let’s take a break from cards for a while and eat. Maybe you guys can play for us on the guitars after that.”

“Your wish is my command, my sweet cupcake,” Mart replied. He stopped his antics and grabbed a sandwich as Diana grasped his hand and pulled him toward the French doors that led outside to a semi-enclosed terrace, which extended to an open patio bordered by the

flower garden. The other Bob-Whites gathered around the tray, exclaiming over the tasty snacks.

Outside, Diana waited until they were out of sight of the house, and then turned to face Mart. Her beautiful violet eyes were shooting sparks. “Mart, were you teasing Trixie about falling off the stage? How could you? That’s the very thing she’s terrified of happening! She has a complex about it! Honey and I – and your mother – were forever convincing her she could do it. And she’s really a good dancer. I better not hear one more word about you teasing her, or ... or ... or our Prom date is off!” She stamped her foot.

Mart had the grace to look ashamed. “That’s me, opening my big mouth before I think! I’ll tell her I’m sorry. You girls have done a lot of practicing, I know.”

“Well, don’t tell her right away, or she’ll know I said something to you, and then she’ll be mad at me. Just don’t tease her about it any more.” Diana smiled. “I know you’re really Trixie’s biggest fan, but some things cut a little too close. She can’t take teasing about the recital because she is nervous about it.”

Mart dug in the soft soil of the rose bed with the toe of his sneaker. “I won’t tease her any more. I’m sure you’ll all be just great. Say, will you need any props for the recital? Dan and I could probably paint some palm trees and a beach scene for a backdrop.”

“Oh, what a wonderful idea, Mart!” Diana’s eyes now sparkled with pleasure at his offer. “Come on! Let’s go tell the others.” She grabbed his hand and started back toward the house.

“Um, well, I haven’t exactly asked Dan yet. He might not want to help.” Mart looked as if he was regretting his impulsive offer.

“Don’t be silly! When Trixie and Honey look at Dan, he’s butter in their hands. He’d do anything if he thought it would make one of them happy, and you know it.” Diana emphasized her words with a toss of her ebony hair.

“Okay, you’re right, Di. But he’d do it for you, too. He thinks you’re just ... just ...” Mart stuttered to a stop.

“Just what?” Diana stopped, dropping Mart’s hand and placing both of her own hands on her hips. They were almost back to the patio. “Just what does Dan think about me?”

“He ... he thinks you’re the nicest girl in the world.” Mart looked unhappy as he admitted this information.

“He does?” Diana smiled in spite of herself. “Well, he’s very sweet, too.” She peered at Mart, who looked even more miserable. “Mart, what is the matter with you? You’re acting completely weird tonight.”

“Well, I, um, I guess I’m afraid that you’ll like Dan better than you like me, now that you know how he feels. All the girls think he is so hot. I’m just ... well, I’m just a ... nerd.”

“Martin Johnson Belden! What a thing to say! First, I like Dan as a friend ... a good friend. I’m not interested in dating him, even if he didn’t already have a girlfriend. And second, I don’t think you’re a nerd, but even if I did, so what? I like you. I like your goofy crew cut, I like your blue eyes and your freckles, I like your big words, and I like your generous heart!” She suddenly pulled him close to her, stood on her tiptoes, and kissed him on the lips.

Stunned, Mart wrapped his arms around her and after a split second, he kissed her back. The heady scent of her Yardley’s English Lavender shampoo filled his nostrils and he teased her lips open, deepening the kiss. Diana’s hands were pressed into his back and her body was soft and yielding against his chest.

“Hey, you two! Get inside, or get a room!” Dan’s voice caused the couple to break apart. Both were panting heavily. Diana smoothed her hair and tugged at her dress to make sure it was down where it belonged. Mart turned aside to tuck his shirt into his jeans and to make sure that nothing about his clothing was awry.

As Diana expected, the other Bob-Whites were enthusiastic about Mart's idea of painting a scenic backdrop. Brian and Jim both promised to make the trip home the next weekend in order to help.

"I think there are some beach chairs in our boathouse that Mother and Daddy would let us use, too," offered Honey. "A couple of chairs wouldn't take up too much room on the stage, would they? And they're not too heavy."

"Let's make a list of all the props we think we can get, and show it to Miss Halia. There might be a limit to how many things can be stored backstage." Diana produced a pencil and paper as she spoke. "Mart, Dan, do you guys think you could be our stage crew?"

"Sure, Di. We'd be glad to do it." Dan and Mart both answered at the same time.

"Hey, Trix, remember your dad's ukulele that you wanted to pretend you were playing? Do you think he'd let us use it? I mean, just to sit in one of the chairs." Honey's eyes glowed as she began to picture the stage set in her mind's eye.

"I'm sure Dad would let us use his old uke. That would be cool!" Trixie spoke for the first time. She was smiling. "Mart, thanks for thinking about making a scenic backdrop. We'll talk to Miss Halia tomorrow at dance class."

April 15, 1973

The next day being Saturday, the three Bob-White girls were up early. Mart and Dan were driving them to dance class in order to meet and talk with Miss Halia after class. Although all of the girls had their drivers' licenses, their parents did not like for them to drive outside of town. This rule had been the source of numerous arguments, but the parents held firm. As a result, Dan was at the wheel of the BWG station wagon as they set off.

As class ended, Trixie approached her dance instructor. "Miss Halia, we – that is, Honey, Di, and I – were wondering if we could have some kind of scenic backdrop or props on the stage while we

dance in the recital. You know, something to help make the audience feel as if we were in Hawai'i. Do you think Miss Rhonda would let us?"

"What kind of props do you mean, Trixie? There won't be much time between each group of dancers, and there is limited storage space backstage. I do know that Miss Rhonda isn't going to purchase any props." The pretty, dark-haired Hawai'ian girl looked interested, despite her skepticism.

"What Trixie means, Miss Halia, is that her brother Mart, and our friend, Dan Mangan, offered to paint a canvas backdrop of a beach scene," Diana explained. "Trixie's dad has a ukulele he'll let us use, and Honey has a couple of beach chairs we can borrow. So I don't think that would take up too much room. We'd pay for the canvas and paints ourselves, so it wouldn't cost the studio any money."

"And the other hula students could use the same backdrop and props for their dances," Honey added. Two groups of younger students, including Diana's young twin sisters, were presenting a hula during the recital as well.

"Hmmm, I'll have to speak to Miss Rhonda. She would have to approve any props. But if she says it's all right, it's fine with me." Halia smiled. "So your dad has a ukulele, Trixie? That's an unusual musical instrument around this part of the country. Does he play?"

"My uncle Harold was at Pearl Harbor for a month or so, back in 1951. He brought back gifts for his parents and younger brothers – my dad and Uncle Andy. Dad taught himself how to play when he was in college, and he still plays every now and then. He says it's genuine koa wood – whatever that is."

Halia's eyes widened as Trixie spoke. Her face paled and she took in a deep, shuddering breath.

"What's wrong, Miss Halia?" Honey's voice reflected her concern. "Do you need to sit down?"

Diana pulled the piano bench from its place in front of the upright piano below the stage. “Sit down, Miss Halia. I’ll get a glass of water for you.”

The dance instructor sank gracefully onto the bench, but she waved away Diana’s offer of water. “I’m all right, girls. It was just a shock to hear that your dad’s ukulele came from Hawai’i. I’ve been looking for a ukulele for this whole past year that I’ve been in White Plains. My great-grandfather made ukuleles back in the 1920s. He made them by hand, and there were only about fifty. My mother has been working on a project to document all of his ukuleles. She’s writing a book about him and is trying to track down all of his instruments and get pictures of them. She’s been working on this for about five years now. So far, she’s learned what happened to about thirty-five of them, and fourteen are still in our family.”

“Gleeps, Miss Halia!” Trixie’s blue eyes were wide. “That only leaves one to find! Do you have any clues about what might have happened to it?”

“We know that it was pawned around the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor, and our research has indicated that it was bought by someone from Westchester County, New York. That’s a big reason why I chose to come here to school this year. But I’ve placed classified ads in every paper published in the county, spoken to the head of the music department here, and visited all of the music teachers I could find in the Yellow pages. It hasn’t turned up.”

“I wonder if Trixie’s dad’s ukulele could possibly be the one you’re looking for? Wouldn’t it be *too* perfectly perfect if it was?” Honey’s eyes danced as she thought about the possibility.

“Would you recognize the ukulele if you saw it, Miss Halia?” Diana was fascinated by the idea of locating the long-lost instrument.

“Actually, I have a picture of my great-uncle playing the ukulele. It’s in black and white, but you can see quite a bit of detail in the picture. Besides that, we have learned that Great-grandfather signed every instrument he made with a symbol on the back of the body of

the uke. I know what the symbol looks like, so I could recognize it if I saw it.”

“Let me ask my parents, but I’m sure they would love for you to come to our house for dinner. You could see the ukulele and your search might be over!” Trixie was almost bouncing in her excitement.

“Trixie, I wouldn’t dream of imposing on your parents’ hospitality!” Miss Halia was obviously torn between the desire to see Peter Belden’s ukulele and fear of intruding.

“Moms and Dad always say Crabapple Farm has stretchy walls. I know they want to meet you and they’d love to have you over.” Trixie chattered on, her words tumbling over each other. “Maybe not this weekend, but I’ll bet they’ll want to have a cookout to say goodbye to Brian and Jim – those are mine and Honey’s older brothers – when they go back to college at the end of Spring Break.”

“If the weather is bad, I’m sure my parents would love to have everyone over for a celebration,” Honey added. “Our house is big, and there would be plenty of space for all of the Bob-Whites and our families to sit down indoors while we eat.”

“Mummy told me that she wants to have Miss Halia over for dinner again, too, before she leaves New York. She’s been to our house before, so she knows how to get there. So if either of you couldn’t do it, I’m sure we could have everyone for a get-together.” Diana was crouched next to the bench where Halia was seated, but she glanced up at her friends as she spoke.

Halia laughed and patted Diana’s hand. “Thank you all, girls! I really appreciate your hospitality, and it would be great to see your dad’s ukulele, Trixie. Although I’m not getting my hopes up that it could be the one! I’ve been disappointed too many times. Why don’t you check with your parents, and you can let me know next Saturday. Or, I’ll give you my address and phone number. You can call me or write if your parents want to invite me to come out to Sleepyside.” She glanced at her watch. “Oh, my goodness! It’s almost time for the next class to arrive. We need to leave so we don’t hold up the ballet class that starts in fifteen minutes.”

Just then, the door at the other end of the long practice studio opened, and Mart Belden's blond head appeared. "Hey, squaws! I thought your class was over at ten-thirty. We need to get going, so Dan and I can study for our Advanced Biology test before it's time to patrol the preserve again."

"We're coming, Mart," Trixie answered him. "Miss Halia, please come and meet my brother Mart and our friend, Dan Mangan. They're the two who volunteered to make the props for our recital." She took the teacher's hand and hurried to the door. Honey and Diana followed at a more sedate pace, carrying the gym bags which held their street clothes.

Trixie

Mrs. Belden agreed that a cookout at Crabapple Farm would be a perfect way to send off the two older Bob-Whites, as well as to meet Miss Halia. The weather forecast called for sunny skies and mild temperatures for the following weekend, and after consulting with the Wheelers and the Lynches, the party was set for Sunday afternoon on the Beldens' terrace. Trixie dashed off an invitation to Miss Halia and ran down to the mailbox to post it, even though the mail wouldn't be picked up until Monday.

Afterward, she ran back up the drive and into the house. At the door of her dad's study, she stopped to catch her breath, and then knocked on the door.

"Come in," Peter Belden invited. Standing in the doorway, Trixie had to take a few more breaths before she was able to make her request.

"Dad – can I – borrow – your – ukulele?" she panted. "Miss Halia – is looking for one – that her – grandfather made – I mean, her great-grandfather. Back in the 1920s. I told her that you had an old ukulele, because we were thinking about using it for a prop in our recital. She has a picture of the one she is looking for. Oh! Wouldn't it be too exciting for words if yours was the same one?"

Mr. Belden looked up, a bemused smile on his face. “Slow down, Princess, and tell me again exactly what you mean.” He patted the footstool in front of his chair and set down his newsmagazine.

By the time Trixie had explained her story again, her father was shaking his head in amazement. “You girls are welcome to use my ukulele, and I’ll be happy for Miss Halia to look at it. If – and that’s a big if – it turns out to be the one her grandfather made, she’s welcome to have it. But I don’t think my uke is old enough to have been made in the 1920s. Your uncle Harold spent a few days in Hawai’i in 1951, on his way home from serving in the Korean War. Hawai’i wasn’t a state back then, you know. Harold bought souvenirs for the whole family; your Uncle Andy got a ukulele, too. I’m pretty sure that he bought them at a pawn shop. But the chances of us having the ukulele that Halia is looking for ... well, they’re about as good as the chance of finding a needle in a haystack. So please don’t get your hopes up.”

3305 words Author’s Notes will be found at conclusion of story.

Lilo A Ho’okahua

Part 2

April 23, 1973

After a cloudburst drenched Glen Road Saturday afternoon, Trixie had tossed and turned all night, dreaming that the party would have to be transferred to the Manor House. Her fears were relieved when Sunday dawned cloudless. By noon, Tom Delanoy, the Wheelers’ chauffeur, and Regan, their redheaded groom, had already delivered a dozen lawn chairs and two patio tables to the Beldens’ driveway. Brian, Mart, Jim and Dan unloaded them and arranged them on the Beldens’ terrace, while Trixie and Honey wiped down the tables and Diana swept the terrace.

