

V A I H I V A !

A story of star-crossed lovers in the South Seas
where the native beliefs cause tragedy.

(British English spelling throughout)

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FADE IN – EXT. – NIGHT SKY

Lightning splits a dark screen illuminating storm clouds in the sky, then blackness and a roll of thunder.

Super: VAIHIVA – A CORNER OF A TAHITIAN ISLAND – 1918

EXT. – NIGHT

Trees and coconut palms heavily buffeted by wind and torrential rain.

TWO WOMEN, one English, NINA McLEOD (26), visibly pregnant, the other Polynesian, MAURI (27), are on either side of a small freshly covered grave. Before them is the churning sea. Nina puts a spadeful of earth on the grave. She is in pain. Mauri, sobbing on her knees by the grave, hand-spreads earth over the grave, lays her cheek on the mud.

Mauri

My baby, my poor baby.

The storm drowns all sounds. Nina drops the spade, turns and moves away. Mauri stumbles after her. They lurch toward a wood and thatch cottage of some size and elegance set at the end of a wide lawn. Behind the cottage, one sees only trees rising up on a mountain side. Nina climbs the stairs to the verandah that encircles the structure, enters at the door.

INT. LOUNGE FURNISHED VICTORIAN STYLE – CONTINUOUS

Bookshelves stuffed.

Nina dripping wet, stands in the centre of the room, struggling with her pain.

Mauri enters, pushes the front door closed.

Nina strangles a cry of pain. Mauri moves to help Nina through the bedroom door.

MAURI

Aue! It's your time now, Nina. Come lean on me. May He be more merciful to you than He was to me.

NINA

I'm so sorry, Mauri. I'm so sorry.

INT. BEDROOM – CONTINUOUS

Mauri strips Nina of her wet clothes. Seats her on the bed and towels Nina's face and hair.

MAURI

You're burning with fever.

NINA

Thank you, Mauri. I'm so sorry.

Mauri slips a nightdress over Nina's head. Nina writhes from another sharp pain.

NINA

George will have someone to play with, won't he?

MAURI

Yes, he will.

NINA

Then he won't – Ahhh! – he won't blame me anymore that his Daddy died?

MAURI

He can't understand these things, Nina. For heaven's sake, he's not yet six. You mustn't feel badly. All you must think about now is your baby. Come hold my hand as I held yours – tight.

NINA

You think he's safe? This storm frightens me so.

MAURI

Quite safe. And he loves Taio Vahine. So, stop fretting. Don't you remember the last storm, and how terrible it was? It passed. My father will help Mama T if it becomes necessary. Now push.

NINA

Thank heaven you're with me, Mauri.

Nina pushes; sweat streams down her face.

Mauri looks at her anxiously. Move slowly up to window where crashes of thunder, flashes of lighting, gusts of wind fling rain on the pane.

INT. BEDROOM – SOME HOURS LATER

Move down from the window where thunder, flashes of lighting, gusts of wind flinging rain on the pane, to Mauri holding the naked baby, showing time has passed.

MAURI (V. O.)

She's here, Nina, a beautiful girl.

Mauri spans the baby who gives her first cry. She swaddles the child and goes to place her in Nina's arms.

MAURI

Nina, she is beautiful. What will you call her? Nina?
Nina? Nina!!!

She bursts into tears, babe in arms.

FADE OUT on claps of thunder and flashes of lightning against the bedroom window.

EXT. PAPEETE MARKET PLACE – LATE EVENING

Dying sun reddens bustling market street. ALAN HARDIE, (25), slim, but strong and athletically built, dodges honking cars and laughs. He steps lightly everywhere.

SUPER: PAPEETE: EIGHTEEN YEARS LATER – 1936

Dilapidated buses honk their way through crowds. Sightseers and local shoppers, mixed races, Chinese, French and other Europeans mingle with the Polynesians. The squalor cannot dampen the vibrancy of the scene. A steamer leaving the island gives a long hoot.

EXT. THE BETTER PART OF TOWN – LATE EVENING

Long shadows hover over homes with lawns and gardens, one with a gate into a driveway leading to a building at the end of a square stretch of lawn. A new Citroen car, circa 1935, passes, revealing Alan Hardie by the gate. He wipes his face with his handkerchief. His hand over glasses, sets bougainvillea aside to read the nameplate, "BRITISH CONSULATE."

EXT. VERANDAH, THE CONSUL'S HOME – LATE EVENING – CONTINUOUS

TYSON, THE CONSUL, (45) clips a cigar as he relaxes in one of four chairs, looking out to sea. A steamer hoots. He lights the cigar and puffs with satisfaction. He lifts a glass of whisky from the table and takes a sip. SERVANT enters.

SERVANT

Mister Hardie.

Alan enters. Tyson puts his glass down on the drinks tray, rises and comes forward holding out his hand.

TYSON

Alan Hardie! God bless my soul! So, you're the General's son. My, but you're a tall, strapping lad! And how's my old friend, your father?

ALAN

(Taking the extended hand)

Very well thanks, Mr Tyson.

TYSON

You're here with a friend, I believe.

Tyson leads Alan to a chair. They both sit.

ALAN

My foster brother. You'll remember him, sir. At least, about him – George McLeod.

TYSON

(Pours whisky for Alan)

Yes, indeed! Nina and Alan McLeod's little fellow. But, of course, he'll have grown up by this time. Where is he?

ALAN

I left him strolling around the waterfront. I'm to meet him at the Coffee Shop at the end of The Place in an hour.

TYSON

Then I shall join you, if you don't mind. I would like to see what the General's made of him.

ALAN

With pleasure, sir.

TYSON

Your father, he's still in the army, of course.

ALAN

Yes; but retiring soon. He'll join us when he does.

TYSON

That's great news. You know, we were in the war together. Yet we almost never write. There's a deal of useless letter writing done in this world. Yet, we remain friends. Tell me, how has the boy turned out?

ALAN

George? Surprisingly like the General. Tall and broad of back. He's closer to my father than I am.

TYSON

Really?

ALAN

I don't believe I mind it much, Mr Tyson. George and I are very tight. Although he's a few year younger than I am, his concern for me amends what I miss from father. And big, broad George, he compensates my father for his great disappointment in me.

TYSON

You appear fit enough but I did notice you don't have the military look about you. Does George?

ALAN

Oh, he does indeed! I'm more for games and study. He's for army. I play a lot of tennis. I've just come down from Cambridge. This voyage was my father's idea. But I suspect George put him up to it. Father insisted I take a break from study to rest my eyes.

TYSON

Your eyes?

ALAN

Scarlet fever. As an infant. Played hell with them.

TYSON

Yes, I remember. It was touch and go whether you lived or died. Our battalion was at the lip of a huge shell crater, when we drank your health. I had a canteen of brandy. George's father, Alan McLeod was in hospital badly gassed. You're named after him. So, the illness weakened your eyes?

ALAN

Oh, nothing serious though George enjoys playing nursemaid. It's his excuse to join me on this trip. Also he wished to learn something about his parents.

TYSON

Tragic, damnably tragic. Drink up, my boy. If we leave now, I could show you a few places of interest.

ALAN

Thank you, sir. But George does not seem to see it a tragedy. He does not recall them at all.

TYSON

(As they rise and leave)

The General's boy! Well! Well!

INT. CROWDED, BRIGHT COFFEE SHOP – NIGHT

Laughter. Raucous music. A motley bunch of mixed races, Europeans, Chinese, Polynesians, at tables in an atmosphere filled with smoke and enjoyment. GEORGE, (24), Alan and Tyson at table. Tyson gives an order to a pretty WAITRESS in a sarong. She nods and disappears.

TYSON

If you look in a mirror, George, you'll know what your father looked like at your age. You have his height and sturdy look too. It gave me quite a turn.

GEORGE

The General tells me the same thing, sir.

TYSON

The General? Is that what you call Hardie? Why, man, he's been a father to you.

GEORGE

He has been very kind. I meant no disrespect. As a matter of fact, I address him as "sir." No one knew my parents so well as you, Mr Tyson. I'd appreciate your telling me all you can of them. It's not that they mean so much. I have no recollection of them whatsoever, but I am naturally curious.

ALAN

It was his excuse for coming on the journey with me.

TYSON

Do you remember Mauri, your mother's closest friend?

GEORGE

I have a vague recollection. I remember her embraces.

TYSON

As for your parents, I've yet to come across a more devoted couple. As far as I'm concerned, they – and your father, Alan – are the finest people I have known. We were close friends from the war years. That's why you were sent to Hardie, George. I had no child to keep you company.

GEORGE

He's been a wonderful father to me. I couldn't have asked for better. But is there anything else you can say about my parents that will help me see them more clearly?

TYSON

Your mother tended to Alan's every need till his last breath.

The atmosphere takes a toll on Alan's eyes. He rubs them.
Alan sees George and Tyson in a smoky blur.

TYSON (V.O.)

Your parents named you, Alan, after your father, you know. And you, George, after the General.

George wets a handkerchief in a water glass. He hands it to Alan, who places it over his eyes.

GEORGE

We should get out of here. We can meet at another time.
Alan's in trouble with his eyes. Scarlet Fever. He's here to rest, not smoke, them.

TYSON

You shall see Brocard tomorrow.

ALAN

Brocard?

TYSON

One of the best damned oculists in Paris. He came to retire and enjoy life but he'll see you if I ask him.

ALAN

That won't be necessary, sir. In London...

TYSON

London be damned! You see Brocard tomorrow.

The waitress, holding the tray with their order, watches puzzled as they leave.

EXT. OPEN AREA, A DILAPIDATED BUS FILLING UP WITH PEOPLE – DAY

Tyson's car pulls up. CHAUFFEUR opens the door. Tyson exits, followed by George and BROCARD (67), the French oculist, who speaks with a very strong French accent. Alan exits the front seat wearing sunglasses. A barrage of native words and smiles greets Tyson. A man of mixed race, TIHONI (26), lacking front teeth, collects money from those entering the bus. The pretty waitress from the coffee shop among onlookers.

ALAN

Fifty miles in that thing?

(Holds out his sunglasses)

Are these really essential, Dr Brocard?

-BROCARD

Mais oui, Monsieur 'Ardie. The sun here, it is sharp and strong, not like it is in England. On zee nose!

On the roof of the bus, a muscular young native, MEA (19) hauls up the luggage. He has his eyes on the waitress.

ALAN

Where do we get off?

TYSON

Tautira. The very end of the road. You'll see something of what remains of native life there.

ALAN

That's exactly what we're looking for, eh Mac?

GEORGE

(Brusque) I'll decide when we get there.

TYSON

You'll find Fara very hospitable. He'll lend you a canoe to cross the bay to Vaihiva. Give Mauri my best, will you? She'll be delighted to see you, George.

GEORGE

Yes. I know.

TYSON

Mauri has a precocious and highly intelligent daughter, Naia, who happens also to be very pretty. Don't you fall in love with her.

GEORGE

No fear of that, sir.

George walks off abruptly.

ALAN

I'm afraid, like my father, he has an inborn – um - distrust of natives.

TYSON

Don't tell me Hardie still is colour prejudiced. He'll be in for a shock to see natives here treated with perfect equality.

ALAN

I wouldn't go so far, sir. For him, God first created the Englishman, then the natives of the rest of the world.

TYSON

Sorry to see some of it has rubbed off on your foster brother.

ALAN

Oh, I don't believe it runs so deep in George. Excuse me, sir.

Alan joins George by the bus. The others load the roof with crates of live fowls, corrugated sheeting, bicycles, and a heap of battered household furniture enclosed with pig wire.

GEORGE

Look Alan, I'll not sit next to these smelly people.

ALAN

Oh, come now, George. These smelly people are extremely clean. They love to run under every waterfall they see, or dive into every pool. Do you smell anything now but for the garlands of flowers?

Alan and George at the bus entrance with the driver, Tihoni, who takes their tickets.

ALAN

Will this contraption make five miles, let alone fifty?

TIHONI

Oh, we do it. This is mail coach. Tihoni always get there, sooner or later.

GEORGE

Let's hope it's sooner!

Grinning faces at the windows. A lot of chatter.

Hung along the sides of the bus are bundles belonging to various passengers tied in faded pareu cloth, strings of fish, bunches of bananas, and other market delicacies. All the seats but for one in front are filled. Tyson at the window.

TYSON

See here, Tihoni, is that room for two?

INT/EXT. BUS – CONTINUOUS

Tihoni enters and pushes down the aisle, looks around, scratches his head.

He turns to an OLD CHINAMAN (78) with a broad, tooth-gapped grin, in a drunken stupor, clutching a three-gallon demijohn to his breast.

Tihoni and Mea hoist the Chinaman clasping his demijohn, onto the middle of the roof of the bus.

The local on the front seat takes his place. Alan and George enter, take their seats.

TYSON

(Looks up.)

Good God, Tihoni! What are you doing?

TIHONI

'Sall right, Mr. Tyson. Always put him here anyway, when I get a load. He never fall off.

GEORGE

Good thing that man moved, Alan, I would not have ridden this banger seated by anyone else.

INT/EXT. BUS – CONTINUOUS

Tihoni clambers into the driver's seat.

Mea, the helper cranks the bus. Sweat pours down his face.

The waitress from the coffee shop at the side of the road smiles at Mea. He smiles back.

Mea again starts cranking, once, twice, thrice.

The girl laughs. Mea tackles the job with hate. The engine sputters into a roar.

A cheer from the passengers. The bus dances to the vibrations.

Tyson and Brocard wave.

Mea turns to the waitress with a victorious look, clambers to the roof again as the bus emits a deafening horn blast and jerks into motion. It wobbles ten yards and stalls. A loud groan. Mea, arms akimbo on the roof, a quick look at the waitress and he scuttles down again. The waitress smiles broadly. Mea, eyes on her, shrugs before taking hold of the crank. Tyson and Brocard are amused. One forceful crank starts the bus and Mea monkeys up to the roof again without taking his eyes off the girl. He waves; she waves back. The bus wobbles forward. All onlookers cheer. As Brocard and Tyson walk to the car.