“Do you think it’s too crowded? Maybe we should have had the cookout at one of your houses after all.” Trixie frowned and pushed a damp curl from her sweaty forehead. Then she lifted the tail of her long T-shirt and fanned herself with it.

“Trixie, it’s perfectly perfect,” Honey assured her. “Of course we would have been happy to have it at our house, but everything looks fine. Your parents have more people inside during your Thanksgiving Open House than we will today.” She used the lower edge of her angel top to mop her own brow. “This feels cozy and ... well, more friendly.”

“Yes, Trix, it’ll be great,” Diana chimed in. And besides, your dad is much better on the grill than my dad is. Although Daddy thinks he’s the king of grilling!” Di smiled affectionately as she spoke of her father.

Trixie wondered how it was that Diana never seemed to sweat as much as she did. Then she took a closer look at Diana’s clothes and realized that instead of jeans, Di wore a short lavender scooter-skirt and a matching sleeveless scoop-neck shell top. She had removed her thin white cotton sweater and taken it inside after the terrace began heating up. White “teeny-bop” Keds oxfords completed her cool, casual but dressy look, and her long black hair was rolled up in an orange juice can on top of her head to keep it smooth and straight . Honey’s modest angel top just touched the top of her lightweight jeans, and she also wore tennis shoes. Her shiny golden brown hair was neatly pulled back into a low ponytail. Trixie sighed and stared at her heavy jeans and chunky Converse Chucks. *Will I ever look as polished as either one of them?* she asked herself.

“Okay, I think it looks just fine now,” she said aloud. “It’s not one o’clock yet. Honey, you should have time to run home and shower before Miss Halia and the Lynches get here, if you need to change clothes. I know that’s what I’m going to do. Come back just as soon as you can!”

“I will!” Honey waved as she headed toward her home. “Mother, Daddy, Miss Trask and Regan are all coming down, and we’ll all bring food when we come. Have Jim and Dan already left?”

“I saw them riding in the bed of the pickup when Tom took it back to the house,” Diana said. “What are Tom and Celia going to do this afternoon?”

Honey stopped to answer. “Celia told me that she and Tom are looking forward to an afternoon by themselves. Tom’s mother is watching the baby, and they’re going to see a movie and eat out tonight. See you in a bit!” She waved again and disappeared from sight in a moment, as she followed the curving, tree-lined path which served as a shortcut to the Manor House.

Trixie and Diana turned to go into the Beldens’ house. “Come up to my room, Di, and help me choose something to wear. Surely I have something comfortable that’s more dressy than jeans and a T-shirt.”

While Trixie showered, Diana searched through her closet and dresser. By the time Trixie returned to her room, wrapped in a towel, her friend had assembled an outfit and laid it out on her friend’s bed.

“How about this, Trix?” she asked.

Trixie stared at the royal blue, V-necked short-sleeved knit top and the scooter-skirt of royal blue. A nautical touch of white braid outlined the front skirt panel, and a white appliquéd star accented the lower corner. Red canvas slip-on shoes and a pair of red, white, and blue post earrings completed the ensemble.

“I’ve had both of those pieces, and the shoes, for a long time – Aunt Alicia made me that scooter skirt for Easter last year, and Moms bought me the top last summer on clearance. But I’ve hardly worn them, and never together. Why didn’t I ever think of them as an outfit?” Trixie turned to Diana and threw up her hands. “See? I’m just hopeless when it comes to clothes. How do you do it?”

Diana shrugged. “I guess I’ve always liked clothes, and when I was little, Mummy and I spent a lot of time putting outfits together. She

wanted me to look nice, but she bought most of my clothes at the thrift shop to save money. I occasionally got a box of hand-me-downs from a cousin of my dad's, who had an older daughter. We had to do a lot of mixing and matching to create a few outfits that would look good. I do love to try out colors and styles, now that I can buy new clothes."

Trixie dressed, and Diana helped her tame her unruly curls into the latest hairstyle; a short shag, fluffy on top, with longer ringlets kissing her neck in back. Next, Diana applied a touch of foundation and blush. After a whisk of the powder brush, a flick of brown mascara, and a dab of strawberry lip-gloss, she pronounced Trixie ready.

"I don't feel like myself with all this stuff on my face," Trixie remarked. "Not that I'm complaining – you did a great job transforming the ugly duckling into a ... well, not a swan, but at least into a pretty okay-looking girl." She watched as her ebony-haired friend removed the orange juice can from her hair and let down the ponytail, brushing her black mane until it crackled, and then smoothing it down with her hands.

Turning to face Trixie, Diana said, "You look great, and Jim will be drooling over you! Everyone can't look the same, Trix, and you've got to accept that there are different kinds of good looks. I'll never look as elegant as Honey does, without even trying. Honey wishes she had more ... um, curves ... in her figure. You know perfectly well that you look exactly like your mom, and no one could say she's not pretty. Jim likes you just the way you are, and he thinks you're beautiful. So, no more 'ugly duckling' comments! Now – where's that ukulele of your dad's? I know you wanted to show it to Miss Halia."

Trixie pulled the ukulele case from under her bed, and opened it to reveal the instrument. It was clean and dust-free, and Mr. Belden had had it restrung and tuned after Trixie told him the story of Miss Halia's search. The two girls touched it reverently. "Just think, what if this is the one?" Trixie's voice was hushed.

"Oh, wouldn't it be fantastic!" Diana was equally awed.

“Girls! It’s about time for Miss Halia to arrive. Didn’t you tell her two-thirty, Trixie?” Helen Belden’s voice came from the foot of the stairs. “I think the Lynches will be here soon, too.”

“We’ll be right down, Moms,” Trixie promised. Carefully, she replaced the ukulele in its case, and she and Diana hurried downstairs, where they found Trixie’s mother arranging a vase of white and yellow jonquils.

“Everything’s ready,” she said. “The hamburger patties are in the refrigerator in my big roasting pan, and we have three packages of hotdogs, too. We have plenty of pickles, onions, lettuce, mustard, mayonnaise and catsup; as well as buns. Your father and brothers are outside lighting the charcoal now; Dad wants to grill some of the corn on the cob that I froze last summer. I’ve cooked a casserole of baked beans; Diana’s mother is bringing potato salad and cupcakes; the Wheelers and Miss Trask are bringing a tray of crudités, a gallon of lemonade, and a chocolate cake.”

“Mrs. Belden, it all sounds absolutely delicious!” Diana beamed at her hostess. “I helped Mummy make the potato salad and the cupcakes last night. The twins are so excited – Margie and Barbie can’t wait for Miss Halia to see the cupcakes they helped decorate.”

“Moms! The Lynches are here!” Trixie’s nine-year-old brother, Bobby, stood at the front window. He was friendly with Diana’s little brothers, who were slightly younger, although the three boys were in the same class. Bobby gloried in being the eldest in the group for a change, and had been looking forward to their visit so much that he had been more restless than usual all day. His attempts at helping had generally caused more work, such as when he had filled a cooler full of ice – without noticing that the drain was not plugged. After filling it, he had discovered it was too heavy for him to move without help, and since everyone else was busy, he had left it in front of the refrigerator. In an hour, there was a growing puddle of water in the middle of the Beldens’ kitchen floor. Finally, Mrs. Belden had posted him to sentry duty at the front window, after having him shut Reddy, the affectionate but untrained Irish setter, in the basement. Neither Diana’s little sisters nor Mrs. Wheeler were fond of large, barking

dogs who jumped up on them, despite Bobby's assurances that "he'll only lick you to death!"

If I heard him ask 'how much longer' once, he must have asked a thousand times! Trixie thought. Aloud, she said, "Why don't you run outside and see if you can help them carry something? I think Di said her parents were bringing paper plates and napkins as well as the potato salad and cupcakes."

"Okay!" Bobby needed no further urging. He was out the door in a flash and running toward the Lynches' Cadillac even before Mr. Lynch could park it.

"I hope Bobby doesn't forget that he just promised Moms he'd help," Trixie worried. But Bobby was proud to be a host and sure enough, he could be seen offering to carry the bag of disposable plates and tableware. Larry Lynch carried a huge bowl of potato salad, and his twin Terry held a covered tray, presumably the cupcakes. Mrs. Lynch followed, holding a hand of each of Diana's little sisters, while Mr. Lynch could be seen heading toward the terrace, where Mr. Belden was checking the progress of the charcoal in his grill pan. Trixie opened the door for Mrs. Lynch and the children, and while the boys took the food into the kitchen, she and Diana lifted little Margie and Barbie and spun them around the living room.

As the smaller girls' giggles escalated into piercing squeals, Mrs. Belden called back from the kitchen, "Trixie! Outside if you are going to swing the little ones around! There's not enough room inside the house and I don't want anyone getting hurt."

Mrs. Lynch joined in. "Diana Kay! I'm surprised at you. Outside this minute!"

"Yes, Ma'am." Trixie and Diana spoke in unison, and set the twins back on their feet. "We'll go outside and play in a minute, girls," Diana promised. "But Trixie and I need to help finish getting ready for the cookout. Do you think you can watch out the window for Miss Halia?"

“Of course we can, Di-di. We love Miss Halia!” Margie assured her big sister.

“I know she has a little yellow Bug car,” added Barbie, with an emphatic nod which made her ponytails bounce.

Trixie and Diana carried paper plates, cups, napkins, and plastic flatware outside to the table which had been designated as the buffet table. Salt, pepper, and the other condiments were arranged near the bags of buns at the end of the line. As they placed the last items on the table, Trixie looked up, toward the Manor House. Honey and her family were making their way down the path from their house, on the newly flagged pathway, with steps built into the slope where necessary. Jim carried a cooler, Honey a pitcher of lemonade, and Miss Trask a tray of raw vegetables – crudités, as Mrs. Belden had explained to Trixie. Mrs. Wheeler, elegant in silky sage-green palazzo pants and a matching shell with a cardigan tied around her shoulders, clutched her husband’s arm with one hand, and a plastic, covered cake holder with the other.

Trixie and Diana ran to greet their friends, taking the cake and vegetable tray from Mrs. Wheeler and Miss Trask. While Diana set the vegetable tray on the buffet table, Trixie took the cake into the kitchen. Honey and Diana followed her inside, leaving the elder Wheelers on the terrace with Trixie’s parents. Matthew Wheeler admired Peter Belden’s grilling expertise, and Jim joined Brian and Mart at the grill which held the ears of corn. Mrs. Wheeler dropped gracefully into a lounge chair.

“What was wrong with your mom, Honey?” Trixie blurted out as soon as they were inside the house. “She was as pale as a ghost.”

“Mother has a phobia about falling down stairs when she’s carrying anything,” Honey replied. “Years ago she fell down some steps while she was carrying a bunch of important papers for Daddy. They were outside, it was windy, and she was afraid the papers would be scattered, so she fell when she missed a step. She had to have stitches in her head, had a concussion, and broke her wrist. Since then she’s very cautious. One reason Daddy had the path paved was

so that she could get some practice. The steps are shallow and pretty wide.”

“She’s here! She’s here!” Margie and Barbie Lynch shouted from their perch on the living room window seat. “Miss Halia is here!”

The three Bob-White girls ran to the living room and out the door to greet their dance teacher, followed by Diana’s sisters. “Did you have any trouble finding our house?” Trixie asked anxiously.

“No, none at all. Your directions and map were very good.” Miss Halia was dressed in a red mu’umu’u printed with white frangipani blossoms. Her dark, wavy hair hung loosely down her back, and she wore a pair of brown criss-cross sandals.

Diana was the last one to reach the yellow Volkswagen, since she had stopped to close the front door. “You can thank Trixie’s brother Brian for the directions,” she said. “He’s very smart, and explains everything so even someone like me can understand.”

“Miss Halia! You finally came!” Barbie was jumping up and down in excitement.

“I told you she’d come, silly.” Margie looked at her sister with an air of superiority. Then she turned to the dance teacher. “But I thought you’d never get here!”

Miss Halia tucked up her long dress, and dropped to her knees to give the little girls a hug. “I’m so glad I could come!” Each small twin took one of Miss Halia’s hands, and pulled her toward the patio table where Mrs. Lynch sat near Mrs. Wheeler’s lounge chair, and where Mrs. Belden was serving tall, frosty glasses of lemonade to the other two mothers.

“Mummy, Mummy, Miss Halia is here! Now we can have the cookout!” Barbie, the more outgoing twin, was speaking. She pulled out a chair next to her mother and begged Miss Halia to sit down.

“Mrs. Belden, Mother, Miss Trask, this is our dance teacher, Miss Halia. Miss Halia, this is my mother, Madeleine Wheeler, Trixie’s

mother, Mrs. Belden, and our estate manager, Miss Trask. They've been very anxious to meet you." Honey, always poised and polite, made the introductions. The five women exchanged compliments on each other's attire and expressed their pleasure at the beautiful weather, and Miss Halia invited the mothers and the teens to call her simply by her first name, since this was a social occasion rather than a class.

"Would you like a glass of lemonade, Halia dear?" Mrs. Belden indicated the tray she had carried out, which held several more glasses.

Trixie felt that she couldn't wait another minute to show Halia her father's ukulele. *What if this is the one?* she thought, overcome with excitement at the prospect. "Halia, can I show you Dad's ukulele right now? He's had it restrung and everything!" The words exploded out of her.