BROCARD

Unless that boy is careful, there exists zee distinct possibility
he will go blind.

TYSON

What?!!

BROCARD

Oui, mon cher. He must wear his glasses from sunrise to
sundown and even then... (Shrugs)

EXT. ON THE ROAD – CONTINUOUS

The bus travels through Tahitian mountain landscape.

EXT. A SMALL CANOE WITH TWO OCCUPANTS – DAY

The man in the stern RAITUA (65) with an age-lined, rugged, kindly face and a muscular frame, paddles with ease. Naked to the waist he wears a weather-stained pandanus hat pressed over his thick, curly grey hair. Sitting forward is a girl, Naia (18) paddling with the same effortless skill in the sunlit sea where mountains rise immediately from the water.

(Polynesian, subtitled)

RAITUA

Enough. Rest, Naia. The breeze is coming.

NAIA glances back and we see her lovely face. She then draws in her paddle. Raitua assembles a sail with green palm fronds. The breeze pushes the canoe quietly forward. The canoe looks smaller than a child's toy between the right hand mountains, towering above them, piercing the clouds in the sky, and the wide sea on their left. Raitua steers.

NAIA

How smoothly we go. We are lucky to have so fine a north
breeze.

RAITUA

It will hold. We shall be home in an hour... Naia...
something most strange has happened in these past weeks.

NAIA

Strange? What is it grandfather?

RAITUA

It is of yourself I speak.

NAIA

Myself?

RAITUA

You do not know perhaps, but your mother must have seen.

NAIA

But what are you telling me?

RAITUA

You have changed of a sudden. You are no longer a child.

NAIA

Well? And what is there strange about that? It is the way of
things.

RAITUA

Only yesterday you were a baby, so it seems to me. Do you
remember how you would ride on my shoulders with your
little fingers in my hair? Happy days they were.

NAIA

Happier than these, you think?

RAITUA

No, only different. Then, before I knew, almost, the baby was
a little girl needing me no longer, proud to do everything for
herself.

NAIA

She wanted her grandfather often enough.

RAITUA

True ... but I looked away for a moment and the child was
gone. A young woman stood in her place. That is the way it
happened.

NAIA

And you are sad for this?

RAITUA

Perhaps a little. I needed time to say goodbye to the little girl.

Naia turns in her seat and faces astern her chin in her hands.

NAIA

Never fear, the child is still there. She will always be there for you Grandfather.

RAITUA

I hope so, Naia. I hope so.

NAIA

How have I changed?

RAITUA

(Shakes his head)

Well... It is wonderful. There is no explaining it. It really is wonderful.

NAIA

You think I'm prettier?

RAITUA

Enough. Would you have your grandfather praise you to your face? Look ahead, Naia. Our friends are there again.

A school of porpoises cross and recross the path of the canoe.

EXT. VILLAGE ON THE WAY – DAY

The bus enters a village. A FAT POLYNESIAN WOMAN, holding a towel to her head, waves and cries repeatedly, "*Tapéa!*" The bus comes to a shuddering stop.

The woman, in a black Mother Hubbard, drying her hair, exchanges the latest gossip with the passengers.

Mea is at the bonnet (hood) of the bus with a jerry can of water.

He fills the steaming radiator. Water drips down below.

The fat woman returns to her hut and emerges minus the towel, with a bundle, and wearing a straw hat. Waddles to the bus.

Alan is amused. George is annoyed. She enters the bus.

INT. BUS – CONTINUOUS

She plunges forward throwing passengers to the sides. She looks at the filled benches. Seeing no vacant seats, settles on the laps of two males who groan. The bus jerks forward.

EXT. A WHEEL LYING FLAT ON THE ROAD – DAY

Tihoni squats by the jacked-up bus, while Mea, puts on a new wheel. A lot of chatter as each one offers suggestions and directs the operation. The fat woman the most officious.

TIHONI

Ain't havin' no luck today!

INT/EXT. BUS – DAY

The bus on its way. George and Alan in their seats.

ALAN

How's the old chap on the roof?

TIHONI

(Hits his head. Brakes)

I forgot all about him! He should 'ov got off at Punaauia.
Hey, Mea!

EXT. ROOF OF THE BUS – CONTINUOUS

Tihoni and Mea lower the Chinaman, to passengers below. The old man bewildered holds the demijohn to his breast.

INT. BUS – CONTINUOUS

As the bus moves away, only George and Alan look back at the old man from their window, sitting by the roadside, grinning.

ALAN

You'll leave him there?

TIHONI

Yeah. I pick him up on my way back tomorrow. He ain't in no hurry.

The bus, travelling toward a beautiful bay.

INT. IN THE BUS – EVENING

TIHONI

Nearly at Tautira. You goin' to Fara, ain't you?

ALAN

Yes. What sort of man is he?

TIHONI

Numera hoe! He a great friend of Mr Tyson. They fish together. You going to Vaihiva also?

GEORGE

Yes. My parents are buried there.

TIHONI

So sorry. You meet Naia. Everybody love Naia. She beautiful girl. Very beautiful.

Through the dusty windshield, the huts and houses of a village, waving, yelling children, and barking dogs. They give chase as the bus passes. It comes to a halt with a jolt throwing everyone forward and back. Chickens cackle.

The fat woman slides off the knees of the two men and crashes to the floor. Some passengers, in pain, rub their necks.

Alan and George look at each other and laugh.

ALAN

Thanks very much for the ride.

TIHONI

Hope you enjoyed it!

INT. PARLOUR, MIXTURE OF POLYNESIAN/EUROPEAN STYLES – EVENING

FARA (57), on a single couch, reads a letter. Alan and George, on a settee, wait for Fara to finish. Squealing children of various ages, with MANU and TEINA, are running in and out.

FARA

Mr. Tyson's friends are mine too. You are welcome.

ALAN

He said you would lend us a canoe.

FARA

It will be my pleasure. You wish to visit Vaihiva, no doubt. Mauri will be glad to see you, Mister George, and you will be most happy to meet her very pretty daughter Naia, who is most kind. That doll my granddaughter holds so tight, is a present from that loveliness.

ALAN

Such a pretty doll

FARA

You know you can walk to Vaihiva along the coast in an hour. Manu, enough! Enough, I say! Present yourself to your mother and tell her to lay the instrument of torture across your buttocks!

Fara walks to the verandah. The evening sun glints on the sea.

FARA

You shall have a canoe, but you shall not depart until morning. These waters are dangerous. It is unwise to sail as night draws nigh. Why so glum? It will be worth the procrastination, if only to taste my wife's succulent dishes. You won't find such exquisite cuisine in the all of Polynesia.

GEORGE

Thank you, sir.

FARA

I wish I could assure you my pestilent grandchildren will not bother you.

(A child's wail)

Regrettably, my daughters are as prolific as my wife. Manu! Will you let Teina have that ball? Maybe then, she will stop the cacophony.

Manu has the ball. Teina is crying piteously. Manu drops the ball and cries a decibel higher. A third child takes the ball and runs off with it. Fara looks on with resigned desperation.

EXT. THE BAY – ON THE LANDING – DAY

Fara and his family wave. The young men paddling on the sea, wave back from the outrigger canoe in the bay. Alan sans glasses. Jungle cocks crow. Farther inland, bands of gold across plateaux, and canyons filled with purple haze.

Higher up, mountain peaks, dark green against the sky.

ALAN

I've always wanted to see the end of the earth. Can anything be more beautiful and peaceful than this?

GEORGE

It's a dead end, if you ask me. Don't put so much muscle into it, Alan. Let me get a hang of the steering first. There's plenty of time. Take it easy. What's that there? Off to the left.

ALAN

It's a blur to me.

GEORGE

Damn it, Alan! You've forgotten your glasses.

Alan takes glasses from his shirt pocket and puts them on.

ALAN

It must be the island, which Fara said is between his home and Vaihiva, Mauri's home.

They paddle on. Alan is absorbed in the wonderful scenery around them, the lush dark green mountains that stand lordly on both sides, rising right out of the sea. Birds fly above their heads. To George it is of no interest.

They paddle on. More beautiful mountain scenery.

They paddle on. Even more beautiful mountain scenery.

They turn the canoe to the right into a lagoon facing, in the distance, toward the wide lawn sweeping up to Mauri's house, which has a beautifully crafted wooden bench at its edge.

Behind the house, forest and rising hills. While they make for the pier...

ALAN

I don't wonder your parents chose this spot.

GEORGE

And I'm wondering what they could have done with themselves, so far from civilization.

EXT. AT THE PIER – DAY

The young men moor the boat and proceed up the path to the house.

When they step up onto the verandah, George knocks on the front door repeatedly.

GEORGE

Alan, this place is like a dream to me. What a strange feeling.
Dim memories are flooding back.

ALAN

Mac, you should have come alone.

GEORGE

Maybe we shouldn't have come at all

ALAN

I'll be out of place. I'll walk back to Tautira. I'd like to see the
coast from the shore.

GEORGE

If they ask me, I think I'll have to stay on here a day or so.

ALAN

I'll wait for you at Fara's house.

Alan leaves. George walks round to the back of the house. He follows a footpath that leads
him into trees and foliage. He walks on and suddenly comes face to face with Mauri, a basket
on her arm. She is now in her mid-forties of regal bearing.

GEORGE

Madam Mauri?

MAURI

Yes?

GEORGE

Don't you know me? Do you remember the little boy and his
parents who lived here many years ago just across the river?

MAURI

Aue! Yes – you – you must be – you are Nina's boy.

GEORGE

Yes, Mauri, I am George McLeod.

Mauri in tears, sets her basket on the ground. She kisses him on both cheeks, clings to him,
then moves back to look at him.

MAURI

You used to call me Mau'i.

GEORGE

Did I?

MAURI

And you were my Toti. You were only six, when I lost you. It was a sad day, Toti. But look at you today. How big and strong you are, like your father. Did you come all the way from England to see me?

GEORGE

Oh, I can't say I did.

MAURI

Then, why did you come, Toti?

GEORGE

It was a piece of luck. A friend of mine was going and I joined him.

MAURI

How long are you staying?

GEORGE

A month.

(Mauri reacts.)

We leave for New Zealand on the next steamer. I'm afraid I've disturbed you coming like this. I should have let you know.

MAURI

No, no. It's a wonderful surprise. It really is. But, I left something in the valley. I must go back.

GEORGE

I can go with you, if you...

MAURI

No, there is no need. Wait for me at the house.

Mauri grabs her basket and moves off.

George returns the way he came.

Mauri walks fast. She falls sobbing at the foot of a tree.

A BOY and GIRL (6, 8) emerge from the thicket. Mauri wipes her face and kneels by them.

MAURI

Find Naia for me, Meina, will you? Tomi, you help her. You must tell Naia she is to have her lunch at your mother's house and to wait for me there. Don't forget. She is not to come home; but to wait for me at your mother's house.

George, waiting on the verandah, waves.

Mauri waves back, soon steps up to join him.

INT. MAURI'S LOUNGE – LARGE SHELVES OF ENGLISH BOOKS – DAY

GEORGE

You must be a great reader, Mauri.

MAURI

My husband's books. He was an American. He died nine years ago.

George raises a framed photo from a side table

GEORGE

I'm sorry, Mauri. Who is this lovely girl?

MAURI

My... my daughter, Naia.

GEORGE

How old is she?

MAURI

Eighteen.

GEORGE

My sister would have been the same age. Mauri, you must know so much about my parents, tell me all you can.

Mauri takes the picture from George, and replaces it.

MAURI

Aue, Toti! Here we talk and you must be hungry.

EXT. BY THE DOCK NEAR FARA'S HOUSE – DAY

Alan and Fara chat as, sometime during their conversation, they make for the house.

FARA

So you departed to let him encounter Mauri alone?

ALAN

She has a history with him and his family. I'd have been out of place.

FARA

Most thoughtful of you, Mr. Alan.

ALAN

To tell the truth, I was reluctant to leave. The place is so lush with hills and forests. Ideal to explore.

FARA

Your preference is for nature's beauty? But what of Mr. George?

ALAN

Oh, he prefers the excitement of the city. If he did not feel it a duty to see his parent's graves and to visit Mauri, he'd be in Papeete right now.

FARA

I am positive Mauri's pretty daughter will alter his mind.

ALAN

Not a chance of that, sir. He's staunch in his view that people should marry their own kind.

FARA

I see. Who can account for people's perceptions? Come, it is time for lunch. Let us partake of my wife's delectable food. Make sure to smack your lips with every mouthful and apprise her of how tasty it is.

EXT. A CEMETERY AT END OF VAIHIVA GROUNDS – DAY

Six graves in a corner overlooking the sea enclosed with a hedge filled with blossoms. George and Mauri stand by the graves, two cover Alan and Nina McCloud; one, a child's, in perfect order, with white coral headstones bordered with shells and strewn with white coral sand. Three waiting to be filled are for Raitua, Mauri and Naia.

MAURI

They knew your father had not long to live. Mustard gas damaged his lungs too badly. So they put a lifetime of love into every moment, and shared that love with you.

GEORGE

I'm glad I came, Mauri. Thank you for bringing me.

MAURI

She was beautiful, Toti, with a fine voice. It was like music when she spoke.

GEORGE

I'm sorry the baby died. A sister would be good company. You've kept her grave beautifully. Those shells are perfect.

MAURI

(After a fit of sobbing)

You must forgive me, Toti.

GEORGE

I should not have asked you to bring me here.

MAURI

(Collects herself)

No, no. It is right. I should be with you.

They go on to the pier.

MAURI

Goodbye, Toti. I think of you often and I always will. I hope you have a happy journey with your friend.

Mauri embraces and kisses George with warmth, then walks away without looking back. George looks after Mauri. Bewildered, he boards the canoe. Looks back and paddles away.

FADE OUT

GEORGE (V. O.)

She was happy to see me. (MORE)

FADE IN – INT. DOUBLE BEDROOM IN FARA'S HOUSE – NIGHT

Alan against the headboard, bare-chested, with a sheet over his lower limbs. George in his pyjama bottoms getting into his top; then sits on Alan's bed.

GEORGE (Contd.)

I'm sure of it. Then she cooled off. She left me by the pier. I felt she wished me away and gone.

ALAN

Nonsense, Mac, we don't know these people, that's all. You probably upset her, coming so unexpectedly after all these years.

GEORGE

Maybe. But there's nothing here for us. Just mountains and forests and nothing else. Let's go back to Papeete.

ALAN

Papeete? This is Tahiti, Mac – what's left of it. Stay here, I want your company.

GEORGE

It's a village like a good many others. And just as dull. But Papeete! Where else will you see ships of so many lands docked right along the main street? Come back with me.

ALAN

No, George. You won't see me in Papeete again until steamer day. There's so much beauty to see; so many forests to explore; so many real locals to meet. If you're leaving, send down my things, will you?

GEORGE

You're crazy! You know that! Barmy! If you stay, who'll take care of you. You'd better come back with me.

ALAN

Not a chance, old boy.

GEORGE

Make sure to wear your glasses every day.

ALAN

Yes Grandma, and my woollen vest and socks.

EXT. THE BAY – DAY

Alan steers a sailing canoe in the bay. He wears his dark glasses. He looks over to his left. He sees the offshore island at the mid-point between Tautira and Vaihiva. Alan steers toward it. He wades ashore and beaches the canoe. He walks along the beach.

Another canoe catches his attention. It lies above high-water mark. He sees a bamboo pole and other fishing gear.

Alan walks toward the end of the dune. He enters the trees where the vegetation begins, into a clearing.

Under a tree, a girl, Naia asleep. Suspended on a branch, above her, is a large string of fish. Naia opens her eyes and stretches. Her big, dark-brown, almost black eyes, in her oval, pretty face, peer at Alan for a sleepy moment. She springs to her feet and brushes the sand off her simple flowered frock and long, bare legs.

NAIA

Hello.

ALAN

I'd no idea anyone was here.

NAIA

What a time to be asleep. I was up very early fishing.

ALAN

You've had good luck. I didn't mean to disturb you. I couldn't resist coming ashore on this lovely little island.

NAIA

Were you coming to our house?

ALAN

Do you live on the point there at the entrance to the valley?
Then you must be...

NAIA

Mauri's daughter. I'm Naia. You are Makla – George McLeod.

ALAN

No. My name is Alan Hardie. I came down with George a few days ago.

NAIA

I heard he came, but why did he leave so soon?

ALAN

I – I suppose he wanted to reach Tautira before dark.

NAIA

Will he not come again?

ALAN

No, I don't think so.

Alan doffs his dark glasses.

NAIA

Doesn't he like this part of the islands?

ALAN

Not as well as Papeete.

NAIA

That is strange. Which do you like better?

ALAN

This – infinitely better.

NAIA

That is good. I must take the fish home. Will you come to the house? You must be hungry. I'll get you some lunch.

ALAN

Won't your mother mind my coming unexpectedly?

NAIA

She wouldn't if she were home. She has gone to Moorea but my grandfather will make you welcome.

ALAN

I'll come with pleasure, then.

Naia unties the fish from the branch. Alan puts his glasses on and takes the fish from her as they walk to the canoes.

EXT. MAURI'S VERANDAH – DAY

Raitua's rugged face in a native pareu and weather-stained pandanus hat. Alan and Naia come into view on the verandah. Raitua is on a rocking chair.

NAIA

My grandfather invites you to stay for a while.
I'm not sure if I should say it but he likes your
kindly face. Also you are Makla's friend.

ALAN

Thank him very much and I'd like to stay.

NAIA

It's settled. We'll send someone to Tautira to fetch your things.

Raitua rises and leads Alan, arm-in-arm into the house.

ALAN

You're sure I shan't put you out?

NAIA

Not a bit. Grandfather likes your (teasing) 'kindly' face so don't worry. And mother will be pleased.

MONTAGE: Alan and Naia in sarong explore the forest. Naia points out landmarks. Puts flower in her flowing hair.

She wears her sarong under a waterfall, laughing. He, in bathing trunks.

Naia grates a coconut on the verandah. Alan watches, then takes it from her. He sets to work vigorously and unsuccessfully. Naia laughs. Alan hands the coconut back with a face. Naia grates it expertly. The meat falls in a shower of flakes.

EXT. SECLUDED SUNNY BEACH – DAY

Laughter. Naia and Alan come wet and fling themselves down on the sand. She in a native beach costume, he in bathing trunks.

ALAN

Now that I should go, I don't want to do so.

NAIA

Then why go?

ALAN

Would you like me to stay?

NAIA

So would grandfather. He knows a good man when he sees one.

ALAN

George will visit Raiatea and Bora-Bora. I wanted to go with him but I seem to have changed my mind.

NAIA

Why?

ALAN

That miserable walk we took to the waterfall.

NAIA

I did warn you.

ALAN

I'll stay if you're sure...

NAIA

Of course, I'm sure. It would be sad to see you go so soon.
We may not meet again.

ALAN

It's strange my coming here, to the place where my father's
best friend is buried.

NAIA

Why strange? You were meant to come.

ALAN

Do you believe in such things?

NAIA

Of course. Don't you?

ALAN

Who could have meant me to come?

NAIA

George's father. Mother says you were named for him.

ALAN

You really believe that fate guides are lives?

NAIA

That is what my people believe.

ALAN

You don't believe in free to choose your own destiny?

NAIA

If I make a choice, that was the destiny planned for me. Shall
we go to the valley? It's a fine day.

ALAN

Um... Yes, I would like that.

NAIA

Good. Let's feed the fowls first.

EXT. HILL TOP – DAY

Alan in his dark-glasses and Naia stand together on the summit.
Below them, in the valley, the river follows its course through the thick vegetation. A smaller stream comes through an open glade and joins the main river.
Scattered are fruit-laden breadfruit and orange trees.

ALAN

It's worth a journey all the way from England to see this.

NAIA

I come here often. Down in the ravine, the river is 'Vaihiva.'

ALAN

'Vaihiva?'

NAIA

It means The Dark River. The wild lands are beyond. Come.
It's not a hard climb. Why do you wear sunglasses all the time?

ALAN

I have a problem with my eyes.

NAIA

You should see Dr Brocard, the Fr...

ALAN

I have and he advised me to keep my glasses on all the time during the day. Naia, what did you mean when you said George's father meant me to come here?

NAIA

You and George are very close, you said. And George's father and your father were close. So it's natural Nina and Alan McCloud would want to meet the grown up you. George came first. Now you. Do you know Nina McLeod wanted you to marry her daughter, if she had one? Come. I'll take you to the wild lands. The climb there is easy.

Naia smiling, perched on tree roots, looks down at him.

ALAN

Wait, Naia! Is this what you call an easy climb?

NAIA

Do you never climb mountains in your land?

ALAN

I used to, often, but they are different.

NAIA

How different? Easier to climb?

ALAN

(Waving her on)

Go on. Let's get to the top.

EXT. THE SUMMIT, AWESOME, WILD MOUNTAIN SCENERY UNDER BLUE SKY

NAIA

You don't like it.

ALAN

You are mistaken, Naia. I do. I've never seen a more beautiful place, but it fills me with a kind of strange sadness.

NAIA

You're a silly man. Why should beauty make you sad? Come.

They stand over a gorge; the river runs far below. Two giant rocks are part of the cliff on the opposite side.

NAIA:

"A L A N!"

The call is echoed and re-echoed in the silence of the gorge.

ALAN

Call again.

NAIA

H A R D I E!

The rocks on the far wall of the gorge again echo eerily. Alan cups his mouth. Naia pushes his hands aside.

NAIA

No, don't.

ALAN

Why not?

NAIA

There's an old saying about this place: "Who calls here, stays here."

ALAN

Stays here? Do you mean in Tahiti?

NAIA

Yes. And I would not laugh if you wish to return home.

ALAN

Do you believe it?

NAIA

Who can be sure of such things?

ALAN

I'll risk it. G-O-O-D-B-Y-E!

NAIA

You should not have done that. It was another voice mocking you.

INT. A CAVE FULL OF HEWN SHELVES – DAY

The shelves have rows of skulls. A grotesque totem, vaguely suggestive of human form, the head is way out of proportion to the body. By the totem are clubs and spears.

NAIA (V. O.)

Tuatau! He sleeps by day. We must not waken him.

ALAN (V. O.)

Can I examine his war club?

They are kneeling in front of the totem. He reaches for the club. Naia looks afraid.

NAIA

Ye...es. But touch nothing else. Come, Alan. Let's go. We might anger him.

Alan examines the heavy club. Naia rises. Alan reluctantly puts the club back.

EXT. AT A STEEP SLOPE – DAY TO NIGHT

Alan and Naia descend carefully, using toe and handholds.

Naia reaches the floor. Alan loses his hold when a rock crumbles. He slides to the bottom.

NAIA

Alan! Are you hurt?

ALAN

I'll be right in a moment.

Alan tries to rise and can't. Naia runs off. At a brook, Naia fills a cornucopia, made of wild taro leaf, with water. She returns, kneels beside Alan to wash his hands and knees.

NAIA

Do you think you can stand now?

ALAN

(Tries, sinks, groans)

Sorry, Naia. I've sprained my ankle. I'll have to wait a bit.

Naia takes his foot and proceeds to loosen his shoelace to remove his shoe.

ALAN

Please don't, Naia.

NAIA

It's not broken but it's swollen. There is a remedy for the pain and swelling. Have you a pocketknife?

ALAN

Yes.

Alan hands her his clasp knife. Naia lowers his foot.

She cuts armfuls of fern, carries them to a level spot and strews them on the ground. She comes to help Alan up.

ALAN

I'm a clumsy beast. I am sorry.

With his arm around her, he hops over to the bed of ferns.

NAIA

No. The rock was decayed. It couldn't bear your weight.
Slowly, now.

(Alan lies down.)

There! I'll get that remedy now.

ALAN

You mean you can find it here?

NAIA

I'm sure to. I will not be long.

A milky fluid flows from the bark of a breadfruit tree into a banana leaf cup. Naia folds the leaf to avoid spillage.

She kneels by Alan and applies the sap to his ankle.

NAIA

It's the sap from the breadfruit tree. It will relieve the swelling. You 'll see.

ALAN

How do you know so much of healing?

NAIA

Our elders, like my grandfather, teach us. You see, we have no doctors on this part of the island, so we take care of ourselves. Am I hurting you?

ALAN

You're better than a trained nurse. You're not like any girl I've met.

NAIA

Is that good or bad? There! That should ease the swelling and pain.

ALAN

We must try to make it down. We can't spend the night here.

NAIA

You will not get very far.

ALAN

But, your grandfather...

NAIA

Will be worried. He will search.

ALAN

How is he to find us?

NAIA

He will call. I will answer.

ALAN

You put great faith in your grandfather.

NAIA

He is a remarkable man. I learn from him and I love him very much. Now I must go and find food.

Darkness steals upon them. Bird calls, crickets etc.

The two eat; their plates are leaves; their food is breadfruit, yams and plantains. A fire crackles, lighting up their faces. Finishing, Alan throws his leaf into the fire. He settles on his bed with his back against the bank of the hillside. Another fern bed lies near Alan's.

ALAN

Could anything be better than this?

NAIA

Nothing, so long as it won't rain.

ALAN

It won't. That old god up there will see to that.

NAIA

Tuatau?

ALAN

Yes. What does he do? I mean what gives him fame?

NAIA

If people are lost, say at sea, they call, "*Tuatau O! Tauturu mai!*" and he guides them home.

ALAN

How?

NAIA

His head, it shines like fire. They follow it to find their way to land.

ALAN

Does he still do it?

NAIA

My grandfather thinks so.

ALAN

But you don't?

NAIA

I've never been lost.

ALAN

Naia, how did you know Nina McLeod hoped her daughter would marry me?

NAIA

(Lies down on her bed of ferns)

My Grandfather told me. Is your ankle still hurting?

ALAN

It has a pretty angry feeling.

NAIA

It'll be better in the morning, you'll see.

ALAN

I've never known a girl like you. I shall miss you.

NAIA

And I will miss you too, very much.

EXT. NAIA WITH BREADFRUIT SAP – DAY

NAIA

Good morning. Is the ankle hurting still?

Alan sits up and rests against the bank of the hillside. Naia squats by his feet, places the sap-filled leaf on the ground and begins to apply the sap to his ankle.

ALAN

Not particularly. But I feel sore all over.

NAIA

I should think so, after such a fall. You will not be able to walk for a week at least. Do I hurt you?

ALAN

Hardly at all... Ahhhh! Ha! Ha! Ha!

NAIA

I am sorry. I woke up in the night. It was so beautiful. I wanted to wake you but you were snoring so sweetly, I didn't have the heart.

ALAN

I don't snore.

NAIA

You do. Not loudly, just the prettiest whistle.

ALAN

If I'm sure of anything, it's that I don't snore.

NAIA

Well, you do. Don't deny it or I shall drop your foot!

ALAN

I snore! Okay. I admit I snore!

NAIA

Shhhh!!!!

ALAN

What is it?

NAIA

Didn't you hear?

Call is repeated. Naia lowers Alan's foot, re-bandaged in leaves. She calls back. An answering call – now distinct and clear.

NAIA

He has found us.

The call again. Naia's answers. Her grandfather emerges from the forest. Naia runs into his arms and kisses him.

Raitua releases Naia and comes to Alan. She chatters. He grins and squats. He speaks to Naia who helps Alan on to his good leg. Raitua motions for Alan to clamber on to his back.

ALAN

But I'm over 170 lbs.

NAIA

He could carry two of you balanced at the ends of a carrying pole.

ALAN

I can manage with support.

NAIA

Don't argue, young man. You have no choice. You're not to walk a step.

Alan reluctantly gets on to Raitua's back. The old man lifts him with ease and moves off.