"Thank you, Trixie. But I've waited this long. Let's enjoy the delicious picnic your families have planned first. You can get it out after we eat." Halia smiled, but Trixie wondered if the hula teacher also wanted to delay the disappointment in case Peter Belden's ukulele wasn't the right one.

"Okay, I guess you're right. But gleeps, it's hard to wait!" she answered.

While Halia and their mothers talked, the girls wandered around to check on the progress of the grilled hamburgers, hotdogs, and corn. The cooking aromas drew them surely to the opposite side of the terrace, where Brian and Mart had taken their father's place while he showed Mr. Wheeler around the garden. Ruffled lettuces, green onions, leafy potato plants and broccoli were growing inside the fenced area, and bean plants were just beginning to twine around their support trellises.

"Is everything almost ready?" Trixie inhaled deeply as she spoke.

Mart, wearing a chef's apron to keep splatters off his new blue polo shirt, answered. "Yes, everything will be ready in just a few

minutes. Brian just went inside to wash out the big roaster, so we can put the meat into it to serve. Are Dan and Regan here yet?"

Brian appeared, carrying the roaster, in time to hear the question. "Dan just pulled up in the truck. Regan's with him. I know Dad talked to Mr. Maypenny and invited him too, but he's not with them."

"Too bad!" Trixie was disappointed. "I guess I wanted Miss Halia to meet as many of our friends as possible at one time. She won't be here that much longer."

"Hey! Neither will I," Jim teased. "So how about a nice, friendly greeting?" He wagged his russet eyebrows at her.

"You goof! Of course I'm happy to see you." To prove her point, Trixie pulled his face down to her level and gave him a kiss, stopping only when she became aware of Brian's glare. Mart was too busy talking to Diana to notice his sister.

Brian cleared his throat loudly. "Jim, why don't you dish up the corn on the cob?" he suggested. Giving Trixie a final squeeze, Jim laughed and took the platter for the corn, using tongs to pluck each ear from the embers of the grill.

Her brothers finished placing all of the burgers and hotdogs in the roasting pan, and Brian announced, "Dinner is served!" He carried the roaster over to the buffet table.

"Boys, you've outdone yourselves," Helen Belden complimented her sons. "That smells absolutely wonderful. Where's Bobby now?" A frown puckered her forehead.

Trixie and Diana immediately began calling their younger brothers, but just then, Dan and Regan walked around the side of the house, the three younger boys in tow.

"I hope everything's ready, Miss Fidget," Regan joked. "I've worked up a powerful hunger this morning, first exercising all the horses myself and then toting all those tables and chairs over here."

He rubbed his arms and patted his flat belly to show how tired and hungry he was.

“Everything is ready. You two go on around to the terrace, while Di and I get these young hooligans washed up.” Trixie grinned at the Wheelers’ groom. “And we’ll get all of the tables back afterward, while you relax with the grownups.”

In moments, everyone was lined up to serve themselves from the buffet table. Soon there was no sound but the birds’ calls, as the party enjoyed all of the delicious foods. After most of the party took second helpings, no one had room for dessert.

“I’ve enjoyed an adequate sufficiency,” offered Mart. “Any more would be a surfeit.”

“Hmph! That’s the first time I’ve ever heard you admit you’d had enough to eat!” sniffed Trixie. “But I know I have.” She patted her stomach, saying, “I may have to take a siesta before I can move again.”

“Halia, the girls say you have been searching for a special ukulele here in Westchester County,” said Mrs. Wheeler, changing the subject. “Can you tell us why you believe the ukulele ended up here, rather than anyplace else in the country – or indeed, the world?”

“My great-uncle had received – as a gift – one of the ukuleles that my great-grandfather made. This was shortly before the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor. When the attack happened, he went straight to the recruiting office and enlisted in the Navy. He had a wife and baby, and in order to make a down payment on a small house for them, he pawned or sold everything he had that was valuable.” Halia gave a deprecating shrug. “Not that the ukulele was terribly valuable, but my great-grandfather had a good reputation. He could never keep up with the demand for his instruments. My uncle always intended to get the ukulele out of pawn, but he was put on a ship bound for Midway Island before he could get back. He was killed in the battle of Midway, and his wife was too distraught, I suppose, to think much about that ukulele.”

“Oh, how awful!” Tender-hearted Honey had tears in her eyes.

“Of course she was,” Diana agreed. “I don’t blame her a bit.”

“Like Jim’s mom – I mean, his real mom – oh, you know what I mean!” Trixie’s face was scarlet as she glanced first at Jim and then at Mrs. Wheeler in embarrassment.

“It’s all right, dear. I know what you mean.” Mrs. Wheeler responded with a warm smile at Trixie. “When her husband died, she couldn’t think of anything except trying to secure a future for her child and herself.”

Halia while the others nodded in agreement. “Yes, I’m sure that was it. She gave up her house and went to stay with her family in the country until the end of the war. At that time, she moved back to an apartment near the naval base, and remembered about the uke. Her son was nearly old enough to begin music lessons, and she wanted him to be able to play the instrument that was traditional in our family. She knew the pawn shop her husband had used, and she still had his pawn ticket. But when she went back, the ukulele was gone. The owner kept a log book, and just because he liked to keep track of where his customers came from, he wrote down the hometowns of everyone who would tell him where they lived. The name of the ukulele buyer was nearly obliterated by a blot of ink, but it was easy to read his hometown. Sleepyside, Westchester County, New York State.”

Halia’s audience sat, enthralled by her tale. Even the little Lynch girls were hanging on her words. “You mean one of those little bitty guitars, like Bobby’s daddy has?” asked Margie. “Did that come all the way from Hawai’i? Back in the olden days?”

“My ukulele did come all the way from Hawai’i,” Peter Belden answered. “But I’m sorry to say that it’s very unlikely to be the one you’re looking for, Halia. My brother sent it from Hawai’i in 1951, several years after your great-aunt was unable to find it at the pawnshop her husband used.”

Trixie, who had been bouncing in her seat as Halia recited her tale, sagged in defeat. "I was so sure that Dad's ukulele would be the one!" she mourned.

"I knew it had to be a long shot. There are so many people here, and it's been so long. But when I had the opportunity to spend a year on the mainland studying, I decided to try to do everything possible to locate the instrument." Halia was poised; if she was disappointed, she concealed it well.

Trixie bit her lip. *I'm not giving up! Even if Dad's uke isn't the right one, I'm sure the Bob-Whites can locate it,* she told herself.

"It's a shame that you haven't had any leads, though," put in kindhearted Mrs. Lynch. "Have you advertised in the papers for it?"

"Yes, I've placed classified ads in every paper published in Westchester County. I even ran an ad in the New York Times for three weeks. I've been to rummage sales early in the mornings before my Saturday dance classes, and spoken with music teachers in the school systems as well as at the college. I've actually turned up a few ukuleles, but none of them were marked with my great-grandfather's special symbol. I'll be returning to Hawai'i at the end of July, and it's looking less likely than ever that I'll ever locate that uke. I've pretty much resigned myself to not finding it now."

"Do you play, Halia? Or do you want the instrument for sentimental value?" Helen Belden asked.

"I do play, Mrs. Belden. But as I told the girls, I really wanted to find the ukulele because my mother is working on a family history project. My great-grandfather was well-known for his ukuleles and that's the only one whose location is unknown," Halia explained.

"If you play, maybe you could play for us," Honey suggested. "I know Trixie's dad had his uke restrung and tuned after she told him you were looking for one."

"Sure. Run upstairs, Trixie, and bring the uke down. At least Halia can see it, even if it's not the one," Mr. Belden readily agreed.

Trixie fetched the ukulele, and everyone held their breath as Mr. Belden removed it from its case. The instrument gleamed with a fresh coat of wax, and the lovely painted design of colorful tropic flowers appeared bright and fresh. He turned it over so that Halia could see the bottom surface. There was a faint mark, but as Halia traced it with her finger, she shook her head. “No, this is not an instrument my great-grandfather made. The mark is very different from his. But Trixie has told me that you play, Mr. Belden. Will you play for us now?”

Mr. Belden nodded. “I can play a few tunes by ear. When I first got the uke I was in college. It was a good icebreaker and helped me to start a conversation with girls. I kept up my playing through college, but haven’t played much since the kids were small. I hope you’ll all be able to forgive me if I inflict a cacophony – rather than a symphony – on your ears.” He strummed a few times on the strings, then played a few bars of *Aloha Oe*.

Halia sang along to the music, and the little Lynch girls swayed in their seats for a moment, before standing and beginning to do some of the moves they had learned in hula class. As the song ended, their audience applauded. Barbie and Margie blushed and ran to hide their faces in their mother’s lap.

“Girls, that was wonderful!” Miss Halia’s eyes sparkled. “I’m so glad you’ve learned something in our class this spring. You’ll be great in the recital.”

“Speaking of the recital, I’ve told Honey that I could play the piano for the hula students if you’d rather have live music than a recording.” Madeleine Wheeler looked a little shy as she made her offer. Trixie was very surprised, not only that Mrs. Wheeler had offered to play for them, but also that this glamorous neighbor could ever be shy.

“Mrs. Wheeler, that’s very kind of you. It’s still over a month until the recital, so if you’re sure it won’t be an imposition, I’d be happy to see that you get the music. Do you want to play just for the older girls? We have three different age groups performing, but Trixie, Honey, and Diana are the only ones in their group.”

“I’d be happy to play for all three sections,” Mrs. Wheeler answered. “I love to play, and I’m sure it won’t take too long to learn all three pieces.”

“Mart and I could play guitars for the girls, too.” Dan spoke up, surprising not only Trixie, but also Mart, who shot him a questioning look.

“We *could* play,” Dan defended himself. “I used to take guitar lessons when my mom was alive, and Mr. Maypenny gave me a guitar for my birthday. I don’t think hula music is that complicated.”

“Okay, but I want to sit where I can see the girls. My own girlfriend has never let me watch any of their practices yet.” Mart sounded as if he was reluctant, but Trixie knew very well that he had asked Diana to save some good seats up front for the male Bob-Whites. She smiled her gratitude at her almost-twin.

“Why don’t you go inside and get your guitar, Mart? Then we’ll do our hula while Halia plays for us. That is, if it’s all right with you, Halia?” Trixie blushed. *There I go again, offering for other people before I ask them.*

“Trixie, of course I’ll play for you. You girls have worked hard and I’m proud of how well you have done.” Halia smiled as she complimented her students.

Mart left his seat next to Diana to go inside and get his guitar, and the girls rearranged some of the chairs in order to have more space for their performance. When Mart returned, Halia showed him the chords that he needed to play, and she began to strum the ukulele. In a few minutes she nodded her readiness, and Trixie, Honey, and Diana took their positions.

Despite her anxiety over dancing in front of Jim, Trixie found she was able to lose herself in the music and imagine that she was dancing on a sandy beach, with a tropical breeze lifting her curls. Her hands moved in the age-old language of the hula, and without even looking at her two friends, she knew they were dancing in unison, as

Halia had trained them and as they had practiced so many times in Honey's or Diana's room. By the time the music ended, she was confident that they could perform well at the recital.

The adults clapped, Barbie and Margie jumped up and down, and even Bobby, Larry, and Terry had left their complex miniature racecar course to watch. Trixie found herself blushing as Bobby emitted an ear-piercing whistle of appreciation.

Halia offered to sing a few more Hawai'ian songs, and while Jim and Brian cleared away the trash and made sure the charcoal in the grill was totally doused, the girls put away the leftover food and wiped down the tables. Too soon, it seemed, Dan announced that it was time for him to leave. He needed to patrol the preserve before dark. Regan had already gone; he had to check on the horses and give them their evening feed. Halia also checked her watch and explained that she needed to return to White Plains and finish typing a paper. The group broke up; Dan, Mart, Brian and Jim loaded the Wheelers' chairs and tables into the estate truck, which Jim was driving home. Brian would help him unload everything, and the two of them would head back to college in another hour.

Trixie watched as her mother bid goodbye to Mrs. Wheeler, Miss Trask, and Mrs. Lynch. The four women were very different, but they had become good friends. *Just like Honey, Di, and I have*, she thought. Mr. Wheeler and Mr. Lynch shook her father's hand while Diana gathered her brothers and sisters and Honey collected her mother's dishes. Soon, Trixie was alone at Crabapple Farm with her parents, Mart, and Bobby.

Mart turned to her. "Sis, you girls were really good! You're going to wow them at the recital!"

"Thanks, Mart. I know you wouldn't say that if you didn't mean it." Trixie smiled at her almost-twin. "By the way, Diana showed me the drawings you and she made for the backdrop. It's going to look fantastic!"

Mart blushed at Trixie's compliment. "We're picking up the canvas this week, and Dan and I will take it to the studio Saturday.

We decided to work on it there, since it's going to be too big to transport once it's painted. I think we can get it done in three weeks with no problem."

5448 words. Author's Notes will be found at conclusion of story.

Lilo a Ho'okahua

Part 3

Monday April 24, 1973
Trixie

Monday morning saw the Beldens, Honey, and Dan gathered at the bus stop. "That was a great cookout yesterday," Dan said. "I'm sorry Mr. M. missed it; he wasn't feeling well. But I was telling him about Halia and the ukulele she's looking for, and guess what?"

"What?" asked Honey agreeably.

"He knows of another ukulele that might be here in Sleepyside. And guess who it belongs to?"

"Dan! You're killing me here. Just tell us," Trixie begged.

"Yes, elucidate, my dear Daniel," added Mart, his blue eyes twinkling. "Don't keep us in suspense; my dear little shamus sibling is about to expire."

"Well, I was telling Mr. M about the cookout and when I got to the part about Halia playing the ukulele he started looking real interested," Dan began. Just then, the rumble of the school bus became audible as it began the climb up the hill toward the stop at the bottom of the Wheelers' drive. "It's too noisy on the bus, and I think it'll be too hard for everyone to hear. I'll tell you at lunch," he promised.

All morning long, Trixie had a hard time concentrating on her studies. She had promised herself not to get excited about any more ukuleles she discovered in Sleepyside. There were several people who owned old instruments, but the ones she had discovered were either old “TV Pal” plastic ukes from the 1950s, or nostalgic keepsakes left over from the “Roaring 20s”. Mrs. Vanderpoel had one such keepsake in her attic, which the late Mr. Vanderpoel had strummed while he was courting young Miss Anna Brinker. Despite her best intentions, though, Trixie found herself daydreaming about presenting Halia with the long-lost ukulele, and Halia bursting into tears of joy.

“...And by what process is argon reduced to a liquid state, Miss Belden?” Trixie jumped as her mind returned to her chemistry classroom with a start.

“Argon? Um, well, ... uh, it’s a gas at room temperature, so ... um, you’d have to freeze it.” She sat up and looked Mr. Perrin, the chemistry teacher, and smiled. *My study session with Jim Saturday afternoon did pay off!*

The three Bob-white girls had first lunch period, while Mart and Dan’s lunch period began only seven minutes before the girls returned to class. Trixie was convinced she wouldn’t be able to eat a thing until she could hear Dan’s story, and was mechanically moving along the line when Diana rushed into the cafeteria and joined her. Honey followed at a more sedate pace.

“Trixie, Honey, you’ll never guess! You’ll absolutely, positively never guess!” Diana was bouncing in excitement, first grabbing her friends’ hands, and then hugging herself. “There’s another ukulele in Sleepyside that we never knew about! I’ll tell you as soon as we sit down.”

“Di, Dan was telling us that he knows about another one, too,” Honey said. “Maybe we should wait for the guys.”

“Honey, we’ll only have a few minutes to talk to Dan and Mart if we wait,” Trixie pointed out. “We might not have time to listen to both Dan and Di.”

“Gosh, I don’t know if I can stand to wait for them! It was too late to call you last night when I found out.” Diana looked thoughtful. “Why can’t I go ahead and tell you my news now, and then if we have time, I’ll tell the boys after Dan tells his story? That way, we might have two different leads to follow.”

“Good idea, Di!” Trixie was jubilant at the prospect of two different leads.

“Well, I think that would be okay,” Honey agreed. “I was so disappointed that your father’s uke wasn’t the right one, Trix! It would just be perfectly perfect if Halia can go home with her great-uncle’s ukulele – or at least a picture of it.”

The girls made their way to the Bob-Whites’ usual lunch table, and while Trixie and Honey opened their milk cartons, Diana launched into her story.

“When we got home Sunday night, my sisters were so excited over the whole afternoon that Mummy couldn’t do anything with them. Maureen and Patty came home from their weekend off, and Barbie and Margie would hardly let them get unpacked.” Diana paused to take a breath, and Trixie broke in.

“I know – Bobby was the same way! But what does that have to do with another ukulele, Di?”

Diana looked hurt for a second. “That’s what I’m trying to tell you, Trixie! Once their bags were unpacked, Maureen and Patty sat down with the girls and got them to talk about what was getting them so wild. Finally, they called me to come in and help. Margie and Barbie were both trying to talk at once, and neither of them was saying anything that made sense. I told them about Halia and the ukulele she’s trying to find. Maureen looked like she had something to say, so I asked her if she knew anyone in Sleepyside who had an old ukulele. I couldn’t believe it when she said her dad had one that came from Hawai’i – back during World War II!”

“Gosh! I can’t believe we didn’t think to ask the Delanoys,” Trixie lamented. “I guess I just assumed Tom’s dad was too old.”

“Maureen said her parents were leaving town today and they won’t be back for a week. So we won’t be able to ask Mr. Delanoy until next week.”

“Seven more days! I’ll just die if I can’t find out anything before that!” Trixie threw herself back in her cafeteria chair.

“Oh, here come the boys,” Honey exclaimed. “I hope they’ll have some good news for us.”

Mart and Dan sat down at the table. As Diana began to eat her lunch, Dan spoke up. “You weren’t on the bus today, Di, but I told the others that Mr. M said he knew of another ukulele in Sleepyside. He said Tom Delanoy’s dad brought one home from Hawai’i during the Second World War. Of course, he doesn’t know if Mr. Delanoy still has it.”

“Oh, Dan! That’s exactly what Di was just telling us. At least, she was telling us that Maureen Delanoy, her sisters’ nanny, said that her dad used to have a ukulele, and she thinks it’s still up in their attic, but the Delanoys are out of town and they won’t be back for a week! Can you believe it?” Honey paused for breath after her convoluted explanation. “Dan and Di, you two have to come over this afternoon, and we’ll talk to Tom. Maybe he knows something more about the uke.”

Diana received permission to ride the bus home to Honey’s house after school, and the five Bob-Whites hurried to the Wheeler garage to see Tom as soon as they got off the bus. However, the chauffeur had driven Mrs. Wheeler into the city to do some shopping; later, she was to meet her husband for dinner and attend a performance of the ballet. There was no way they could talk to Tom before the following day.

“I’ve got to get busy patrolling,” Dan said. “We’ve waited this long; the ukulele isn’t going anywhere this week.”

“And I’ve got to take care of the chickens and mow the grass before Dad gets home,” added Mart. “Dan’s right.”

“Di, as long as you’re already here, how about riding with us? Maybe you can stay for supper, and I’ll drive you home after we eat,” Honey suggested.

“Just let me run home and change,” Trixie said. “I know Moms won’t mind me exercising the horses, but I’ll have to go right home afterward.”

As they rode, the three girls chattered with excitement over the potential discovery of the missing ukulele. Despite the disappointments so far in Halia’s search, Trixie was stubbornly convinced that the Bob-Whites would locate the instrument.

“We’d better not say anything to Halia about it on Saturday, though. I don’t want to say anything else until we at least find out whether Mr. Delanoy still has the uke,” she said with a sigh.

“You’re right, Trix,” Diana agreed. “It’ll sure be a long week, though.” Honey nodded her agreement.

Saturday, April 29, 1973

By Saturday, Mart and Dan had bought the canvas for their backdrop, and figured out how to mount it in panels backstage. With Diana’s help, they had drawn a design for a beach scene, with palm trees, blue ocean, and sky. The five Bob-Whites crowded into the BWG station wagon to drive to White Plains so that Dan and Mart could begin transferring their design to the canvas during the hula class. Miss Rhonda had given permission for the group to stay for two hours after classes finished for the day.

It was hard for the three girls to keep the news about Mr. Delanoy’s ukulele to themselves during hula class, but they didn’t want to raise Halia’s hopes until they could find out – at the very least – if he still had the instrument. Trixie concentrated on her movements; now that she had the techniques mastered, she needed to project the emotions behind the rhythmic swaying and graceful

gestures. She watched Honey and Diana, who always seemed to dance with such effortless grace. *Maybe I'll never be as good as they are*, she thought. *But I'm not quitting!*

"Girls, imagine yourselves in the music," Miss Halia instructed. "Feel the sand under your feet; feel the warm sun on your head. Smell the fragrance of the flowers in your lei. Think about the words to this song."

Trixie inhaled deeply, but all she could smell was the slightly dusty odor of the stage's heavy velvet curtains. *Oh well, at least it's hot enough back here to pretend I'm dancing on a sunny beach*. She grinned suddenly. *It's going to be fun. I've dreaded the recital, but it's going to be fine. No matter what!*

Monday, May 1

Finally, after an endless weekend, it was Monday. Trixie and Honey had finally been able to speak with Tom Delanoy about the ukulele, and he had agreed to take them to see his parents after the elder Delanoy returned to Sleepyside.

"I don't know if it's still at their house, or if it was given away at some point," he told them. "My dad didn't play it, and he wouldn't let us kids use it for a toy. We begged him for a TV Pal and we did have a couple of those to share. But I don't know what ever happened to that uke of his."

Monday afternoon, when the Beldens and Honey arrived at the Wheeler stables to exercise the horses, Tom was waiting for them. "I talked to my dad, and he said you could go up into the attic and look for the ukulele tonight. Maureen is going to meet us there with Diana. After supper will be a good time for my parents, he said. We'll leave from here at seven o'clock." The handsome chauffeur wore a broad grin.

"Gleeps! I don't know if I can live that long!" Trixie pulled her own hair in impatience.

“Since you have survived the past interval of seven diurnal cycles, I have total confidence that you will continue to do so for a few more hours,” Mart told her, with a ruffle of her sandy curls.

Regan, standing at the stable door, chuckled. “Still Miss Fidget!” he said, using his old nickname for Trixie. “You kids go ahead and ride – I’ll call Dan and let him know the plan. He’d like to go. Maybe Mr. Maypenny would like to ride along, too.”

As she saddled her old favorite, the little mare Susie, Trixie could hear Regan and Tom talking.

“Remember how I said Maypenny wasn’t a Sleepyside name? Back when Mr. Wheeler first hired him as gamekeeper?” Tom asked. “Now I’m learning that my own dad knew the guy years ago, before my parents were even married. I’ve talked about Mr. M. around my dad dozens of times, but he’s never let on that they knew each other, let alone were once friends. Everyone who works at the Post Office knows everyone else in Sleepyside. And you know how older people always have to tell you the life history of everyone you meet.”

“Well, I wouldn’t have thought anything of it back in the city,” Regan answered. “You meet too many people to keep track of all of them. But in a village the size of Sleepyside, I’ve noticed that everyone knows everyone else – and they keep tabs on ’em.” The redheaded groom scratched his head and grinned. “As Trixie would say, it’s very mysterious.”

Susie snuffled and pranced in her eagerness to get outside, and Trixie could hear nothing more of the men’s conversation. She glanced at Honey, but her friend was farther from the door than she was, and Honey’s mount, Strawberry, was more impatient than Susie, blowing and raking the stable floor with his hooves. Neither was Mart in a position to overhear Tom and Regan, as he slipped the bridle over Starlight’s head and cinched his saddle girth.

As they rode, Trixie told her brother and friend about the snatch of conversation she had heard. “Regan was right, it is very mysterious! Why in the world would Mr. Delanoy not have told Tom about Mr. Maypenny? It seems like they must have been friends, if

they were close enough to shop for souvenirs together. Why wouldn't they have gotten together after the war, when both of them are right here?"

"Oh, Trixie, maybe there was some feud that came up later," Honey suggested. "Just like your dad and old Mr. Frayne. It's sad, because I think Mr. Delanoy is a nice man, and of course, Mr. Maypenny is just ... well, just wonderful."

"Speculation is fruitless," Mart reminded them. "Maybe you can ask one of them about it, after we see the ukulele. But if you ask me, you should let sleeping dogs lie."

Although Trixie believed she wouldn't be able to eat a bite in her excitement, the ride had whetted her appetite, and she did justice to her mother's birthday dinner of meatloaf, mashed potatoes, peas, and glazed carrots, in spite of checking the time every few minutes. Honey, Di, and Dan arrived just in time for dessert of chocolate birthday cake and ice cream. Each had brought a small wrapped gift for her.

"I hope you all don't mind," Trixie apologized. "I'm too excited to open any gifts right now, but I'll do it when we get back from the Delanoys'. Hurry, Mart, and let's get the table cleared, so we can meet Tom."

Mrs. Belden shooed them off. "Nonsense, Trixie. It's your birthday. I'll take care of the dishes tonight," she said. "Just wash up and run on over to Honey's. By the time you get to the Manor House it should be nearly seven."

Tom pulled up and parked in front of a modest, one and one-half story house on a quiet, shaded street in the residential part of Sleepyside. As the Beldens, Dan, and Honey exited the car, Tom's sister Maureen pulled up behind him, with Diana in the front passenger seat of her little blue Volkswagen. Diana jumped out of the car the instant it stopped running, and ran to meet her friends.

"Oh! I'm so excited I can hardly stand it!" Diana exclaimed. "Do you have the drawing of Halia's great-grandfather's mark, Trixie?"

“It’s right here in my pocket.” Trixie patted the pocket of her jeans.

Tom and Maureen greeted each other and the group ascended the two steps to the senior Delanoys’ front porch. Tom hadn’t even touched the doorbell before the front door was opened by a short, plump, gray-haired woman the Bob-Whites recognized as his mother. Mrs. Delanoy ushered the group inside and went to the back door to call her husband. “Mike! The kids are here. Tommy and Maureen have the Bob-Whites with them.”

As they waited for Mr. Delanoy to come inside from his dog kennels, Mrs. Delanoy chattered about her latest grandchild. Trixie fidgeted with impatience while she kept glancing out the window of the Delanoys’ dining room to see if she could see Tom’s dad. Finally, the click of the kitchen door announced his arrival.

“Well, it’s a pleasure to see you young people,” Mr. Delanoy greeted them, shaking hands with the boys and his son, and giving his daughter a peck on the cheek. “How is that runt of a dog doing these days?”

“He’s still as active as a pup,” Mart answered truthfully. The Beldens’ Irish setter, Reddy, had started life as the runt of the litter. Mr. Delanoy bred and raised setters for show and for hunting. He had offered Reddy to the Beldens for a very low price, since he wouldn’t be a show dog. Reddy had outgrown his runt status long ago.