EXT. MAURI'S VERANDAH, DINNER TABLE – LATE EVENING

Raitua sits at the table watching Naia clear the dishes.

Naia's face is drawn and sad. Alan emerges with a cane through the front door, his foot now in bandages.

ALAN

I walked the verandah a dozen times this afternoon.

NAIA

I'm glad.

ALAN

There's no need for me to make a nuisance of myself any longer.

NAIA

(Stops with the dishes)

Oh? You think you must go so soon.

ALAN

The steamer arrives in a week. I've various things to do. George will be wondering what's become of me.

Naia moves off with the dishes. Alan hobbles down the steps, across the lawn to the sea. Raitua, on the verandah, looks out at Alan. Naia joins Raitua. They exchange looks. Then Naia starts down to Alan.

NAIA

I packed your things. We arranged for you to be taken tomorrow to Tautira in the canoe.

ALAN

I'd much rather go alone. Is there a way of getting the canoe back?

NAIA

It's the canoe in which you came.

ALAN

Oh.

NAIA

Can I get you anything?

ALAN

No. Nothing, thanks.

NAIA

Then I'll say goodnight.

ALAN

Goodnight.

EXT. BY THE PIER – DAY

Alan in dark glasses and cane with Naia and Raitua. Alan's luggage is in the canoe.

ALAN

Thank you for everything, Raitua. I shall never forget you.

Naia stands by Raitua and translates speech for both. They shake hands firmly.

NAIA

My grandfather says you are always welcome.

ALAN

Thank you. I hope we meet again.

Raitua leaves. Alan removes glasses.

NAIA

With this breeze, you will reach Tautira in an hour.

ALAN

Naia... Listen. I can't understand what came over me these last few days. I've behaved like a beast.

NAIA

Oh, I'm glad you said that, Alan. I thought you were upset about something I had said or done.

ALAN

You! What could you have said or done? You and Raitua have been so good to me and I – I behaved like an ingrate. Can you forgive me?

NAIA

There is nothing to forgive.

ALAN

I promised George I would be in time to meet the steamer. Forget these last days. Remember the others. I have no words to say how I shall miss you.

NAIA

Oh, Alan!

She clings to him, brings his head down and kisses him,

ALAN

I've remained as long as I could. You must know how much I want to stay. It would be unfair to both of us.

NAIA

It's all right, Alan. We'll have this to remember. Go now. Go quickly. Take care of your ankle. Wear your glasses.

Alan puts his glasses on and, with his cane, gets into the canoe with trouble.

NAIA

Goodbye, Alan. I will miss you.

Alan, in the canoe, paddles away. Naia, in silent tears on the pier, waves.

EXT. PAPEETE STREET – NIGHT

Awning proclaims the "BOUGAINVILLE CLUB." A car draws up. Chauffeur opens door. Tyson emerges and enters the building in a hurry.

INT. LOUNGE OF THE CLUB – CONTINUOUS

Tyson enters the crowded, smoke-filled, and noisy room. He sees George and moves to the table where George sits with friends. He acknowledges greetings but refuses to join the group. George and Tyson shake hands. Tyson urges George to come with him. George excuses himself and leaves with Tyson, who takes a good last draught of George's whiskey and soda.

INT. CLUB PRIVATE ROOM – CONTINUOUS

Tyson opens the door and ushers George in.

TYSON

I say, George, I've just seen Alan.

GEORGE

Good. I was wondering if he'd get back in time to catch the steamer.

TYSON

He's not taking this boat.

GEORGE

He's not? Why?

TYSON

A girl.

GEORGE

Oh! A girl. Well, an extra month here won't do us any harm. Let him have his fun.

TYSON

He wants to marry her.

GEORGE

Marry whom, for God's sake!

TYSON

Mauri's daughter, Naia.

GEORGE

Good heavens! He can't.

TYSON

Of course, he can't.

GEORGE

He's mad! The General will not...

TYSON

He'll destroy Naia's life.

GEORGE

Naia's life? I'm thinking of Alan and his father.

TYSON

(First talking over him)

You must convince him... And I'm thinking of Naia.

GEORGE

Where is he now?

TYSON

At the Consulate.

GEORGE

Shall we go?

INT. A DOUBLE BEDROOM IN THE CONSULATE – NIGHT

GEORGE

You stubborn ass! You'll destroy everything you worked for. You've made a name for yourself at Cambridge. Do you want to trash all that?

ALAN

Credit me with some sense, Mac. She's intelligent, no matter what you think.

GEORGE

For God's sake, don't stand on that game leg. Sit down and listen to me. At best, marriage is a gamble. Why double the odds against success by choosing a girl with whom you have nothing in common, who is of another race and social class?

ALAN

Yes, I did think along the lines of race and social class.

GEORGE

Good! You can't take her to England. She won't fit in. She'll never be anything but a Polynesian at heart.

ALAN

You sound just like The General.

GEORGE

That's not fair, Alan. Even Tyson agrees with me. Oil and water. As a scientist, you should know they don't mix. A question of cultures. The Cambridge professors said...

ALAN

I admit I thought it would be cruel to take Naia away from all she knows and loves, and where she is at home. I'm aware some people in English society may react unfavourably to this union or to her.

GEORGE

If you were aware of that, why...?

ALAN

It's difficult to explain.

GEORGE

Alan!

ALAN

Ever the nursemaid! Jealous someone else may take over your job!

GEORGE

This is no time to be glib, Alan. It's too serious a matter. Your life is in the balance. You're throwing your career away. Will—you—sit—down? What changed your mind?

ALAN

(Hobbles about the room)

What changed my mind? I suppose the realisation the logic with which I came here is not a universal logic.

GEORGE

You intend to elucidate I hope.

ALAN

Like you, I believed I'd throw my life away. I have an education it's true, in a wide open field.

GEORGE

Well, then?

ALAN

Mac, you have to be quiet if you want reasons. I'm trying to get it together myself. I know the specific gravity of stars and their distances from Earth in terms of light years. I know of black holes and their behaviour. Does that place me above someone who knows how to survive the dangers of mountain, forest and sea? Who finds food in the wilds and lights fires from dry branches? Someone who treats wounds with the medicines nature provides?

GEORGE

Which serves to prove my point She will be out of place...

ALAN

Permit me to finish my thoughts George. My mind is full of mathematical formulae only a handful of people understand. I'm ashamed to admit I had the arrogance of learning above the common reach. Reality grounds hers. She made me humble. She made me realise how abysmal is my ignorance.

GEORGE

My word! You are smitten! She's a beauty, I know. I've seen her photograph. I now want to meet this Polynesian paragon. Sit down, damn it! Can she use the wisdom of the islands in genteel English parlours? Serve tea with style? She will be an embarrassment.

ALAN

I believe she will serve tea with great elegance. When you meet her, you'll know she'll fit into any society.

GEORGE

Doesn't it matter to you how the General feels?

ALAN

Yes, of course it does. When he...

GEORGE

You don't expect father to welcome her with open arms, do you?

ALAN

When he sees her, he will know I could do no better had I chosen the daughter of a titled lord.

GEORGE

A high class lady! Who will then be akin to my sister. Will nothing change your mind? Even to breaking your father's heart? He will never accept her, you should know that.

ALAN

No, Mac. Nothing will change my mind. Nothing at all.

GEORGE

Then, there's nothing more for me to do other than to tell you I'm glad I won't be the one facing the General!

ALAN

I had hoped you, at least, would understand my feelings.

GEORGE

I'm sorry, Alan. There's no way I can. A Polynesian from the wilds in an English parlour! No! Oh no!

INT. A ROOM IN A HOUSE IN VAIHIVA – NIGHT

Naia delivers a woman's child. She spans the baby which cries. She swaddles it and returns it to the mother.

INT. MAURI'S DINING ROOM – NIGHT

Mauri, seated in her chair, watches Naia as she serves supper.

MAURI

You are well, Naia?

NAIA

Of course. Why do you ask?

MAURI

You are too quiet; tired, perhaps?

NAIA

I am, a little. Liana went into labour today. Mama T was informed but she was delayed and I alone brought Liana's son into the world.

MAURI

You must be proud.

NAIA

I am, mother. It was a wonderful experience.

MAURI

Were there no visitors while I was away?

NAIA

Oh, yes. You remember telling me about George McLeod?

MAURI

(Starts)

Yes.

NAIA

Didn't you say he is travelling with a friend?

MAURI

Yes.

NAIA

Well, this young man was here. His name is Alan Hardie. Grandfather invited him to stay with us. You'll be sorry you missed him.

MAURI

He came alone?

NAIA

Yes.

MAURI

When did he come?

NAIA

I don't remember exactly. Perhaps two or more weeks ago. A very nice man. Grandfather liked him. He returned to Papeete two days ago. I'm tired, Mother. I'm going to bed.

MAURI

Yes. Do. Sleep well, Naia.

EXT. PORCH IN RAITUA'S HOUSE – DAY

Mauri climbs steps to the porch where Raitua is rocking on his chair smoking.

(Polynesian subtitled)

MAURI

Naia tells me you've had a visitor here.

RAITUA

Yes, a young man I liked a lot.

MAURI

How long did he stay, father?

RAITUA

How long? Three weeks I think.

MAURI

And it was you who invited him?

RAITUA

Yes. Naia has told you? He is the friend of the other one –
Makla, George McLeod.

MAURI

And you were content that he should come here, to be alone
with Naia day after day, with no one to watch over her?

RAITUA

Naia needs no watching. The young man is to be trusted. I
saw that at once, or I should not have asked him to stay.

MAURI

You are old and foolish. You have forgotten what it is to be
young.

RAITUA

I have not forgotten that the young need companions of their
own age. Never have I seen Naia happier than during these
past days.

MAURI

She is miserably unhappy. I saw it the moment I came. And it is your doing. What a fool I was not to take her with me.

RAITUA

You are a strange mother, Mauri. You show your love for your daughter in a peculiar way. Naia is no better than a prisoner at Vaihiva. She sees no one but ourselves.

MAURI

What has passed between them? Naia confides in you; that I have always known. Tell me, then, what he has said to her.

RAITUA

He said goodbye. He is leaving by the steamer to New Zealand.

MAURI

You have done well, father. You permit this young man to come here, to make love to Naia, whether you knew it or not. And now he is gone, taking her happiness with him. She loves him. How proud you must feel.

RAITUA

You saw that she loves him?

MAURI

Do you think she could deceive me? It is certain.

RAITUA

And her love is returned; that too is certain.

MAURI

She told you this?

RAITUA

No. I saw it for myself.

MAURI

Then he will come back.

RAITUA

And if he did, what could be better? If he asks for her, would you not give him our child?

MAURI

Never!

RAITUA

Ēhahaoia! Where will she find a better man?

MAURI

Would you have him take Naia to a foreign land among strangers, never to see her again?

RAITUA

Yes, if Naia wishes it. We must think of her, not of ourselves.

MAURI

I will never let Naia go with him.

She leaves her father in anger.

INT. ROOM IN FARA'S HOUSE – DAY

GEORGE

I simply had to follow you, Alan.

ALAN

It's no use, George. If she'll have me, I will marry her, no matter what you or anybody says.

GEORGE

Even if you hurt your family? The ones who care about you?

ALAN

I expect those who care about me to understand no other woman but Naia is for me.

GEORGE

How can you say that when you've never given our young ladies a chance? Your head was forever buried in books at Cambridge.

ALAN

You're wasting your time, George.

GEORGE

As soon as you come out from under those books, you fall for a native woman and want to make her my sister. (MORE)

GEORGE (Contd.)

Have a heart, man. It just won't work. You are from very different worlds and never the twain shall meet.

ALAN

You don't know her, George. Meet her before you issue rash verdicts.

GEORGE

Are you prepared to cause your Naia dreadful anguish and embarrassment? She will be so completely out of place – and I know you will break your father's heart – and mine. Now, please, don't be your stubborn self.

ALAN

Enough, George. Nothing you say will change my mind.

EXT. THE OPEN SEA – DAY

Alan wearing dark glasses, paddles fast and furiously. His outrigger canoe is back to front.

EXT. OFF-SHORE ISLAND

Naia stands by her canoe as Alan nears, Naia walks away.

Alan, jumps into the shallows and pulls his boat alongside Naia's. He moves across the sand into a palm grove. Naia, flower in her hair, reclines against a tree.

ALAN

You knew I was coming?

NAIA

Yes.

ALAN

You mean you guessed it.

NAIA

When I sighted the canoe, I knew. You paddled stern first, with the outrigger on the wrong side.

ALAN

No! I was not aware of it.

NAIA

Why did you come? You were so wise to go when you did.

ALAN

Naia...

NAIA

It will be hard to go through it again.

ALAN

But that's what I'm here to tell you. I'll not leave, I mean, not without you.

NAIA

Oh! And I must consent, yes?

ALAN

I hope you will. Otherwise, my life would be meaningless. Don't... don't you feel anything for me?

NAIA

(In his arms, kissing him wildly)

Oh, Alan! Alan!

ALAN

You must have known I'd come back.

NAIA

No, I did not. I hoped for it. Oh how I hoped for it.

ALAN

I left because I felt it would be wrong to take you from here, from the people you love. What a fool I was to think I could exist a day without you.

NAIA

I wanted so much to hear you say that.

They kiss passionately.

ALAN

Are you sure you want to give up your family? Your home? And your people for me?

NAIA

My home is with you. I could not love these islands if you were not here.

ALAN

Oh Naia, you're so lovely, in every way. I didn't know it was possible to be so happy. It scares me.

NAIA

Happiness is not something to fear but to enjoy.

ALAN

I must see your mother. You want me to meet her, don't you?

NAIA

Then you will not have enough time to get back to Tautira before dark.

ALAN

I can't go until I know her mind. Won't she ask me to stay?

NAIA

If she doesn't, you can sleep in my grandfather's house. He likes you.

They walk hand-in-hand to their canoes. Paddle side by side. A cutter is anchored at the mouth of the river.

ALAN

What boat is that?

NAIA

A cutter that belongs to Miti – an old friend of my grandfather. He comes often to load oranges.

They reach the pier and clamber out of their canoes.

INT. MAURI'S SALON – DAY

Naia and Alan, hand-in-hand, stand before Mauri.

NAIA

Mother, Alan and I love each other. Please give us your blessings. We need them. I need them.

ALAN

Your daughter means everything to me, Madam Mauri. I love her more than I can express.

MAURI

You have just this moment sprung this news on me. Give me
a day to consider it.

EXT. MAURI'S VERANDAH TO MAMA T'S HUT IN A CLEARING – NIGHT

Ethereal moonlight. Stars twinkle.

Mauri descends the steps. She follows the path into the valley forest.

She approaches MAMA TAIO'S hut. Its walls are bamboos lashed together, over which is a
thatch roof. A swinging lantern sends spears of light through the walls. She knocks.

MAURI

Mama T.

MAMA T (V. O.)

Who calls upon me at such an hour?

MAURI

It is I, Mauri.

MAMA T (V. O.)

Mauri? Then why do you stand outside? Come in.

INT. MAMA T'S HUT – CONTINUOUS

The bamboo door creaks eerily.

The light from the swinging lantern plays on Mama T's (80 to 100) deeply lined face.

Her eyes are clear and intelligent. She sits upright at a table in an old high-backed chair.

MAURI

I had to see you alone, Mama Taio.

MAMA T

What is it? Someone ill? Not Naia?

MAURI

No, no. It is not that.

MAMA T

Well, what is it? Speak. Have you come only to keep silent?

MAURI

Naia wishes to marry an Englishman.

MAMA T

Congratulations.

MAURI

He will take her back to England.

MAMA T

And what can I do about it?

MAURI

I will never see her again. Read the bowl, Mama T.

MAMA T

No. I will not. You want me to say what you wish to hear.

MAURI

I give you my word I will listen to the voices of the spirits. It is true I do not wish Naia to marry this Englishman, I need to know if the spirits agree.

MAMA T

I will not read the bowl. That is final. I will not give you cause to prevent Naia from marrying with the man she has chosen as her husband.

MAURI

You love Naia, Mama T. Would you want her to make a mistake?

MAMA T

That is why I will not read the bowl. My eyes would see what they wish to see. Naia is the rain that waters my barren heart.

MAURI

Mama T, the spirits choose to talk through you. You will not misread them. We must think only of Naia.

MAMA T

Enough! I will not read the bowl.

MAURI

You will let Naia choose a destiny that may lead to unhappiness? You will see the truth. You always do. Read the bowl, Mama T. Let the spirits guide us

A pause. Mama Taio rises, then sits again, looks at Mauri, rises lays a half coconut shell on the table, some leaves, and a jug. She pours water into the shell, then sprinkles the leaves in it. She lights a candle and moves her face close to the bowl. She looks wide-eyed at Mauri.

MAURI

What is it? Tell me Mama T.

MAMA T

You know I did not want to do this. The events are hidden but, if those two unite, sorrow and death will follow.

MAURI

Sorrow and death!

INT. NAIA'S BEDROOM – NIGHT – CONTINUOUS

Mauri watches over Naia asleep.

MAURI

Naia. Wake, my heart. Wake.

NAIA

Mother! Why are you up so late?

MAURI

I have just come from Mama Taio?

NAIA

Mama T? What did she say? Why do you not speak?

MAURI

You have no doubts, Naia?

NAIA

None, Mother.

MAURI

I know how wrong one can be when one is young.

NAIA

Why must elders think a curse of ignorance is on the youth of this world?

MAURI

Because of our own mistakes, my child.

NAIA

No mistake here. I have never been more certain.

MAURI

You are prepared to leave me and your grandfather and go to a strange land?

NAIA

I never dreamed it would come to this, Mother, but then, I never knew Alan would come into my life. It makes me happy to know that he is with grandfather now. I will miss going fishing with grandfather. I will miss the advice and knowledge he gives me.

MAURI

Yes, it is what I expected...

NAIA

But, above all, I will miss you, mother. More than you will ever know. I was blessed with a most loving, most understanding mother. So I hope you will realise my love for Alan, and my need of him, is far more than anything I have ever known.

MAURI

No! Let me speak. Your happiness alone is what concerns me.

NAIA

My happiness is with Alan. I must be with him. Do not deny me that?

MAURI

Listen to me, my heart. Mama T says, if you marry this man, sorrow and death will be the end of it.

Mauri leans to embrace her but Naia gets out of the bed and moves away. She turns to Mauri.

NAIA

Taio Vahini has said this? She has spoken in those words?

MAURI

In those very words .She loves you, Naia. She could not speak amiss in any matter concerning your welfare. This cannot be set aside.

NAIA

It can be set aside. It must be. Mother, I love him. I love him! My happiness is with him – only with him. Is that nothing? I will not give him up. You speak of my happiness. It is with Alan, Would you have a coward for a daughter? Would you have me order my life on the advice of an old woman looking into a coconut shell filled with water and sprinkled leaves.

MAURI

You talk as the child you are. You know the spirits are never wrong. If you love him, you must give him up, if not for your sake, then for his.

NAIA

Tell him I fear to marry him? For such a reason?

MAURI

What to say must be decided, but he must be told.

NAIA

Mother, speak from your heart.

MAURI

Would you go toward a future offering nothing but sorrow and death, taking him with you?

NAIA

Yes, willingly, if it must be so.

MAURI

But it shall not be so. I myself will tell him.

NAIA

(Seizing her dress)

No, Mother!

Mauri's face is inexorable. Naia cries with breaking heart.

NAIA

What shall I tell him?

EXT. ON THE VERANDAH AND AT THE PIER– DAY

Mauri watches Alan and Naia walk hand in hand toward the pier. Raitua releases the canoe from its moorings.

NAIA

According to French law, I cannot marry without Mother's consent. But don't worry. Grandfather and I, we will make her agree.

ALAN

(Kisses her)

I'll wait ten days at Tautira. Then I'll come for you.

NAIA

Oh, Alan. Be patient. Please be patient.

ALAN

Ten days. No more.

He disengages himself and steps into the canoe. Raitua gives him a push.

NAIA

Good go with you!

EXT. VAIHIVA JETTY – DAY

MITI and TWO NATIVES load the anchored cutter with sacks of oranges. Mauri approaches and speaks to Miti. His reply is vehement refusal. She admonishes him. He gives a reluctant shrug of acceptance. She leaves. Miti ensures Mauri is no longer in sight, then makes off.

EXT. OUTSIDE RAITUA'S HOUSE – DAY

Raitua is repairing a canoe. Miti joins the old man. Raitua puffs thoughtfully on his pipe.

(Polynesian – subtitles)

MITI.

Mauri wants me to take her and Naia to Morea on my cutter.

RAITUA

Be ready to sail within the hour.

Miti smiles and nods.

EXT. CHICKEN COOP BY MAURI'S HOUSE – DAY

Raitua comes to Naia feeding the fowls. She beams at the sight of him. He speaks. She stops feeding the birds. A look of alarm crosses her face. As the old man continues, she smiles, puts her arms around him and kisses him.

EXT. VAIHIVA JETTY – NIGHT

Naia, Raitua and Miti board the cutter and set sail.

EXT. OUTSIDE FARA’S HOME – EARLY MORNING

Raitua knocks. A sleepy Fara, among his vast family, opens the door. Alan also appears.

FARA

Yes! Yes! I am opening – Raitua!

(Subtitled) What’s the matter?

ALAN

What is it? Raitua!

Raitua beckons him over Fara's noisy brood. Alan pushes through to follow Raitua. Fara turns to his family.

FARA

Permit me to enter my own house.

EXT. DECK OF THE CUTTER – DAWN

Naia looks out for Alan from the deck. She sees him and waves. He waves back and boards the cutter. He takes her in his arms.

ALAN

It's all right. We're together, darling.

NAIA

I can't believe mother would do something like that. You would not have found me in Moorea. It's nothing against you, Alan. An old woman who speaks to the spirits...

ALAN

Speaks to what? I don't want to hear this.

NAIA

No, Alan. I must tell you. I could not marry you if you did not know it.

ALAN

Go ahead then, tell me, darling.

NAIA

Mama T told mother the spirits said, if we marry, sorrow and death would follow – for both of us.

ALAN

You don't believe such nonsense, do you?

NAIA

Mother believes it.

ALAN

The old witch said what she knew would please your mother.

NAIA

You believe that?

ALAN

I am certain of it.

NAIA

If you are certain, then I am too.

The cutter takes the breeze. On deck, Alan and Naia embrace, the rising sun behind them.

EXT. DECK OF THE CUTTER AND ISLAND OF HAO – DAY

A beach swarming with natives, beautiful voices raised in song. Flowers decorate the sea. Around the cutter are canoes filled with garlanded natives.

Alan and Naia, arms about each other, look smilingly upon the scene. Alan wears glasses. More canoes make their way to the cutter. Raitua and Miti also look on.

NAIA

I hoped they would sing. The Hao people have lovely voices. They welcome my grandfather back to the island of his birth.

ALAN

How on earth did they know he was coming?

NAIA

Without a telephone, you mean? We islanders have our ways.

On the beach, islanders surround the canoe bearing Naia, Alan and Raitua from the cutter. The three jump in the shallows. Many haul the canoe onto the beach. All three are garlanded. Alan hoists a child above his head. Raitua addresses the crowd.

ALAN

What a friendly people!

NAIA

Grandfather was born here. They all know us. See how quiet they are as he speaks. He has already told them who you are and why we've come. It's ours, Alan, all of this. Yours and mine.

ALAN

How large is the island?

As they walk along the beach, hand-in-hand.

NAIA

Thirty miles from one end of the lagoon to the other, about half that across. It's a thousand miles from one end of the Archipelago to the other.

ALAN

And I didn't know until a month ago such islands existed.

NAIA

The Hao people have never heard of England either.

ALAN

Does your grandfather know of the prediction?

NAIA

Yes, I told him.

ALAN

You did? Isn't he afraid to bring us together?

NAIA

He is, but he knows how I feel. He told me, "Sorrow comes to all and death is an inevitable end."

ALAN

Your grandfather is a remarkably astute... a sharp man. But I can't help thinking it's a nasty trick to play on your mother. Won't she be livid?

NAIA

Yes, at first. Grandfather is telling them we have come with her consent. Otherwise, we couldn't marry. Mother will come round.

ALAN

You think so? I'm not so sure.

Cheering crowd approaches. They lift the lovers shoulder high.

NAIA

You'll see. I know it. Grandfather knows it too. If he were not sure, he would never have done this for us.

The islanders make off with them, down the beach.

EXT. A LONG TABLE ON THE GRASS – NIGHT

Hula dancers, music and song. Roasting pigs turn on spits.

The people take their places on mats at the table, laden with food. Naia in a pretty wedding frock and Alan garlanded, are seated in a place of honour, Alan dressed as a bridegroom, in a pareu. Naia leads Alan to the dancers and begins to dance. Alan joins in the spirit of it. The other dancers and singers ring them and clap in rhythm. Raitua joins in the clapping. An islander bends to his ear. Raitua nods, goes to Naia and speaks to her. She nods with a sense of urgency. She takes Alan's hand. The two follow Raitua into the darkness. The music and singing continue.

Suddenly the music stops. There is general chatter wondering why. Mauri pushes her way to the centre. She is palpably angry and we hear it in her low voice.

(All dialogue is in Polynesian, subtitled.)

MAURI

Where is my daughter? Where is she?

RAITUA

(coming forward)

She is married, Mauri.

MAURI

You did this? My own father. Do you know what the spirits told Mama T?

RAITUA

Yes.

MAURI

And still you went ahead, knowing what lay in store for both of them?

RAITUA

Daughter, we are all subject to death, and sorrow visits everyone?

MAURI

Take me to her before it is too late.

RAITUA

It is too late.

MAURI

(Tears, but proud and tall)

I can only hope, my father, that we do not live to regret this day.

Mauri leaves. Raitua is no longer sure he has done right.

EXT – THREE IN A CANOE ON WATER SHADED BY TREES – NIGHT

They beach the craft on a thickly wooded island. Naia and Alan get out of the canoe. Native waves and paddles away.

Alan and Naia continue on to a clearing.

They find there a small, newly built dwelling, thatched with green fronds. Two small suitcases are at the entrance.

NAIA

The Hao islanders built this for us. Oh, Alan, I'm so happy. You wait here.

Naia picks up her suitcase and goes inside the pavilion. She lowers a roller matting from the ceiling that covers the large open windows.

Naia approaches wearing a pareu. Her hair hangs free. Alan places the garlands from his neck around her neck.

ALAN

Mrs. Alan Hardie.

NAIA

Hardie *Vahine*.

He draws her to him and they kiss with increasing passion.

INT. ISLAND PAVILION – DAY – CONTINUOUS

They are naked, making passionate love on a floor mattress. – no sheets, no blankets.

EXT. ON THE ISLAND – DAY

Naia and Alan are under a waterfall. They are naked. Their nudity must be open; they are without shame. They are in the Garden of Eden. They kiss. They frolic until he takes hold of Naia as if he never means to let go. He takes her to a grassy bank. There he makes tender love to her. His glasses by their side. When done, while still naked, Alan puts on his glasses.

ALAN

You won't like it in England, at first. How will you feel in a country where the sun is a rarity? Where it is cold much of the time.

NAIA

Don't worry. I'm prepared for that. I'll be happy with you.

ALAN

You'll be terribly homesick. Will you promise to tell me if you're not happy? You must let me know.

NAIA

And make you unhappy too? Never!

ALAN

But you must, Naia. I wouldn't...

NAIA

Mamu. How foolish you are to worry. I may love England. You're not to speak of it anymore.

EXT. ON A HEIGHT ON THE ISLAND – DAY

Alan, in dark glasses, holds Naia hands. They watch canoes approach. The sound of singing.

ALAN

I'll be sorry to go.

NAIA

So will I. I know the song they are singing. It's sad. About a girl who loses the one she loves to the sea.