“That’s good to hear!” Mr. Delanoy chuckled. “I hear you kids are looking for a special ukulele. Why do you think mine could be the one?”

Trixie, Honey and Diana all spoke at once, attempting to tell Halia’s story. Finally, Mr. Delanoy held up a hand.

“Never mind!” He gave a booming laugh. “It really doesn’t matter. I don’t have any real use for that uke, and if none of my kids

want it, I'd be happy to let the little lady have it. It's probably up in the attic. Do you know where it is, Viv, honey?" he asked his wife.

"I'm pretty sure it's put away in your old footlocker; if not, it's in my cedar chest," Mrs. Delanoy replied. "You know which one that is, don't you, Maureen?"

"Yes, Mother. Is it locked?"

"It is, but here's the key. I got it out since I knew you were going up there." Mrs. Delanoy reached into the pocket of her apron and pulled out a small key on a bright red ribbon.

The group of teens followed Tom and Maureen up the steps to the attic, actually a sloped space under the eaves, which ran across the whole front of the house, and was entered by way of a low door in an upstairs bedroom.

Once inside the attic, Trixie and Diana were the only ones who could stand fully upright. As they looked around, Trixie saw a half-dozen large cardboard cartons, another half-dozen mismatched suitcases, a collection of slightly worn toys and doll furniture, and an old baby crib. At first it seemed like a jumble, but she systematically tracked the area and in a moment, spotted a cedar chest against the wall which backed up to the bedroom, just beyond a box full of old clothes. A battered footlocker was on the other side of the cedar chest.

"Over here, guys!" she called. "I've found the chest and the footlocker."

Maureen hurried over, still clutching a baby doll which cried "mama" as she set it down. "How about this?" she asked. "I thought Mom gave away this doll. It was my favorite." She dropped onto her knees in front of the cedar chest and fitted the small key into its lock.

Trixie held her breath, and she could feel that Diana and Honey – maybe even Mart and Dan – were holding their breaths, too.

“Oh, my! Look at this stuff!” Carefully, Maureen lifted sets of embroidered pillowcases, a dainty embroidered christening dress and bonnet wrapped in tissue paper, and a set of silver napkin rings. A dove-grey suit with matching pumps and a feather-trimmed hat followed.

“This is Mom’s wedding suit.” Maureen looked for a place to set the items she removed, but the floor was dusty, so Diana took the suit from her. Although she went all the way to the bottom of the chest, Maureen did not locate a ukulele.

“There’s still the footlocker,” she reminded the Bob-Whites. “I’d say it’s more likely to be there.” She carefully replaced the items in the cedar chest and moved down to the footlocker. It was not locked, and after removing a small box of military medals and some manuals related to proper conduct of a member of the United States Navy, she lifted out two sets of sailor’s uniforms, which Mart held for her. Underneath the uniforms was an instrument case, and Trixie nearly squealed as Maureen pulled it out.

“Oh, open it, please,” she pleaded.

3405 words *Author’s Notes will be found at the conclusion of the story.*

Lilo a Ho’okahua

Part 4

“Hold on a second, Trix.” Dan spoke up for the first time. “Why don’t we take it downstairs, and let Mr. Delanoy open it? After all, it is his.”

“You’re right, of course, Dan,” Trixie agreed instantly, although she could not suppress a sigh of regret. The few added minutes of waiting stretched interminably before her mind’s eye.

After replacing everything as it had been, the Bob-Whites and Maureen exited the attic; Tom followed, making sure the light was out and the door was latched.

Downstairs, the excited group gathered around Mr. and Mrs. Delanoy. “Did you find it?” Tom’s father asked, using a remote control unit to silence the game show he and his wife were watching.

“We found this case,” Maureen told him. “It feels like something is inside, but we wanted you to be the one to open it.”

“All right, then.” Carefully, Mr. Delanoy unfastened the clasps holding the case closed. A collective sigh could be heard when the top opened to reveal a ukulele, gleaming in a light-colored, exotically grained wood. A narrow inlay of mother-of-pearl surrounded the opening and decorated the curved sides of the instrument. The strings were present, but when Mr. Delanoy touched one, it shattered into dust. He lifted it from its case and handed it to Trixie.

“Oh, my! What a gorgeous piece,” she breathed, stroking the wood with a gentle hand.

“Check the back, Trixie,” Honey urged. “Look and see if it has Halia’s mark.”

“Okay, but someone will have to hold the ukulele while I dig that paper out of my pocket.” Trixie held the instrument out, and Dan took it. Like Trixie, he reverently touched the body of the ukulele, and studied its frets and pegs.

“Got it.” Trixie held up the paper. “Turn it over, Dan, and let me hold this paper next to the back.”

“Looks to me like you’ve got yourself a match there, Trixie Belden,” said Mr. Delanoy. “Are you going to call the Hawai’ian girl now and let her know?”

“Gleeps, I’d love to! I couldn’t have asked for a better birthday present! But Mr. Delanoy, you did say maybe one of your kids would

want the ukulele. Don't you think you'd better ask them before we tell Halia?"

"They say blood is thicker than water, but I reckon that this ukulele belongs to that girl's blood kin more than it belongs to mine. How do you feel, Tommy? Maureen?"

"Dad, I agree with you. The uke is yours, to do what you want to do with it. I wouldn't really have any use for it, and Halia is preserving a piece of her family history if she takes it back to Hawai'i," Tom answered.

"I feel the same way Tom does. You should ask the rest of the kids, though, because I don't want to speak for them. But I don't really think any of them would want the ukulele," Maureen agreed with an emphatic nod.

"All right, then. Your mom and I will call the rest of the kids and talk to them. We should have an answer by Saturday." Mr. Delanoy pressed the remote to bring up the television's sound, and folded his arms as if the matter was settled.

Tom cleared his throat. "Dad, there's something I've been wondering about. Mr. Maypenny told Dan about the two of you being at the hospital at Pearl Harbor, and even remembers that you shopped together on the day you bought the uke. I don't understand why you never told me you knew him."

Mr. Delanoy turned to look at his son. Sighing, he turned down the television's volume again, and began to speak. "Son, I went to school with Ike Maypenny. We were good buddies, hunted and fished together. Ike even dated my sister, Maureen, for awhile, before the war. When the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbor, Ike and I both enlisted in the Navy, even though we were twenty-five, twenty-six years old. We were assigned to different ships, but both were in the Pacific, and both of us were wounded at the first naval battle of Guadalcanal. We were shipped to the U.S. Naval Hospital at Pearl Harbor afterward; that's when we met up and had our day of sightseeing and shopping. I wasn't wounded as badly as Ike was, and

was able to return to my ship soon after that. We didn't see each other again until after the war."

"Do you know where Mr. Maypenny was assigned after that?" Dan seemed curious; the others knew that Mr. Maypenny hadn't discussed his past with Dan, other than the fact that he had lived on his small piece of land for almost his entire life.

"Dan, I really don't know. I only know that when I came back home, he was already living out there in his cabin like a hermit. He rarely came to town, and when he did, he didn't come by. He didn't have a phone, and neither did we, back then. I was busy getting to know your mom again, Tommy, and getting acquainted with your brother Kevin – he wasn't even born when I went away. I got a veteran's loan and we built this house. Before we knew it, you came along, and then the other kids; I was working at the Post Office and getting my dog business started. I didn't have time to hear myself think, much less visit an old friend who was ignoring me."

"But Dad, that still doesn't explain why you never told us about him. As much as Tommy and Kevin hunted and fished, I would have thought Mr. Maypenny would let them use his land." Maureen's brow knitted in puzzlement.

"Sweetheart, it was my fault as much as his. When I decided to raise Irish setters, I was looking for a place to train them for hunting. I thought about Ike Maypenny and his land. It was quiet out there, and not many people visited. I know for a fact he didn't allow hunting on his land – except what he did himself. So I felt like it would be a safe place for me to take the dogs. I went out there one day to put the proposal to him. Heck, I would've paid him for the use of the land."

"And what happened?" Tenderhearted Honey nibbled a fingernail.

"He told me no. Just no. Didn't give any reason, nothing. Well, my Irish temper got up and I said some things I shouldn't have said. I even accused him of wanting to retaliate against my sister because she had married someone else during the war. He told me to get off his land, and since that day I've never spoken to him. That's why Tommy

didn't know about him. It wasn't hard to keep our quarrel to myself since Ike rarely came to town and didn't talk about it to anyone else. And I knew better than to suggest that Kevin and Tommy ask him for permission to hunt on his land. So there was never any reason for them to meet him."

"Are you still angry with him?" Diana asked. Her eyes welled with tears of sympathy for both Mr. Maypenny and Mr. Delanoy.

"No. No, I'm not." Mr. Delanoy sighed and looked at Dan. "I told you I didn't know where Ike was stationed after I left the naval hospital at Pearl. I *don't* know, for certain, but I heard tell it was someplace in the Atlantic. I don't know what he did, but when he came back, he wasn't the same happy-go-lucky guy I knew."

"He must have been through a lot," Mart observed.

"Yes, I expect that you're right. Well, life is too short to hold grudges, and I should try to see Ike again and offer to let bygones be bygones. We've both been as stubborn as a pair of old mules."

"Dad, we'd better get going," Maureen said after checking her watch. "I know Diana has homework to do. Thanks for letting us look for the ukulele; I know I was almost as excited as the kids."

The week seemed to drag for Trixie. Every day, she sought out Tom Delanoy to ask if his father had decided to let one of his children have the ukulele, or to offer it to Miss Halia. By Thursday, Tom raised his hand as soon as he saw her, to forestall the inevitable question. "Trix, I promise to tell you the minute my dad lets me know. In fact, he might even call you himself. So there's no need for you to waste your breath asking me what he's going to do."

"I'm sorry, Tom!" Trixie was immediately contrite. "I didn't mean to be a pest – it's just that I'm so excited, I'm just not thinking very straight."

Tom smiled and ruffled her wayward curls. "I know you're excited about returning a piece of your friend's family history to her," he said.

Saturday, May 13, 1973
Trixie

Nearly two weeks had passed, and Trixie still had not heard from Mr. Delanoy. As the Bob-Whites drove to their dance class, the girls each speculated on what Halia would do when she learned of the ukulele's existence, and argued over the best way to show it to her.

"I think we should just bring it to the recital," suggested Diana. "We can present it to her at the end of the program. It would be the perfect way to finish up the dance class."

"It *would* be perfect, but I don't know if we should give her such a big surprise as that," Honey contradicted. "I wouldn't want her to go into a dead faint from shock or anything!"

"Girls, we have only two more weeks of lessons before the recital," Miss Halia said to the assembled hula students. "Next week, I would like each of you to wear your costumes to class. We'll use the class time as a dress rehearsal. Mrs. Wheeler will be accompanying all three groups on the piano, and Mart Belden and Dan Mangan will play their guitars. So I'm very excited about our music. Everyone, please give Mart and Dan a big hand!"

The assembly erupted with applause and the two boys blushed as Miss Halia gestured for them to stand. "Mart and Dan have also made the lovely scenic background for us. Thank you, Mart and Dan!"

After everyone else had left, the Bob-Whites lingered to speak to Halia. But before any of them could utter a word, Halia came up to them and gave each of them a hug in turn.

“I just want to thank you all for welcoming me and taking so much interest in my search for my great-grandfather’s ukulele. I realize it’s like trying to find a needle in a haystack, but when I had the opportunity to come to New York, I knew I had to try to locate it. But even if the ukulele is lost for good, I’ve found some wonderful friends here in Westchester County. You must keep in touch, and if you ever visit Hawai’i, I insist that you visit me and allow me to show you some real Hawai’ian hospitality.”

Tears glistened in Halia’s dark eyes, and it was all Trixie could do to keep from blurting out that she believed they had indeed found the ukulele. But she forced herself to remain silent. Stealing a glance at her friends, she could tell that they all shared the same struggle. After another round of hugs, they quietly left the dance studio and headed back toward Sleepyside in the Bob-White station wagon.

“Trixie! There is a message for you to call Mike Delanoy.” Trixie’s mother greeted her as she entered the sunny kitchen of Crabapple Farm.

“Oh, Moms! I hardly know whether to be excited or scared!” Trixie gulped, realizing that this call would either answer a prayer or dash a dream for Halia. *And me, too*, she thought.

“Go ahead and call him. He said he’d be at home until about four o’clock.” Mrs. Belden finished drying the last clean dish and replaced it into the cupboard.

Trixie picked up the hall telephone as if it were a fragile piece of china, and dialed the Delanoys’ number. She swallowed again as she listened to the pone ring two, then three, then four times. Just as she was certain that no one was at home, a deep voice answered “Hello, this is the Delanoys’ residence.”

“M-m-mister Delanoy, it’s Trixie Belden. My mother said you called.”

“Hello, Trixie. Thanks for calling me back.” Mr. Delanoy’s voice sounded spookily like Tom’s over the telephone. “I thought you’d like to know. I finally was able to speak to each of my children, and every

one of them said I should give the ukulele back to your Hawai'ian friend, if it turns out to be the one she's looking for."

"Oh, Mr. Delanoy! I'm so ... so ... Oh, I don't know what I am!" She tugged on one of her curls as she spoke.

"If you'll allow me, I'd like to come and watch your hula recital, and maybe I could present the ukulele to your friend afterward."