ALAN

I wish I knew your speech.

NAIA

I'll teach it to you. It's more beautiful than English or French.

They move away. Now only the sea and the song.

EXT. ISLAND OF HAO BEACH – DAY

Alan is dressed in his clothes. Naia in a frock. The islanders surround them and Raitua. The cutter is in the background. Miti approaches the shore and beaches the canoe. Naia, Alan, Miti and Raitua climb in and are pushed off. Other native craft follow. The islanders sing and wave. The four climb aboard the cutter. They raise the sails. The cutter moves easily over the swells into the sea. The islanders wave and sing. Alan and Naia wave back.

EXT. THE OCEAN AND THE CUTTER – DAY

The sky ablaze with colour. In the distance is the shoreline. The cutter is becalmed. Raitua, Naia and Alan on the fore hatch. Raitua smokes a pipe. Miti approaches. He and Raitua enter into a debate.

ALAN

Naia, they appear to be arguing? What's the trouble?

NAIA

If there is no breeze by morning, grandfather will have to swim ashore.

ALAN

Can he swim the distance? I'll go.

NAIA

He wants you to stay with me. Besides, no stranger could make his way along the reefs. It's seven or eight miles to the village. And, when you get there, you will not be able to talk to the people.

ALAN

We could wait out the calm. He'll never make it.

NAIA

Don't you worry. He'll be all right. You know how strong he is. And it has become necessary.

ALAN

Necessary?

NAIA

Grandfather discovered they forgot to fill the demijohns at Hao. We've only three gallons of water left. There's no knowing how long it will be before the wind comes.

EXT. THE VESSEL – EARLY NEXT MORNING

Raitua dives over the side and swims easily for the land. He turns in the water to wave. Naia, Alan and Miti wave back. With anxious looks, they follow Raitua until he wades ashore. He waves and starts to run. At the distant sound of thunder, Raitua stop and looks up. A heavy cloud approaches from far out over the sea. Raitua resumes running. A gentle breeze brushes Naia hair at the rails. Alan approaches with drinking water for two.

ALAN

It should rain any minute. I can feel the chill in the air. There's nothing to worry about now. Here, drink. You must be thirsty.

NAIA

There's wind behind the rain. It will blow hard before dark. I hope Grandfather comes soon.

EXT. VILLAGE – DAY

Raitua enters the village and calls. He receives an answering call. Villagers come out to see their visitor. A man of his own age nears. Raitua explains. The man exclaims "*O Raitua! Nofea mai oé?*" Raitua points in the general direction of the cutter. Another man speaks and mentions "Mauri?" The man shoos a couple of kids off. The kids run off yelling 'Mauri.' Mauri emerges and goes to her father, who is led toward her. She kisses him on both cheeks.

EXT. CUTTER'S BILLOWING SAILS IN A DOWNPOUR

The cutter moves to the open sea. Alan starts to unfurl the sails. Miti is steering. He speaks.

ALAN

What's he saying?

NAIA

We must go with the wind or the boat will capsize.

EXT. ON SHORE AND SEA

The villagers get into their canoes and outriggers. They push off and fight the high waves.

The rain beats on the anxious faces of Raitua and Mauri in their canoe.

EXT. ON THE CUTTER

Miti finds it difficult to steer.

When the cutter lifts to the edge of a trough and plunges downward, a mast cracks under the strain and comes crashing down to fall into the sea. A huge wave slams the deck.

Miti is swept overboard. Alan struggles to throw a ring buoy to him. The cutter flounders.

EXT. ON THE SEA

Suddenly, Mauri, in a canoe with Raitua, points and cries out.

MAURI

The spirits were right.

They are in an agony of fear as a wave lifts the cutter which plunges down over the wave on its side and out of sight.

There is a general cry of 'Aue!' Another huge wave descends upon Raitua and Mauri which overturns their canoe.

Other canoes converge on them and on Miti and pull them up.

EXT. ON THE CUTTER

Naia at Alan's side speaks over the noise of the high winds.

NAIA

Oh, Alan, Mama T was right.

ALAN

What's that you say, darling?

NAIA

She said I would bring you sorrow and death.

ALAN

Naia, we are not going to die. I won't let it happen.

NAIA

I do love you, my own sweet man. Oh, Alan. I am so sorry.
But the gods may let you live if I go now.

Naia kisses him, breaks from his embrace and tries to throw herself over the rails.

ALAN

(Grabs hold of her and pulls her to his arms)

Naia! No! Don't! Don't. If we are to die, we shall die
together. I wouldn't want to live a day without you. But, I
promise it won't happen. Trust me, Naia.

NAIA

I was afraid to ask but your father and George – will not want
a native girl for you, will they?

ALAN

Once they know you, they will realise how unworthy I am of
you.

NAIA

Oh, Alan, I hope they will see how much I love you.

ALAN

They will see how much I love you.

She clings to him sobbing. He releases her to fight his way to the steering wheel.
The ship disappears under a huge wave.

INT/EXT. TYSON'S VERANDAH – DAY

George enters with outstretched hand. Tyson rises from his chair to greet George with a
sombre face. As they shake:

GEORGE

Any news, Mr. Tyson?

TYSON

I'm afraid not, George. Do sit.

GEORGE

Have you informed the General?

TYSON

Not yet. If I hear nothing within the next few days, I will call off the search.

GEORGE

Please send me word. But let me break the news to Alan's father. I want to return home as soon as possible to be with him when I tell him. I know the pain will be intense and that he will take it like a Stoic. However he will need me there.

TYSON

Of course, I understand. How are you holding up?

GEORGE

I'm quite numb. For that I am grateful.

TYSON

Let's cling to the last vestiges of hope.

GEORGE

Yes, indeed, sir. Let's do that.

EXT. A BEACH, SOFT, WHITE, VIRGIN SAND – BRILLIANT SUNSHINE

On the beach are two bodies. Alan and Naia in a sleep of exhaustion. The shattered hull of the cutter wedged between two great coral mushroom rocks. Coconut palms at the edge of the sand. Naia wakes. She is not certain where she is, then sees Alan. She goes over to where he lies face down on the sand, kneels and turns him over. He smiles at her.

ALAN

So it wasn't a dream. I was afraid to open my eyes.

NAIA

We're safe! It's hard to believe but – the pigs Alan! We mustn't lose them. We'll have many in time.

ALAN

(Rises to slash a coconut for Naia)

In time! How long do you expect us to stay here?

NAIA

(Drinks coconut water.)

I don't know. We don't even know where we are. Though I suspect it's Tematangi. It's not on the shipping lanes. (MORE)

NAIA (Contd.)

We could be here for years. Prepare yourself for difficult weeks ahead.

Alan slashes another coconut and he too drinks and goes toward the sea. Naia races ahead into the water.

Alan's smashed glasses on the sand catches his attention – he picks up the pieces and drops them into the sea.

EXT/INT. ON DECK, IN THE BOAT AND ON THE SHORE

Naia and Alan, at the door of the doghouse, hear pig grunts.

They wade ashore with piglets wriggling in their arms. They let them loose on the beach.

They laugh with delight as the piglets (they're protein) run into the brush.

They wade ashore with arms full of clothes and various articles from the boat. They lay them on the beach. They hug each other in satisfaction before going back to the cutter.

In the pile are an axe, an adze, a handsaw and various other working tools.

They again wade ashore, with arms full of more articles and tools from the boat, which they add to the pile on the beach. Tin plates and cups, cutlery, a large iron pot, a tea kettle, a clothes iron, fishing tackle, hooks and fishing spears, plenty of tinned food, fresh fruit, tea, coffee, a big case of soap and a friction topped tin filled with safety matches.

They collapse at the side of their treasure, look at each other and laugh.

NAIA

Where are your glasses?

ALAN

Broken, I'm afraid.

NAIA

When we get home, and it may be a long time, I know where to find the right medicine for you.

ALAN

You mean, if we get home.

EXT. VERANDAH OF MAURI'S HOME – DAY

Raitua and Mauri rise from chairs to shake Tyson's hand (Mauri translates for Raitua)

TYSON

I'm sorry I cannot bring you better news after a month of searching. Neither Naia nor Alan nor the cutter have been sighted anywhere.

MAURI

Thank you, Mr. Tyson.

TYSON

But we will not stop searching the seas. It seems the whole archipelago has risen to the challenge. One cutter even went close to Tematangi. There was no response to their hooter.

MAURI

What are you trying to say Mr. Tyson?

TYSON

It's difficult, very difficult. You know how much Naia meant to all of us. But we must assume that she and Alan are not coming back to us.

MAURI

My father and I already came to that conclusion. The gods had predicted it.

EXT. THE ISLAND ON THE EDGE OF THE COAST.

The pigs, six of them, are now in a pen and bigger.
Alan and Naia are building a hut on the edge of the sand under overhanging trees.
The sea comes rolling in. And rolling in. And rolling in.

EXT. A SMALL NEAT DWELLING ON THE EDGE OF THE SAND – DAY

Trees protect the hut, decorated with bushes and wild flowers.
SOUND of an axe hitting a tree. The creak and smash of a falling tree. Alan in native waistcloth stands triumphant over the tree. His skin is brown over a strong, now more heavily muscled body. Plaited leaves shield his eyes. Naia appears.

NAIA

How are your eyes, Alan? I can make a new shield for you.

ALAN

This one is fine. It should last another couple of weeks. I'll have the canoe ready soon.

NAIA

I cannot believe all you have learned. A good, straight tree. You think you can do it?

ALAN

I know I can. I watched your grandfather working on his new one. I saw exactly how it's done.

NAIA

You're lucky to have found a straight tree. They're not common on the Low Islands.

A jungle-cock's crow. The jungle-cock crows again. Naia moves up into the undergrowth. Alan follows. They move aside some plants to look into a small clearing. A cock, a hen and some chicks, who become nervously aware of the intruders. The cock cackles and flies off. The hen holds her ground. The chicks run for cover in the grass. Alan and Naia enter the clearing, which overlooks the sea. A cutter is discernible. Naia's hand in the grass, brings forth a chick. She drops the chick into her raised skirt. The hen dashes at Naia, who grabs it by the legs. She hands it to Alan. The faint sound of a conch shell wafts over the water. Alan is unsure. Naia is engrossed. She drops another chick into her skirt. Alan turns seaward and squints into the bright sheen of water.

NAIA (V. O.)

I'll soon have the rest.

The cutter moves away.

ALAN

Naia... Naia.

NAIA (V. O.)

There – I think I have the lot. There are ten.

Naia laughingly puts the last chick into her raised skirt. Cheeps from within. Now she hears the conch shell.

NAIA

A sail, Alan! It's a cutter! Hurry!

She runs from the clearing holding her skirt; Alan follows with the hen. At the water's edge, Alan and Naia wave with their free hands.

NAIA

It's going away. The fire, Alan! Light the fire!

Alan hands the hen to Naia and rushes into the hut. He emerges with a tin of kerosene and a box of matches. He runs to a ready-made bonfire. Alan pours kerosene and sets it alight. He feeds the flames wet leaves and grass. They watch wretchedly as the smoke blows inland.

EXT. THE ROOF OF A SMALL PAVILION – DAY

Alan thatches a gazebo a short distance from their hut. Naia speaks up to him. He leaps down from the roof, amazed. He places his hand on her stomach then breaks out into laughter.

ALAN

Will you be able to handle the birth when it happens. Of course, I shall help.

NAIA

I have watched and even birthed babies. I shall have no trouble. Especially if you will be there.

ALAN

Then I shan't worry. I shall finish this by tomorrow.

INT. HUT – DAY

Alan's groans before we find him in bed shivering. Naia, obviously pregnant, bends over him. He speaks with difficulty, breaking the words, stammering.

ALAN

This is dengue fever, Naia. I could die. I don't want to.

NAIA

Don't talk of death, Alan. I could not survive alone.

ALAN

If this is the haemorrhagic type and I start to bleed, the chances are I – I won't survive.

NAIA

I will not let you die, Alan. I will not let you die. I shall leave you for a little while?

ALAN

Where do you plan to go?

NAIA

I noticed, in a clearing, remnants of papaya trees left by those who once inhabited the island. The leaves are good medicine.

ALAN

If you think it will help.

NAIA

I hope it will. (Goes)

INT. HUT – DAY

Naia force feeds him the extract of papaya leaves in water, some of which falls on his pillow. Alan slurps up as much as he can.

INT. HUT – DAY

Naia is sitting by Alan who is in a sleep of the dead. She shakes him but he does not waken.

NAIA

Get up, Alan. Get up. It is time for your medicine. Alan!

He finally opens his eyes. Again she force feeds him the extract of papaya leaves in water, which he swallows with difficulty. Then he falls into another sleep. Naia turns and weeps.

INT. HUT – DAY

NAIA

It's not working.

She is tries to force feed him and fails. She gives up and begins a heart-breaking sobbing.

INT. HUT – DAY

Alan is sitting up, sipping the extract of papaya leaves in water. Naia is by his side.

ALAN

You know, Naia, you would confound the doctors in England. You could teach them a thing or two.

NAIA

Most of my people know these medicines. We have to learn to cure ourselves. I had to cure you. I very nearly gave up. But I knew I could not live here without you.

ALAN

You and your people are amazing. Father will realise that.

Naia turns away to hide her feelings.

INT. THE HUT – DAY

Both in bed. Alan asleep. Naia, very pregnant, awake. She bites her knuckles from the pain. Alan opens his eyes, stretches contentedly and looks toward Naia. She apparently is asleep. Alan in a pareu, quietly slips out of the hut. Naia rises and goes to the small stove and begins to grill fish. Moments later, another pain racks her. Alan comes in wet. He removes his pareu and dries himself naked without self-consciousness. Wears a fresh pareu.

ALAN

Today is the first day with nothing to do. Let's take a holiday,
Naia. Paris! That's the place!

NAIA

Paris? Looking the way I do in this beautiful gown?

ALAN

I know how anxious you are to get back to your mother and
grandfather.

NAIA

(Lays table.)

And you'd be sorry if we are found.

ALAN

(Fetches coffee pot. They eat.)

Maybe, But you mustn't be afraid, Naia. I'm here. When ...?

NAIA

Not for another ten days at least.

ALAN

Are you sure?

NAIA

Will you do something for me, Alan?

ALAN

Of course.

NAIA

Well, since you have nothing else to do, Perhaps you will get me the kaveka eggs you promised. I woke thinking how good they would taste.

ALAN

What if you go into labour? I don't want to leave you alone.

NAIA

There is time yet.

ALAN

Then I'm famished for kaveka eggs.

NAIA

I hate asking you to go. It's a long way and there's no wind. You will have to paddle.

ALAN

Where's the basket? I'll be back soon. Are you sure you'll be all right?

NAIA

Be careful of your eyes. Start back in the late afternoon. The glare will be off the water then.

ALAN

(Kissing her)

Promise you will rest the whole day.

NAIA

I promise. Now, go! And keep your eye shields on.

Alan goes. Naia in pain. When it subsides, she swings the large iron pot over the fire. Perspiration dots her forehead. She takes, a pillow, a coverlet and clothing and goes out.

EXT. – DAY

As Naia leaves the hut, a tame frigate bird sidles along a wooden rail outside. He squawks.

INT. GAZEBO

There is a mattress on the floor. Naia enters and sheets the bed for herself. She grits her teeth against the pain. She leaves to return to the hut.

INT. HUT

Naia dips the kettle into the vat of boiling water and goes out with it.

EXT. ON THE SEA AND AT THEIR HOME – DAY TO DUSK

The sky fills with colours. Alan with his eye cover, is happy, which reflects in his easy paddling of the canoe. He looks to the stern of the boat.

In the basket, the kaveka eggs nestle on a bed of grass.

Alan approaches the beach.

ALAN

Naia!

He jumps into the shallows and hauls the boat up. Taking the basket, he jogs toward the house. The frigate bird sidles on his rail and demands attention as he passes. Alan enters the hut. The frigate bird vocalizes his annoyance. It is dusk. Alan, without the basket, re-emerges from the hut, visibly concerned. Something on the ground near his feet catches his attention. His name traced in the sand. An arrow points to the gazebo.

ALAN

Naia!

He runs forward to the entrance of the gazebo.

ALAN

Naia?

INT. CANDLE-LIT PAVILION – NIGHT

Naia on the mattress on the floor, cradling a new-born infant.

NAIA

It's all right, Alan. Our son, Tua, he is here.

Alan is rooted to where he stands. He tries to speak but chokes on laughter.

Tears flow fast and free. He shouts and shouts as the tears gush out and he can't stop laughing.

EXT. THE SEASHORE – DAY

The waves come rolling in now smooth, and now wild.

Alan is seated in the shallows of a calm sea, concentrating on shaping a small wooden ball.

Naia approaches holding Tua, now two years old. (Naia speaks only Polynesian)

NAIA

(Subtitled) What are you doing sitting there all morning,
Alan? Time for lunch.

ALAN

(Answers in English)

Tua needs toys. I must make some.

NAIA

Well Tua just took his first steps today. I'm sorry you missed
seeing it.

ALAN

(Genially)

I'm sorry too. I will make sure to see him take his second
steps.

NAIA

(English)

Oh, Alan? You are funny.

EXT. THE SEASHORE – DAY

The sea comes to shore two or three or more times.

Naia plays with TUA using the wooden ball Alan made. The child is two and a half years old.
Naia throws the ball. Tua runs, laughing, to pick it up and hand it to his mother to throw again,
which she does. The boy laughs and goes for it. The faint sound of a ship's hooter.
Naia pricks up her ears. Again the sound of the hooter. Naia runs into their little hut on the
shore. Tua wonders why she left and does not want to play with him. He follows after her.

INT. HUT

Naia grabs the matches and kerosene. Alan, completely blind, is sitting on a mat within.

ALAN

What's the matter, Naia?

NAIA

There's a ship beyond the bay. We must light the fire.

EXT. THE SEASHORE

She runs out and nearly runs into Tua. Alan follows her with a slight stiffness in his walk.
He knows where the bonfire is. Tua follows them.

Naia lights the fire as Alan stands by her. She picks up Tua.

FADE OUT

FADE IN – EXT. SEA-FRONT, PAPEETE – DAY

The clamour of chattering crowds, the patter of hawkers, honking cars and calls of shopkeepers fill the air.

Near the sea wall, a crowd collects to watch a twenty-ton cutter approach the harbour. Tyson's car honks its slow way down the street. As the car inches forward, Tyson looks toward the cutter.

It nears the dock.

Tyson taps the driver who finds a place to stop. The driver opens the door. Tyson steps out to join the crowds at the sea wall. They greet him with friendly deference.

The anchor slowly descends as the stern comes round.

Natives and their belongings fill the deck. A seeming native, wearing dark glasses, with a native child of two and a half in his arms, and a native woman at his side. They are dressed in cast-off clothing. Tyson, alerted, stares hard at the trio.

TYSON

Good God!

He goes over and speaks to the MAN IN CHARGE on the jetty under the noise of the crowds. The man in charge nods, issues instructions.

Before the people disembark, the man in charge boards the cutter and makes room for Alan and Naia to disembark first.

Alan takes Naia's arm and they step on to the dock. Tyson is visibly moved to see them.

TYSON

Alan? Naia? Where in the world...?

ALAN

Mr. Tyson?

NAIA

Yes, Alan. It is Mr. Tyson.

TYSON

Come straight to the Consulate. We can talk there.

ALAN

Thank you, sir.

INT/EXT. THE GREAT HALL AND VERANDAH OF THE EMBASSY – DAY

Tua toddles through the open door to the verandah. Naia and Alan, now fresh and clean, are seated with Tyson. Their clothes don't fit. The boy climbs on to Alan's lap.

ALAN

He's a Low Islander, born and bred.

TYSON

Where, in heaven's name, have you been?

NAIA

Tematangi.

TYSON

Good Lord! How were you found?

ALAN

Luck. Sheer luck.

NAIA

Mother and grandfather are well, Mr. Tyson?

TYSON

They are, Naia. What news this will be for them and for Hardie and young George!

NAIA

They believe us dead?

TYSON

What else could they believe? More than three years!

ALAN

Have you heard from my father?

TYSON

A letter arrived by the last steamer. He's out of the army and at your old place in Devon.

ALAN

And George?

TYSON

Your father says George won't leave him. Now, Alan, about your eyes, can you see anything?

ALAN

Nothing, I'm afraid.

TYSON

How long?

ALAN

About six months.

TYSON

You're not to give up hope, my boy. You remember, the French eye specialist?

ALAN

Doctor Brocard? Very well.

INT/EXT. INSIDE & OUTSIDE BROCARD'S SURGERY – DAY

A beam of light trained on an eye. The light goes out. A window curtain is drawn revealing Brocard, and Alan in a doctor's chair. Brocard returns to his desk and sits.

ALAN

Well, Doctor?

BROCARD

What are your plans, Monsieur 'Ardie?

ALAN

I'll go home if there's a chance.

BROCARD

And if I say it would be useless?

ALAN

I'm prepared for that.

BROCARD

Do not blame yourself, Monsieur 'Ardie. Lack of glasses may have aggravated the trouble, *oui*. But the real cause lies in a destructive process of the membranes lining your eyes – the choroids and retina.

ALAN

And that means...?

BROCARD

Destruction of the tissues. Best you know the truth.

ALAN

There is no hope, then?

BROCARD

None, I fear.

ALAN

You are quite sure it would be useless to go home,?

BROCARD

For treatment? *Certainment*. However, if you plan to go in any case, be prepared to have my opinion confirmed.

ALAN

(Finds his stick and rises)

Thank you for your candour, Dr Brocard.

BROCARD

I am sorry I cannot be more optimistic. Come. I will take you to Monsieur Tyson.

Brocard leads Alan out to the other room where Tyson sits.

Brocard shakes his head negatively as Tyson rises.

TYSON

Ah! Take my arm, Alan. Bye, Brocard. And thanks.

BROCARD

Au revoir!

Tyson leads Alan down the steps to the car, where the driver holds the door open.

TYSON

Brocard may well be mistaken.

ALAN

Oh, don't worry about me, sir. I fully expected it. I'm all right. It's for Naia I'm sorry.

TYSON

You'll let me wire your father?

ALAN

Thank you, sir.

EXT. THE GROUNDS AND PIER AT VAIHIVA – DAY

A launch approaches. Alan and Naia with Tua in her arms, stand at the boat rails and wave. Mauri descends from the verandah, clutching her heart.

Raitua down by the pier moved but dignified. Naia descends with the child.

Mauri runs forward, sobbing.

Naia embraces her grandfather. Then, placing her child in his arms; she turns to Mauri who has come up to her. They cling and sob.

Alan taps his way down with the help of one of the crew.

Raitua hands the child to Mauri and goes to meet Alan. Raitua touches Alan's shoulder. Alan moves his stick to his left hand and reaches out for the face in front of him.

ALAN

(In fluent Polynesian - **subtitled**)

Raitua! I am so happy to see you. I hope you are fit and well.

RAITUA (**subtitled**)

I thank the gods I remain in health. I too am happy to see you and my granddaughter and great grandson.

ALAN

Mauri? Are you still angry with us?

MAURI

Oh, Alan!

Mauri comes forward and takes him in her arms.

INT. CONSULATE — DAY

Tyson reads a telegram with a worried expression:

FLYING TO SAN FRANCISCO TO CATCH NEXT STEAMER – HARDIE.

EXT. A SHIP ON THE OPEN SEA – DAY

The blast of a ship's hooter as it enters Papeete harbour.

Garlanded hula dancers and singers welcome the visitors.

Brocard accosts Tyson near the pier.

BROCARD

Tyson! Isn't it unusual, your meeting the steamer. I supposed it had long since stopped being a diversion for you.

TYSON

I'm expecting friends; Alan Hardie's father, in fact.

BROCARD

You don't tell me! He's come to take him home?

TYSON

I don't know. Perhaps if the lad will go. General Hardie's certain to want to see you while he's here.

BROCARD

I shall be at his service. A tragic affair, Tyson. Well, at least there's one comfort for the lad's father. He has a daughter-in-law of whom to be immensely proud. A lovely girl, Tyson.

Tyson at the dock searches among the faces lining the rails. Passengers wave. George, and GENERAL HARDIE (56), at the rails search the dock. The General is dressed in white with a wide-brimmed panama-hat set back on his head,

TYSON

That's General Hardie.

BROCARD

I'm relieved to know it. He's the look of a man not easily downed. Who's the young fellow with him?

TYSON

George McLeod, the General's foster son. He came here with Alan Hardie some three years ago.

BROCARD

Of course, I remember him. I mustn't keep you, Tyson. Call me any time. Oh, Tyson, I wouldn't encourage him to hope. There's not a ghost of a chance for the poor young man.

George spots Tyson and points him out to the General. They wave. Tyson waves back. The gangplank lowered, Tyson, showing his identification, climbs up the gangplank. Hardie and George meet Tyson at the top. They shake hands. The General turns to bid shipboard friends farewell.

TYSON

How has he taken it?

George shakes his head negatively.

HARDIE

I'm ready Tyson. Your name carries some weight in these parts. Where's this Consulate of yours?

EXT. CONSULATE VERANDAH – NIGHT

Tyson, Hardie and George seated, drinking whisky.

HARDIE

There is no hope?

TYSON

None, whatsoever.

HARDIE

You haven't a real oculist here, surely?

TYSON

Yes, Hardie, we do. One of the best. Retired here from Paris.

HARDIE

What do Frogs know about anything?

GEORGE

(over the General's words)

How has Alan taken it?

TYSON

As you would expect.

HARDIE

He wants to go home, of course.

TYSON

I doubt he has made plans so far.

HARDIE

I see. And he's really married to a native girl?

TYSON

Her father was an American engineer.

HARDIE

A half-caste!

TYSON

The mother comes from good blood on both sides. Her people are of the oldest and most intelligent families in Polynesia and have been important for centuries.

HARDIE

I don't understand you, Tyson. You approve of this marriage?

TYSON

You're damn right I do. These people are not aborigines living some prehistoric jungle life. The Polynesians are an intelligent and proud race, to put many an Englishman to shame. When you meet Naia...

HARDIE

Never! I'm surprised you suggest it. It won't be necessary. Now that Alan is blind, she'll release him.

TYSON

You haven't got it, Hardie. They've a genuine love.

HARDIE

Nonsense! What does a Kanaka wench know about love, eh?

TYSON

I think you have much to learn, my friend.

EXT. TAUTIRA PIER – DAY

The launch nears. George and Tyson at rail. General sits on a deckchair smoking. Fara and his entire family at the pier, bubbling with elation.

TYSON

You had best go alone to Vaihiva. Bring Alan here tomorrow morning.

GEORGE

His wife may want to come too?

TYSON

She won't. Naia has the intelligence to know Alan will wish to see his father alone first.

EXT. OUTSIDE MAURI'S HOME – DAY

Naia, washed clothes on her arm, comes through the verandah door. George confronts her. Both are confused.

NAIA

Oh! ...

GEORGE

Sorry. George McLeod.

NAIA

Makla? George McLeod? I knew you'd come back.

GEORGE

It's more than I knew. You must be Naia.

She places the clothes on the verandah chair. Then warmly shakes his outstretched hand.

NAIA

What a happy time. Not a day passes that Alan doesn't speak of you. He says he sees much of you in me.

GEORGE

Where is he?

NAIA

I will take you to him.

Naia leads him round the back and on to the valley path.

NAIA

I hope you will stay this time.

GEORGE

No hurry to leave. I want to get to know you better.

NAIA

Strange, I want that too. Very much. Mother will be very happy to see you again.

GEORGE

Is she here?

NAIA

No, In Moorea, where we have land and property.

GEORGE

I shall stay until she returns.

NAIA

Did... did Alan's father come too?