"Sure, that would be fine. I know Halia will be thrilled. Let me give you the details of the recital." Trixie rattled off the date, time, and location of the hula recital, and Mr. Delanoy repeated the information after her.

As soon as she hung up the phone, Trixie went in search of her brother Mart, and told him the news.

"Isn't it wonderful, Mart? And say ... I have an even more exciting idea!"

"Pray elucidate, my dear Holmes," Mart replied. "What fantastical ideas have been ricocheting around in your cranium?" He grinned as he said the words, and Trixie grinned back at him.

"Whatever! Listen to this. You know that Mr. Delanoy said that he and Mr. Maypenny used to be close friends, but they had that dispute about using Mr. Maypenny's land for training the hunting dogs? He also said it was time to make up the quarrel. Why don't I – and Honey, too – invite Mr. M. to the recital, and then maneuver it so that he and Mr. Delanoy have a chance to speak? "

"Sis, I know you want to get the two of them to make up. But don't you think this is something they need to do on their own?" Mart's tone was doubtful. "I think it would be fine to invite both of them to attend the recital, but trying to get them together ... I don't think so."

"You might be right. But Mr. Delanoy did say it was time to let bygones be bygones. Surely if they are both there, he'll try to speak to Mr. Maypenny." Trixie conceded that trying to control other people's

reactions wasn't the best idea. But she didn't stop thinking about trying to get the Wheelers' gamekeeper to resume his old friendship.

"When Honey and I go riding today, I'll suggest that we visit Mr. Maypenny. You know, he was the one who told Dan that Tom's dad had a ukulele. So maybe he isn't holding a grudge any more, either." She tossed her head to emphasize her words.

"Go ahead. I'm sure Mr. M. would enjoy watching the dance. I just want to know one thing: will we all have to sit through the entire recital of every class at the dance studio?" Mart looked apprehensive.

"Of course, Honey and Di and I will have to stay for the whole thing. But all of the hula classes are doing their pieces right after the intermission. Halia said that should put it about an hour after the recital starts. Of course, you and Dan need to be there and be ready – that's if you still want to play for us," Trixie told him.

"Sure we do, Trix! We promised, didn't we? Jim Frayne's not the only honorable male around." Mart grinned, as Trixie blushed.

Later, Trixie inhaled the fresh, pine-scented air of the preserve as she and Honey rode Lady and Susie along the trails. Since it was only the middle of May, the heat was not oppressive. Fallen pine needles and dry leaves from the previous autumn crunched under the horses' hooves, and she could identify the cries of several birds in the quiet surroundings. She had told Honey of her idea to invite Mr. Maypenny to the recital, and Honey had been enthusiastic.

"Oh, Trix, wouldn't it be just wonderful if Mr. M and Mr. Delanoy made up their quarrel and were friends again? Just the way that Halia's ukulele was lost and is found, they could find the friendship they lost. Does that make any sense?"

"You know, I'm wondering what happened to Mr. M to change him," Trixie mused. "Mr. Delanoy *thought* he went to the Atlantic fleet, but he said he really didn't know what happened to his old

friend – just that he was already back here and was different when Mr. Delanoy got back from the war.”

Honey guided Lady toward the branch of the trail which led to Mr. Maypenny’s cabin. “I don’t see that anything could be wrong with inviting Mr. M. to the recital, and we could ask him what he did after he left Hawai’i; I mean, I’m sure he’d tell us if he didn’t want to talk about it.”

Soon they entered the clearing which held Mr. Maypenny’s snug log cabin. Mr. Maypenny himself was outside in his fenced-in garden, picking peas and digging tiny new potatoes. He raised his head at the sound of the horses’ nickering, and gave the girls a friendly wave.

“Good afternoon, girls,” the gamekeeper greeted them. “I hope you two can come inside and sit a spell. I’ve got a pitcher of fresh lemonade ready to drink as soon as I finish picking these peas and potatoes. They’ll make a mighty fine supper tonight, along with the stewed rabbit I pulled out of the freezer this morning.”

“Mr. Maypenny, that sounds absolutely delicious!” Trixie exclaimed. “We were hoping you’d be home this afternoon.”

The older man straightened up and stretched himself, then exited his garden, carefully latching the gate. Trixie and Honey dismounted and tied their horses’ leads to the hitching post in front of the cabin. Susie and Lady stretched their necks and in a moment they were cropping the grass.

Inside the cabin, Mr. Maypenny poured a glass of lemonade for each of them and sat down. Although Trixie took a sip of her drink and tried to enjoy the tart refreshment, her mind was busy, testing and discarding questions that might get Mr. Maypenny to open up about his wartime activity. *The funny thing is, I’ve always thought he was a lot older – too old to have been in the war. Even though he is a lot older than Dad, I guess I just thought he was as old as my granddad would be now.*

“What’s on your mind, Trixie?” Mr. Maypenny interrupted her jumbled thoughts. “If there’s something you want to ask, just go ahead and ask.” His eyes twinkled with laughter.

“You can read me like a book,” Trixie admitted. “As a matter of fact, I, that is, Honey and I were wondering what you did after Mr. Delanoy went back to his ship during the war.”

A deafening silence followed. Mr. Maypenny’s eyes lost their twinkle as his face took on a bleak, closed expression. She began to wish desperately that she could take back her words.

“What Trixie means is that, um, well, Mr. Delanoy told us you were wounded worse than he was and had to stay in the hospital longer. He said he lost track of you and when he came back to Sleepyside after the war, you were already here.” Honey rushed to explain the reason behind Trixie’s seemingly random question.

The older man sighed. “Did he also tell you I practically ran him off my land at gunpoint? And that I haven’t spoken to him for twenty-seven years? Did he tell you why I became almost a hermit?”

“Well, he did tell us that you wouldn’t let him use your property to train his dogs for hunting,” Honey said. “He didn’t say you ran him off at gunpoint. And he didn’t seem to know what had happened to you in the war. Is it something you feel like telling us?”

Mr. Maypenny’s bleak expression deepened to a flinty hardness, and the lines in his face were like sharp grooves cut into the stone. He stared past the two girls as if seeing something they could not see. Trixie felt more and more as if she and Honey were intruding, and debated with herself whether or not they should simply get up and leave him alone. Glancing at Honey, she could tell her friend felt the same way.

Suddenly, after what seemed an eternity, Mr. Maypenny spoke again. “It’s something I’ve kept quiet about for too long. I might as well tell you girls about it, because it’s not helping anyone to keep it to myself.” He stood and walked over to the small window above the

counter, where he washed his dishes in an old-fashioned enamel basin. Staring out at the peaceful wooded scene, he began to speak.

“I did have a pretty bad shrapnel wound in my leg, and it wasn’t healed by the time Mike Delanoy went back to his ship. But that’s not why I wasn’t sent back. I was suffering from what they called ‘battle fatigue’ back then – sometimes it’s called ‘combat stress reaction’.” He snorted in disgust, as if the phrase was offensive to him. “During the battle of Guadalcanal, I was trapped in the radio room of my ship. I was wounded, but I made it out of there. Some of my buddies ...” His voice caught, and Trixie found herself unable to look at him as he struggled for composure. After a few more moments of silence, he cleared his throat and added in a roughened voice, “Well, I hope you girls never have to find out what it’s like to be in combat. The guilt ...”

Once again, Mr. Maypenny’s face took on a shadowed, faraway look; his hands were jammed into his pockets. Trixie and Honey waited for several long minutes before he resumed his story.

“My body healed, but the doctors decided I was unfit for combat, and gave me a medical discharge. I came back to Sleepyside, out to this land that had been in my family for a hundred years or more. My parents had died in an automobile accident while I was away in the Navy, and I was alone; my brother had moved to the city. Even if we hadn’t quarreled, there was no way I was going to get in a train and be around such crowds. I shut myself away from the world here, and tried to be self-sufficient. I had failed some of the people who had relied on me, and I didn’t want to get attached to anyone else, who I might fail, too.”

The gamekeeper paced the narrow space of the cabin’s kitchen in silence for a few moments. Finally, he began to speak again.

“I didn’t want to be dependent on anyone else, either. Mr. Lytell and Mr. Frayne seemed to understand how I felt; they had both served in the First World War. So for a few years, I grew all of my vegetables, killed all of my meat, and shopped only for the things I couldn’t grow or make: coffee, sugar, flour, salt. I trapped foxes and other critters to make money to buy the things I needed and to pay my taxes.”

“Weren’t you lonely sometimes?” asked kindhearted Honey, with tears in her eyes.

“I guess I was lonely, but I was too busy building a wall around myself to realize it. I wasn’t going to let myself get attached to other people; not going to get involved with them. It was pretty easy until Mike Delanoy came back. He was an old school buddy of mine; we used to hunt together before he married; I even used to date his sister before the war. She had joined the Navy as a nurse, married a guy she met during the war, and moved out to somewhere in the Midwest afterward. I was glad when I found out, because a fine girl like her shouldn’t have been mixed up with a weak coward like me.”

“There’s no way I’d ever call you weak *or* a coward, Mr. Maypenny!” Trixie jumped up, eyes blazing and fists clenched.

“Well, that’s the way I felt about it at the time. I had nightmares about that battle; the shells, the wounded men screaming; the ship burning as it sank out of sight. Worst of all, even though I was wounded, I wasn’t completely helpless. But I couldn’t help anyone else ...” his voice trailed off. “Back here, the least thing – like a car backfiring – could set off a flashback for me. When I was around other people, they did too many things I couldn’t control, and when I was surprised by things, I couldn’t cope with the adrenaline surge.”

“How did you ever get past that – or did you get past it?” Trixie was unfailingly curious.

“As I was saying, Mike Delanoy was an old friend of mine. When he got back, he was busy getting caught up with his life for quite awhile. I didn’t blame him – he had a wife and a little son he’d never seen. He bought a house, went to work at the Post Office, started buying and breeding his dogs. He came out a couple of times when I wasn’t here and left a note, but I didn’t get back to him. I just wanted to be left alone. Then one day he came out, looking for a quiet place to train his dogs for hunting. It was a bad day for me and I didn’t want to talk to anyone. When I answered the door, he started into his speech. Like I told you, I didn’t want to depend on anyone, or to let

anyone depend on me. I told him to get out and to never ask me again.”

Mr. Maypenny had turned to face the window again, his jaw set in a firm line, but with a tear trickling down his weathered cheek. Once more, he stared intently out the small window. Trixie wondered what sight he saw in his mind, for he was obviously unaware of the beautiful soft spring afternoon, in the dappled shade of the clearing where his cabin stood.

“I was wrong to shut him out ... him and everyone else, too. The day you girls rode into this clearing and started talking to me was a lucky day for me. It was the day when I decided that [getting involved with other people is what life is all about](#). If it hadn't been for you girls and that day, I would never have had the chance to know Dan, and that would have left me with a hole in my heart. After that day, I decided to get involved with the local veterans' organization. There were young men coming home from Vietnam who felt the same things I felt. I decided to let them know there was someone who cared about them and appreciated their service. Mostly I write to them. But a few times I have gone to visit the wounded vets, just to let them know I appreciate them.”

Honey jumped up and ran the short distance to Mr. Maypenny and gave him a hug. “That's wonderful! I wonder if we could do something like that, too. That would be a wonderful Bob-White project, don't you think, Trix?” She turned to look at her friend.

“Yes, let's take it to the guys at our next meeting,” Trixie agreed. “We could even call an emergency meeting.” She paced back and forth in the tiny cabin, her forehead furrowed in thought. Finally, she stopped pacing and cleared her throat.

“Mr. Maypenny, we wanted to invite you to our dance recital. Mr. and Mrs. Delanoy are coming, and we were going to try to surprise you and try to get you talking to him again. But maybe the surprise part isn't such a good idea. We'd like for you to come, and we hope you will talk to him. He's not angry at you, either, and as much as told us he'd like to let bygones be bygones. What do you say?”

“Girls, I won’t lie to you. Crowds make me nervous. I’d like to come and watch you dance and I’d even speak to my old buddy again. But I don’t know if I could sit in a room with a hundred or so people for ... how long? A couple of hours?” Mr. Maypenny pulled a faded red bandana from his pocket and blew his nose loudly.

“Ah, yes, it would be a couple of hours all together. But if you wanted to come after the intermission and just stay until the hula is finished, you’d probably only be there for ... um ... forty-five minutes or so,” Honey estimated.

“I’ll think about it, girls. I’ll think about it and let you know.” Mr. Maypenny turned around to face Honey and Trixie and smiled at them. “But I’ll go ahead and write to Mike Delanoy and invite him to come out and bring one of his dogs. I guess I could get used to having people around; I’m going to be awfully lonely when Daniel goes away to college in the fall.”

4970 words *Author’s Notes will be posted at the end of the story.*

Lilo a Ho’okahua

Part 5

June 2, 1973

Honey

The date of the recital dawned sunny and warm. Honey Wheeler stretched and rolled over in her bed, counting the hours before she would dance before a crowd of parents and friends at the auditorium of the Westchester County Community College. She closed her eyes and pictured the stage, with Mart and Dan’s tropical beach scene in the background; herself, Trixie and Diana in the graceful, flowing hula dresses she had made; fragrance wafting around her from the flower leis her father had ordered especially for the recital. She stretched herself again and glanced at her bedside clock.

“Oh my gosh!” she squealed, jumping out of bed and pulling on the shorts and T-shirt she had worn the previous day. “I can’t believe it’s seven-thirty! We’ve got to be at the dance studio by noon for our final rehearsal and to pack up any of our personal things to take home.”

Honey ran a brush through her shiny light-brown hair, slipped on a pair of thong sandals, and ran downstairs to the dining room, where a delicious buffet awaited her. It was Saturday breakfast as usual at the Wheeler estate. Her parents, brother, Miss Trask, and Regan would be finishing up. The rest of the staff would eat after the family.

Her father was just folding up his newspaper after reading it; although he wasn’t going to his office today, he had an important international call coming at eight o’clock. He had already pushed back his empty plate, which Honey knew had contained two eggs, three slices of bacon, and two slices of buttered toast. Madeleine Wheeler was sipping on a cup of coffee; a cup of fresh fruit and a small bran muffin were in front of her. Miss Trask was just helping herself to a small serving of scrambled eggs and a slice of toast from the hot buffet that was set up; a glass of orange juice and a cup of coffee were already at her place, along with a copy of the New York Times. Jim read a paperback copy of *Macbeth* while he munched his toast and scrambled eggs, and Regan perused the latest copy of *The Horseman’s Quarterly* as he drank his coffee.

“Good morning, everyone! It’s such a beautiful day, isn’t it?” Honey greeted her family, helped herself to bacon, fruit, and toast, and slid into a chair across from Jim and next to her mother.

“Good morning, darling,” Mrs. Wheeler said. “Do you have everything ready for the recital?”

“Oh, yes, Mother. It’s all ready. Luckily, our costumes are so simple that it won’t take any time at all to change. Daddy, thank you for the beautiful leis! Trixie and Diana will be so excited when they see them.” Honey beamed at her father, who grinned back at her.

“Nothing is too good for my princess,” he replied. “I just hope the fragrance won’t be overpowering when you dance.”

“I’ll be getting out to the horses, Mr. Wheeler.” Regan pushed back his chair and stood. “There’s a lot to do this morning if I’m going to be ready to go by noon.” He grinned at Honey and remarked, “It’s supposed to be bad luck to wish you a good performance, so I’ll just say, ‘Keep your head up and your heels down’.” Giving her a “thumbs up” sign, he left the dining room to begin his duties as stablemaster.

“It’s too bad that the recital couldn’t be held at the dance studio,” Miss Trask commented. “But I suppose the studio auditorium isn’t large enough for this event, and the parking might be a problem, too.”

“Yes, that’s what Halia told us. She said the college auditorium is very nice, and there is plenty of parking nearby. Tom knows how to get there, doesn’t he?” For the first time, Honey felt just a little nervous. Tom was driving her parents, Miss Trask, Regan, and Mr. Maypenny to the recital, while the Bob-Whites were going in the club station wagon.

“Yes, he knows how to get there. In fact, Tom told me he took a few classes at the campus after he finished his Army service and before he started working here.” Mrs. Wheeler smiled at her daughter.

“Tom was in the regular Army?” Honey was very surprised. Although Tom spent a weekend every month in military training, she’d never heard him speak of being on active duty.

“Yes, he was stationed in Germany for two years.” Her mother looked surprised that Honey hadn’t known. “We were all tremendously relieved when the U.S. and Vietnam signed a cease-fire in March, so that he won’t have to worry about being sent to Vietnam, into combat. Surely you’ve noticed that he and Regan both have had Reserve training since we’ve lived out here, Honey!”

“Oh, well, yes ... I knew they went away for military training every month. I don’t know why I never thought about him or Regan being in the service before they came to work for us.” Honey was embarrassed.

“Remember when I turned eighteen and had to register for the draft, Sis? Brian did, too; so did Dan and Mart. It’s the law.” Jim spoke for the first time. “I sure hope President Nixon can keep us out of the mess in Vietnam, now that the treaties have been signed.” His lips were set in a thin line.

“What would you do if you were drafted, Jim? Would you go?” Honey’s eyes were huge in her pale face.

“I hope I don’t get drafted, because I don’t believe in war as a way to settle disputes among nations. But if my country called me, I would serve.” Jim’s green eyes blazed. “I don’t think you have anything to worry about right now, Sis, because I’ve got a student deferment as long as I’m attending college. But as soon as I graduate, I lose that deferment.”

“What about Tom and Regan, Daddy? Could they be drafted ... or whatever, since they’ve already spent time in the service?”

“Honey, I don’t think Regan would. He served a tour of duty in Vietnam right after he left Saratoga, before he went to work for the Claremont Riding Academy. Even though he’s in the reserves, he has an injury that will probably keep him from being called to active duty. And Tom has a very high draft number. He’s not likely to be called up unless war breaks out somewhere else.” Matthew Wheeler looked at his watch. “I’ve got to be ready for that call, darling. I’ll see you later.” He kissed Honey and his wife, and patted Jim’s back before leaving the dining room.

Honey was thoughtful as she packed the overnight bag she was taking to the studio. It would be a long day, and she wanted to have a change of clothes and some extra makeup to be prepared for whatever happened. While she packed, she thought about Mr. Maypenny and his “battle fatigue” and wondered if Regan had experienced any of that. *How would I act if I went away to a war zone, some place where I might be killed – or a friend might be killed – at any moment? What if I was there for years on end, and then I came back to my nice, normal life in Sleepyside? How would I feel toward my old friends? How would I react to things like sudden noises? Regan*

doesn't seem to be jumpy, if that's what it does to you. But it's true he doesn't like being in large groups of people.

Unable to reach a conclusion to that line of thought, she began to imagine Halia's reaction to seeing the ukulele. Once Mr. Delanoy had told Trixie that his children had agreed to his giving the ukulele to Halia, Trixie had called the dance teacher and informed her that they were sure now that the missing instrument had been located. Honey could tell that Halia was very excited in spite of trying to act casual. *She's probably been disappointed so many times that she can't really believe this might be it.* Halia had agreed to the plan for Mr. Delanoy to present the uke to her following all three hula performances, and Honey had another surprise for her in the form of a lei made of double strands of fragrant white tuberose, interspersed with lavender orchids, to match the ones the girls were wearing. Matthew Wheeler had paid an exorbitant sum of money to have the leis made and flown to New York.

At eleven-thirty, Honey and Jim had just finished eating a light lunch when the Bob-White station wagon pulled up into the Manor House drive, Brian at the wheel. While Jim went to the front door and waved to let their friends know they would be out in a minute, Honey ran to find her mother in the music room.

"Good-bye, Mother," she said, giving her mother a kiss. "We'll see you at the auditorium."

"Good-bye, darling. I'm looking forward to it. Tom will be pulling around soon, to take me to White Plains, and then he'll come back for your dad, Miss Trask, Regan, and Mr. Maypenny. Miss Trask will bring the leis. I'll be there in plenty of time to do a run-through of your dance."

"Where is Daddy? I want to tell him good-bye, too."

"I believe he is in his study. He's had calls all morning long." Mrs. Wheeler smiled at her daughter.

“All right, I’ll go tell him, too.” Honey turned in the direction of the study just as Jim entered the music room to tell his mother good-bye, and the siblings nearly collided.

“Whoa, there, Sis!” Jim grinned at his sister. “No injuries right before the big performance.” He rubbed her head in an affectionate gesture.

Ten minutes later, the Bob-Whites were on their way. It was crowded in the station wagon, with Mart’s and Dan’s instruments, and the girls’ overnight bags, but everyone was in a good mood, and they spent the drive singing.

The hours before the recital passed in a blur for Honey and the other Bob-Whites. Changing into their costumes, applying the slightly heavier makeup Halia had advised for performing onstage, setting up the backdrops, studying the program to see when their turn would come; doing a run-through of their own performance while Mrs. Wheeler warmed up on the piano; all of that took a couple of hours. The students were encouraged to eat a light meal or snack since it would be hours before they would have another chance to eat.

Finally, it was time for the hula portion of the recital. Diana’s little sisters and a dozen classmates were in position on the stage, while Miss Halia and Diana stood on either side in the wings. The opening notes of *Kanaka Waiwai* sounded, and the little girls began to dance, as Halia and Diana performed the movements in the wings, for the benefit of any student who might forget what she was supposed to be doing. As the song ended, a burst of applause brought smiles to the little ones’ faces, and they bowed gracefully before moving offstage.

“Di, they were so cute!” Honey stood by as Diana hugged her sisters. She and Trixie couldn’t help smiling at Barbie’s and Margie’s excitement.

“We did it! We did it!” they chanted.

The intermediate class was doing a hula to *Mauna Alani*, and Honey began to feel just a bit of stage fright. The girls were backstage, putting the final touches on her makeup. “Trixie, Di, I don’t know if I can do this!” She swallowed a nervous gulp.

“Of course you can, Honey!” Trixie was matter-of-fact. “This can’t possibly be as hard as facing down some of the crooks we have caught. Remember how scared I was when we first started? Well, I finally figured out that it’s only scary if I let it be. If I can do it, you can do it.”

“Honey, you’ll be fantastic! We all will. We can do this in our sleep.” Diana smiled reassuringly at Honey. “Besides, just smell the heavenly fragrance of those leis! It was wonderful of your dad to have them made for us.”

The opening notes of *Aloha Chant* rippled backstage, and Honey took a deep breath. Firmly, she placed her mind in a tropical paradise and inhaled the fragrance of her lei. Diana was to lead the way to center stage, and Honey saw that her friend was smiling and appeared relaxed. She took another cleansing breath and followed Di, using the graceful gliding walk and expressive hand movements Halia had taught them. From the corner of her eye, Honey could see Trixie, following at the exact distance that she was supposed to.

As she swayed and moved her feet in the intricate steps of the hula, Honey could make out the sounds of Mart’s and Dan’s guitars, as well as her mother’s melodic piano accompaniment. Although she couldn’t see the tropical backdrop, she could see the two beach chairs she and her friends had cleaned and set up. Mr. Belden’s ukulele lay in the seat of one of the chairs, propped up against the back. She thought of the story behind the words to the *Aloha Chant*, and imagined herself welcoming a friend to the paradise of Halia’s stories.

Before Honey knew it, the final refrain was playing in *diminuendo*. She, Diana, and Trixie placed their hands together in front of their chests and bowed. The applause felt almost like thunder, it seemed so loud and lasted so long. She peered out into the audience, but was unable to make out the faces of her father, Jim, Miss Trask, or Brian. She could barely see her mother, still seated at

the piano, or Mart and Dan, seated just beyond Mrs. Wheeler, with microphones for their guitars.

As the applause continued, the intermediate and the primary hula classes joined them onstage, and Miss Rhonda stepped forward to the microphone to speak.

“Parents and friends, I’m so happy that you have enjoyed the hula section of our recital,” she began. “It was a great stroke of luck that we were able to offer a hula class this spring, and I’d like to thank the teacher who made it possible, Miss Halia Kinney. Please give her a big round of applause.” Miss Rhonda stepped aside, and a blushing Halia stepped forward.

“As a gesture of thanks for her many hours of hard work, I’d like to present Miss Halia with this beautiful lei, donated by the family of one of our students,” Miss Rhonda announced. “Girls, ...”

With great solemnity, Margie and Barbie Lynch stepped forward, and as Miss Halia bowed her head, they reached up to place the lei around her neck. Halia straightened up and moved toward the mike. “Thank you, everyone! From the first moment I entered the Dance Academy of White Plains, I felt at home. Everyone here has gone out of their way to make me welcome. I would just like to thank every one of my students, and every one of their parents; most of all, I would like to thank Miss Rhonda and the rest of the staff here.” She bowed again.

“There is one more special presentation for Miss Halia before we continue with the recital.” Miss Rhonda had stepped to the microphone again. “Most of you may not know that Miss Halia’s great-grandfather made handcrafted ukuleles during the 1920s and 30s. Her mother is in the process of writing a book about him, and Halia has been searching for one ukulele that was believed to be here in Westchester County. She had nearly given up hope of finding it, but with the assistance of three of her students, the ukulele has been found. The present owner has decided to donate the ukulele back to the family of the man who made it, as a part of the Hawai’ian culture that should remain in the islands. Mr. Delanoy, would you like to come forward now?”

Honey could see a shadowy form arise from his seat. Slowly, Mike Delanoy came toward the stage. She could see that he held the instrument case in his hands, and she held her breath. Halia had been prepared for the presentation, but she still had not seen the ukulele and Honey had a terrible thought. *What if it's not the right one?*

But as Mr. Delanoy reached the stage and ascended the steps, Honey let out the breath she had been holding. *There's no way that can not be the right ukulele! The mark is identical!*

After Mr. Delanoy held the case out to her, Halia sank gracefully to her knees on the stage, released the latches holding the case closed, and slowly lifted out the ukulele. She gazed at the beautifully grained, golden wood of the instrument body, and ran her finger along the mother-of-pearl inlay. Only then did she turn it over to look for her great-grandfather's mark. As she traced the mark with a careful finger, Honey glimpsed a sheen of tears in the teacher's eyes. Halia reached forward to shake Mr. Delanoy's hand, and then she stood, looking for Trixie. She enveloped Trixie in a tight hug, and turned to Diana and Honey, embracing them, too. Only then did she walk back to the mike, holding the ukulele.

"Thank you, thank you, thank you! *Mahalo*, as we say in Hawai'i. Mr. Delanoy, I can't tell you how much this will mean to my family. Just now there is a movement to resurrect some of the traditional Hawai'ian music, and this ukulele is a part of Hawai'ian music history. I'll never be able to thank you enough for being generous enough to give it to me."

Mr. Delanoy cleared his throat. He wasn't standing near enough to the mike for it to pick up his words well, but Honey could hear him perfectly. "I'm glad to be able to return the ukulele to your family. But I have to thank an old friend for bringing it to light. If it hadn't been for my old buddy, Ike Maypenny, I would never have known that uke was anything but an interesting souvenir. Ike told these young people here – " he gestured to the three Bob-White girls, Dan and Mart, " – that I had bought a ukulele in Hawai'i during the war.

Without Ike, it would still be locked up in my attic. I want to thank Ike for thinking of me and I hope we can get together soon.”

He shook Halia’s hand and walked back down the steps into the audience. The audience applauded again, and then Miss Rhonda stepped back to the microphone. “We will take a ten-minute intermission before resuming our program,” she said. “Thank you again, students, for all of your hard work, thank you Miss Halia, for your generosity in teaching, and thank you, parents, for your constant support. Thank you to Mrs. Matthew Wheeler, who accompanied the students on the piano, and to Mart Belden and Dan Mangan, who accompanied on the guitar. They all did a wonderful job!”

Honey, Trixie, and Diana helped Mart and Dan move their backdrop and the beach chairs backstage before hurrying out the doors that led back into the auditorium. “Do you suppose Mr. Maypenny is still here?” Trixie asked anxiously. “Do you think he heard Mr. Delanoy?”

“Oh, I hope so!” Diana said fervently. They hurried to find their parents and brothers in the audience, but only Miss Trask was sitting in the row of seats occupied by the Sleepyside group.

“Your parents and brothers went to get drinks for you girls,” she told them.

The three Bob-White girls made their way to the concession stand in the lobby. Honey, as the tallest, had the job of spotting their parents in the crowd. It was a moment before she could see them, and then she noticed the red heads of her father, her brother, and Regan standing together near the door.

“This way, Trixie, Di! I see Daddy and Jim over by the door,” she said.

When they reached the door, they discovered that Mr. and Mrs. Belden and Mr. Lynch were also with Mr. Wheeler, Jim, and Regan. “You girls did an outstanding job,” declared Matthew Wheeler with a broad smile. He gave Honey an affectionate hug, and handed her a cup of soda.

“Thank you, Daddy,” she replied. “I had stage fright for a minute, but Di motivated us with some positive thinking and it worked! Where’s Mother?”

“She and Mrs. Lynch took Diana’s little sisters to the bathroom, and Brian took Bobby and the Lynch boys,” answered Mrs. Belden. She and Trixie’s dad were both beaming at their daughter with pride. Honey could see, though, that Trixie really wanted to know what Jim had thought.

“How did you like the dance, Jim?” Honey asked, so that Trixie wouldn’t have to.

“It was great. You girls did a marvelous job.” Jim smiled at each of the girls, but his gaze lingered on Trixie. “You were just ... just ... well, you were just great!”

Trixie blushed to the roots of her sandy hair, but she smiled at him before taking a sip of the soda her father had gotten her.

“Daddy, where did Mr. Maypenny go? I thought he’d be out here with you,” Honey asked.

“When we got out here to the concession stand, Mr. Maypenny had gone outside,” Regan answered. “I went out to see if he was okay. He said he really enjoyed watching you girls, but he was just about tired of the crowd. He wanted to get back home, but he wouldn’t say anything, because he didn’t want Tom to use the gas to take him home alone, and he knew your parents were staying until the end of the recital. Well, just as he finished telling me that, Mr. and Mrs. Delanoy came out. Mr. Delanoy asked Mr. M if he wanted a ride back to Sleepyside, because he and Mrs. Delanoy were leaving. I told Mr. M that if he wanted to leave, I’d tell your parents, Honey. I knew they wouldn’t mind.”

“Oh! Did he go with them?” Trixie had been silent until now, but the question exploded out of her as her curiosity was tested to the bursting point.

“That he did. He said something to the effect that the ukulele wasn’t the only thing that had been lost and found.”

“Lost and found! That’s right. How wonderful that he and his old friend got back together after all this time. Who would have dreamed that something so wonderful could have come from us taking this hula class?” Trixie’s eyes sparkled, and Honey and Diana hugged her.

The group spread out to welcome Mrs. Lynch, Mrs. Wheeler, Brian, Mart, and Dan, and renewed explanations were made.

“Sis, I’ll take my hat off to you,” said Mart with a grin. “You’re like a dog with a bone. You never gave up hope of finding that uke, and you never gave up hope of getting Mr. M and Mr. Delanoy back together as friends. Besides being a fabulous hula dancer, I’d say you’re a fabulous human being.”

Honey smiled at her best friend. “I hope we never lose our friendship, Trixie. But if we do, I hope we have someone who loves us enough to try to get us back together.” As she spoke, she put her arm around Diana’s shoulders. “Right, Di?”

“Right!” Diana returned the gesture, and pulled Trixie into a group hug. “All for one, and one for all!”

3947 words

the end

Author’s Notes

Disclaimer: The characters from the Trixie Belden series are the property of Random House, and are used without permission, but with a great deal of respect and affection. No profit is being made from their use in this story. Other characters, including Mr. and Mrs. Delanoy, Maureen Delanoy, and Halia Kinney, are my own.

Thanks to my fabulous editors, Trish, Ryl, Steph H., and Ronda. Your assistance has been invaluable. Special thanks to Trish and Steph for helping me choose my graphic background, when I was unsure of the right decision. Trish

challenged me to be more realistic in my treatment of Mr. Maypenny's disclosure of his battle fatigue (now called post-traumatic stress disorder, or PTSD), and Dana shared some insights based on her own military service. I hope the final product is somewhat improved! Thanks also to the generous Terry, who not only helped me to make my pages more web-friendly, but also gave me a couple of suggestions for "horsey" good-luck wishes.

My lovely and ever-helpful webhostess, Vivian – not only does she never fail to respond to a question about the mysteries of html, but she also loaned her name to one of my characters for this story. ***Mahalo, Vivian!***

Many thanks to Cathy P., for Jixemitri, and to the community which I have found at Jix. Thanks to all of the wonderful readers at Jix and at Zap's Trixie Belden Homepage, for reading and supporting me in my writing. I'm very grateful!

I researched the history of ukuleles on a number of sites. Here are some of them:
<http://www.geocities.com/~ukulele/> Brudda Bu's Ukulele Heaven
<http://www.ukes.com/lehua.html> Lehua Ukuleles - Lehua Classic & Traditional Lines - Designed in Hawaii and crafted in Braga, Portugal
<http://www.ukuleles.com/index.html> Handmade ukuleles, with photos – has email link – David Hurd gave permission to use photo.

The cluster of plumeria blossoms used in the title graphic, and repeated in the dividers, came from a photograph taken by Ronda on her trip to Hawai'i. Thanks for allowing me to use it, Ronda!

The Hawaiian language didn't play much of a role in the story, but I wanted a Hawaiian phrase for the title. These sites were helpful:
<http://www.hisurf.com/hawaiian/dictionary.html> - Hawaiian dictionary/translation of English to Hawaiian words. This is where I found my Hawaiian title.

<http://www.royalelephant.com/hawaii/guides/hawaiian.htm> - some Hawaiian phrases

The early 1970s saw a resurgence of interest in traditional Hawaiian music and culture, as I learned from researching these sites:
http://store.mountainapplecompany.com/product_info.php?cPath=15&products_id=406&osCsid=16ac08d5636b31799c032b6af04a5b3e (folk music of Hawaii with listenable clips; considered to be one of the top 50 Hawai'i albums of all time, released 1971) The pieces I chose for the three groups of hula dancers came from this album: *Kanaka Waiwai* for the little ones; *Mauna Alani* for the intermediate class, and *Aloha Chant* for the older ones.

<http://www.alternative-hawaii.com/music/top50p3.htm> - lists the top 50 Hawaiian albums of all time; part of a larger site that is all about Hawaiian history and tradition

http://inventors.about.com/od/rstartinventions/a/remote_control.htm I was surprised to learn that TV remote controls were available during the early 1970s. This site gives information on the history of the remote control.

Dates for WWII battles are easily found – here is some info on the Battles of Guadalcanal:

<http://www.combinedfleet.com/guadal.htm> Guadalcanal Campaign main page

http://www.combinedfleet.com/btl_gn1.htm First Naval Battle of Guadalcanal, Nov 13, 1942 – I decided this is where Mr. Maypenny was wounded when his ship was lost during battle.

Thanks to Ronda for links to several sites which covered the topic of PTSD:

http://www.ncptsd.va.gov/ncmain/ncdocs/fact_shts/fs_older_veterans.html
This site discusses late PTSD for veterans of WWII and Korea.

<http://ptsdcombat.blogspot.com/2006/05/brief-history-of-ptsd-wwi-to-present.html> More info on combat fatigue/ PTSD.

http://www.medicinenet.com/posttraumatic_stress_disorder/article.htm
another article on PTSD.

<http://www.vietnam-war.info/> I needed to refresh my memory about the ending date of the Vietnam war. This site is dedicated to the history of the Vietnam war, and has a timeline of the war and other information

There are a number of internet sites where people can have fresh flower leis custom-made and flown to the mainland. [Here](#) is one. I chose to have the girls' and Miss Halia wear leis made of tuberose and orchids, although I really wanted plumeria blossoms. However, the plumeria leis are only shipped to the West Coast, due to the perishable nature of the blossoms.

Ronda (Rolyru) has posted Hawaiian names for the Trixie characters (at Zap's), based on the meanings of their names in English rather than on the spellings. Here is her list (used with permission):

Hawai'ian names for the characters (from Ronda)

Beatrix (Latin “she who blesses/ bringer of joy”) ‘Thilani – “Sacred one from Heaven”. Or it could be Hi’ilani – “held in the arms of Heaven”; Kapi’olani - “the heavenly arch” i.e. the rainbow – the rainbow traditionally being a sign of God’s blessing. I couldn’t find Ronda’s Hawaiian form of Beatrix with the other names, and the thread is gone now. I also tried to figure out the Hawai’ian names for Mr. Maypenny and Mr. and Mrs. Delanoy. My suggestions comes from a Wikipedia article, found here: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaiian_name

Brian (strong & mighty leader) - 'Alihikaua means commander in battle.

Celia (Heavenly) - Lani also means heavenly.

Daniel (God is my judge) Literal -O'ke akua ka'u luna kanawai. Judge = Luna Kanawai.

Diana (goddess of the moon) - Hina (moon goddess) Mahina -moonlight, Konane-bright moonlight.

Hali'a – “fond remembrance”.

Helen (light) - Ke'alohi In Hawaiian, the word Helena = going.

Isaac (Ike Maypenny) (“he will laugh”) – Aka or IkaŌaka

James means supplanter, which in Hawaiian is Ukali, although Kimo is a stand alone name these days.

Lawrence (“from Lawrentum, Italy”) possibly Mailauleneke (“mai” means “from”; the Hisurf site offers to find your name in Hawai'ian and it gave me Lauleneke for Lawrence).

Madeleine - There isn't a direct translation for Madeleine, but the word Meli means Honey. Another name which I thought could fit was Mililani – "Caressed of heaven, favorite" – from Wikipedia article. Madeleine is a French derivative of Magdala - a village on the Sea of Galilee, whose name meant "tower" in Hebrew (again from Wikipedia). If a tower can be said to scrape the sky, I think Heaven could caress the top of the tower, so I thought “caressed of Heaven” was appropriate, and Mililani sounds a little like Madeleine.

Martin(god of war) - Koa is warrior; Kekoa — “Brave; the soldier; the koa tree”; Kū — “Upright”. One of the four great gods, best known as the god of war.

Matthew (“God's gift”) - Makana lani - heavenly gift

Maureen (originally an Irish pet form of Mary) – Malia, Mele, Ku‘uleimalia (“my Mary-child”)

Michael (Mike Delanoy) (“who is like God”) - Kūlani — “Of heavenly nature”. Variant: Kekūlani. Also: Mika‘ele — Hawaiian for Michael, Michaela, and related names.

Peter (the rock) - Pohaku - rock

Rhonda (owner of the dance studio) (Rose; woman from Rhodes, according to a couple of baby name sites) – Loke (“rose”), Lokelani (“heavenly rose”)

Terrence (“towering”) - Halehale

Thomas (“twin”) - Mahoe or Mahana - twin

Vivian (Vivian Delanoy) (“lively”) – Hisurf suggested Wiwiana; based on the meaning of Vivian, I’d suggest: Miki‘ala – “Alert” + Kona – “Leeward”, name of a famous wind. So... Miki‘alakona – what do you think?

William (“powerful warrior”) Au Kanai‘i - strong warrior or current

Since I can’t forget “my” Lynches, Diana’s parents might be: **Edward** (combination of “cool” and “guard” – Keanu (“the coolness”) Maka‘ala – (“eyes wide awake, watchful”); and **Margaret** (“pearl”) – Momi (“the pearl”) or Momilani (“heavenly pearl”). **Margie** (Margaret) would be the same as her mother, but could be called Leimomilani, or Kaleimomi (lei meaning “child” as well as “necklace” and Ka generally designating “the”); **Barbie** (Barbara means “beautiful stranger”) – possibly Ka’auleinani (‘Au “traveler” + lei “child” + nani “beautiful one”). **Patricia** (Patty Barton, the Lynches’ second nanny) (“noble”) Keali‘i – “the chief, nobleman”, a common first part of compound names. So, Keali‘ilei or Leikeali‘i, perhaps? Lynch names from information in the previously cited Wikipedia article.

Mahalo!

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