GEORGE

He and Mr. Tyson have stopped at Tautira with Fara. I couldn't wait.

NAIA

I'm so glad, George. I feel I know you already. Alan speaks so much of you.

EXT. BY THE RIVER – DAY

Raitua squats on the bank, watching Alan and Tua in the river. Alan, without his glasses, is waist deep in the water with his son. Tua is not yet three years old. Alan lifts him up in the air and splashes him in the water. The child squeals with delight.

TUA

More, Daddy, more!

George and Naia come through the glade. Raitua rises. Naia puts finger to lips.

NAIA

Alan.

ALAN

There she is, Tua. Your mother's come to take us home. You've had enough.

TUA

More, Daddy, more!

ALAN

You'd like to do this all day, wouldn't you, you water rat? I'll have him swimming before he's a month older. Now, little fish, show your mother how well you paddle.

Alan, his hand under the child's belly, guides him paddling to the bank. He lifts the child and places him on his feet. Raitua puts Alan's glasses in his hand and dries Tua under protest. Alan reaches for his towel, Naia hands it to him from over his walking-stick stuck in mud.

NAIA

Here's your towel.

ALAN

(While rubbing himself.)

We've had a glorious time, Naia. I like the air on my hide. There's someone with you, isn't there?

NAIA

Yes. We have a visitor, Alan.

ALAN

A visitor? Who? Mr. Tyson?

NAIA

He's here. Put out your hands.

Alan allows Naia to lead him. He throws his towel over his neck, stretches out his hands over George's face and neck.

ALAN

Mac? Is it you, Mac?

GEORGE

Alan, old boy!

Alan and George embrace. Naia is snivelling happily. The child, with Raitua, observes the two men with puzzlement.

ALAN

George! It's George! Do you know how I guessed, Naia? By a little mole on the back of his neck.

They are all laughing and tearful. Tua joins in.

GEORGE

You know the General is here. He is out of the army now and in Tautira. He looks forward to seeing you.

ALAN

Of course, he had to be here. Glad he's out of the army. He needs to relax. He'll love you, darling. I'll go to Tautira and bring him back to meet you, Naia.

EXT. THE VAIHIVA PIER – DAY

Alan aboard ship at the rail, a native sailor at his side. He waves.

Raitua, Naia with Tua in tow, and George are on the pier, wave back with vocal farewells.

NAIA

Bye! George, I'm worried. Bye, Alan!

GEORGE

Bye Alan! There's nothing to worry about, Naia. Bye Alan.
You'll see.

INT/EXT. TO AND IN MAURI'S HOUSE IN THE RAIN – NIGHT

Mauri, with an umbrella descends from the cutter and walks toward the house. Raitua appears out of the rain.

(
Polynesian with Subtitles)

MAURI

Oh! Father! You gave me a shock.

RAITUA

Forgive me.

MAURI

No, I am pleased you came to meet me. You should know I
am hoping Alan's father will see how unsuitable Naia and
Alan are for each other.

RAITUA

Enough, Mauri. They are most suited to one another. Mama T
and a coconut shell cannot tell the future.

MAURI

She has never been wrong before, father.

RAITUA

I came to say young Makla is here, the one you call Toti. This
time you will invite him to stay. And now I shall leave you.
Good night.

He leaves. Mauri clenches her fist. She walks on and steps up to the verandah. She folds
the umbrella and looks through the window.

Inside, Naia and George play with Tua on the carpet in Mauri's sitting room. They are
laughing and happy together.

INT. MAURI'S LOUNGE – NIGHT – CONTINUOUS

NAIA

Time for bed, young man.

TUA

Uncle George!

Mauri's face at the verandah window. She turns away, leans against the wall, her hand at her heart, trying to still the emotional pain and guilt. She turns back for another peek.

GEORGE

Just another five minutes, Naia.

NAIA

It's quite enough his father spoils him. I'm not about to let you start.

Mauri enters; puts the umbrella in a stand. Naia rises to embrace Mauri.

NAIA

Mother!

MAURI

I'm all wet, child.

GEORGE

You see, Mauri, I had to come back.

MAURI

I'm glad. Tua, I'm all wet. I can't carry you now.

NAIA

I told you he would return, Mother.

MAURI

Alan's father, is he here?

GEORGE

At Tautira. Alan went to meet him.

MAURI

Then, you have not seen him, Naia?

NAIA

No. Isn't it wonderful having George here Mother? We'll not let him run away this time, will we?

George turns to Mauri. Mauri fails to smile. Beat.

MAURI

He can stay as long as he likes.

INT. FARA'S STUDY – DAY

General Hardie stands in front of the desk. He brushes his moustache with a nervous finger. Tyson leads Alan in. The General shakes his son's hand.

HARDIE

You look perfectly fit, my boy.

ALAN

Never felt better. You, Dad?

HARDIE

Splendid. Thank you, Tyson. How he has broadened! And all solid muscle. Uninhabited islands agree with him, eh?

ALAN

Thank you, sir. George said you're out of the army.

HARDIE

(Seating himself at the desk)

About time, don't you think? Sit down, my boy.

ALAN

Are you glad? (Sits at desk – Tyson helps)

HARDIE

I'm damned if I know! I've looked forward to freedom for years, and now that I have it...

TYSON

You'll take lessons from me in the art of loafing.

HARDIE

So I shall, you rogue. I couldn't have a better instructor.

TYSON

Thirty odd years of experience. There's nothing like fishing, Hardie, to keep a man contented.

HARDIE

I'll take that on trust, Tyson. Fishing would bore me stiff.

TYSON

It's time I left you two alone. (Goes)

HARDIE

There's the best friend I've had in the world since George's father died. If he were alive, what a reunion this would be.

ALAN

Mr. Tyson's just as fond of you, Father.

HARDIE

He told me what the local oculist had to say. We mustn't take it as final. I've damned little faith in French doctors.

ALAN

This one seems very definite.

HARDIE

A Frenchman is always definite, with or without reason. London has the best oculists in the world.

ALAN

I'd see them all if there were any hope.

HARDIE

That's the spirit! The first thing I did when I received Tyson's cablegram was to wire Professor Grayson at Cambridge.

ALAN

Grayson?

HARDIE

Sentimental bloke. He came down with a pocketful of obituary notices from scientific journals. He thought I should read them. By the time I finished, I began to suspect you amounted to something.

ALAN

Does he know about my eyes?

HARDIE

Yes. He said to me, 'Bring him straight home. We can hire pairs of eyes for him by the dozen. It's his brains we need.'

ALAN

What did he propose?

HARDIE

That you take up the research in which you engaged at Cambridge.

ALAN

Would he want me at Cambridge?

HARDIE

He said you could work at home if you liked. He selected an assistant for you, a mathematician.

ALAN

Do you remember his name?

HARDIE

Matson... Maxon...

ALAN

It wasn't Mathewson?

HARDIE

That's it, Mathewson.

ALAN

The very man I wanted.

HARDIE

The steamer sails on the sixteenth
.

ALAN

Naia will love it there.

HARDIE

Who?

ALAN

My wife. Sorry, I thought you knew.

HARDIE

Surely, you don't intend to take her along?

ALAN

Do you expect me to leave her here?

HARDIE

Our climate would kill her.

ALAN

Is that your only objection?

HARDIE

Frankly, Alan. She'd never fit in. She would be miserable and unhappy.

ALAN

How can you know, not having met her?

HARDIE

Your whole future is at stake. Your wife may be all you believe her to be. I'm sure she does very well in her own environment. But to burden...

ALAN

That's enough, Father. You have made yourself perfectly clear. You propose I desert my family.

He reaches for his stick resting against the desk.

HARDIE

You've no right to put it in those words. I am sure you realise you have made a terrible mistake – for which you must pay, of course. I propose you care for them here, where they belong. I propose you do not wreck your future career with unsuitable appendages. I propose you do not ruin your life, and what remains of mine – for the sake of a Kanaka wench who will forget your existence in a month.

ALAN

(Rises, taps to door, shouts over father)

Mr. Tyson! Mr. Tyson!

EXT. MAURI'S VERANDAH – EVENING

George, a cold drink before him on the table. Mauri unhappy. Tua, on the lawn with Raitua.

GEORGE

I hope my being here has not put you out in any way.

MAURI

No. No. My concern is that Naia and Tua will move so very far from me. Naia will be going with a blind Englishman to a country foreign to her.

GEORGE

Oh, Alan will be fine and he will be sure to see Naia is all right. Incidentally, Naia told me she is going to look for flowers that have the propensities to cure blindness.

MAURI

Aue! No. We must persuade her not to do so. Those flowers grow only on dangerously high cliffs. Especially now that you say the oculist was clear Alan has no hope whatsoever of regaining his sight.

GEORGE

I will definitely stop Naia from taking such a risk. Thank you for bringing it to my attention.

EXT. VAIHIVA – TABLES AND CHAIRS LAID OUT ON THE LAWN – DAY

Alan sits with his stick on the lawn bench. Many in great activity, help Mauri ready a feast. Naia stops laying flowers on the tables. She goes to sit by Alan, takes his hand, kisses him.

NAIA

I miss you when I am not near you.

ALAN

I miss you too. Terribly.

NAIA

Everyone's down. Mama T is in the kitchen. Dinner will be on the lawn in true native fashion. Will your father like it?

ALAN

It's a splendid idea.

NAIA

I'm wearing a pretty flowered frock for him. Mother cannot believe we are staying on. She fears, your father will persuade you to change your mind. Alan, you did not decide on my account, did you?

ALAN

I hated to tell you we were staying. I thought you wanted to go to England.

NAIA

I want only what makes you happy. Tell me, Alan, why is your father coming here, to Vaihiva?

ALAN

I believe – I hope – he is coming to meet you, and to convince himself it will be fine to take you home with me.

NAIA

And will we go?

ALAN

No. I like it here. Far more than ever I liked England.

NAIA

Really? That make me so happy. (Beat) Alan?

ALAN

Naia?

NAIA

I have asked this before... Won't you try, for my sake?

ALAN

Not your native herbs again? It's for your sake I hate to try them.

NAIA

I won't hope. Just want to be sure.

ALAN

You will be bitterly disappointed, sorcerer, won't you? You won't stop nagging until I agree, right?

NAIA

I'm not a nag. Oh! ... Oh! ... You mean it, Alan!

ALAN

Do you have the stuff ready, shaman?

NAIA

I'll have to get the flowers.

Naia grabs his hands and pulls him off the bench.

ALAN

Now? Gullible as your Mother. If you let yourself go, you'd be a better witch-doctor than Mama T.

NAIA

Oh, Alan! How you flatter me!

MAURI

Where are you taking him, Naia? Mr. Hardie should be here very soon.

NAIA

We will not be long, Mother.

Mauri's anxious face.

EXT. AT THE RAVINE, BELOW THE ROCK FACE – DAY

Naia and Alan in a canoe row to a beach. They pull the boat onto the bank. He takes her arm and they move inland. She leads him through lush undergrowth and trees. They appear at the ravine, below the rock face. They move to the riverbank.

ALAN

I know where we are.

NAIA

Where?

ALAN

Very near the rock face of echoes. By the dark river.

NAIA

How did you know?

ALAN

I see through the pores of my skin. "Who calls here, stays here."

NAIA

You remember that? You see, it's come true.

ALAN

You're a superstitious heathen.

NAIA

Only partly. I'm not ashamed of it.

ALAN

Most of us are the same, in our hearts.

NAIA

Even in England?

ALAN

Especially in England.

NAIA

I'll have to leave you here for a while. It won't be for long.

ALAN

Stay a little. I smell the air coming out of those small ravines on the east side of the valley. There's a cool sort of fragrance in it. I love this place.

NAIA

Of course. It isn't late.

She sits. He lies, cradling his head in her lap.

ALAN

It's weird. When I first saw the place, it overwhelmed me. At the same time, I had a strange sense of foreboding.

NAIA

Who is a superstitious heathen now?

ALAN

It rubs off on one. It's as if it's not right to be so happy.

NAIA

It's always right to be happy. Alan, will your father like me?

ALAN

He'll love you, Naia, only he won't show it. You'll think he disapproves of you. He's like that.

NAIA

He won't kiss me then?

ALAN

Good lord, no! He's kissed no one but my mother.

NAIA

Not even you?

ALAN

Not that I remember.

NAIA

What a strange man!

ALAN

Perhaps it's his army training. He has few friends but those he has, stick to him – like Tyson and George's father.

A distant holler. George nears from down river, carrying a string of fish and his rod. George hangs his fish on a branch; lays the rod at the base.

ALAN

Had any luck. George?

GEORGE

Splendid! I caught twenty. They're full of fight these little fellows, whatever they're called.

NAIA

Nato. Good eating too.

GEORGE

Never thought I'd enjoy myself so much in the wilds. It's a complete paradise, this valley. Never seen anything to equal it. I stopped only to be in time to meet the launch. Why not go back together?

NAIA

Take Alan with you, George. I'll feel better. I've something to do first. I'll get back on my own. And here's something to keep you from being lonesome.

She kisses Alan on the mouth. He returns her kiss. George opens his arms to her.

NAIA

(Kisses his cheek)

Poor George! That will have to do.

Naia waves and runs off.

GEORGE

Where's she off to?

ALAN

She's persuaded me to try her native remedy. She believes it will make me see within a week. She's gone to find the herbs or flowers she needs.

GEORGE

No! No! Mauri said the flowers grow on dangerous cliffs.

George runs off. George stops running and calls 'NAIA' - then starts running again. Naia hears his call and stops. She turns and calls 'GEORGE' They meet.

NAIA

What is the matter, George? Has something happened to Alan?

GEORGE

I can't let you go up those high cliffs when I know there is no way on earth for him to regain his sight.

NAIA

And I do not want to spend the rest of my life wondering if the flowers were a real cure for his blindness.

GEORGE

You're my sister now. I won't let you do this. Even Alan is against you taking this fruitless risk. Come back with me.

NAIA

I am touched, really touched, by your concern. But you must remember I grew up in these islands. I have been on high cliffs many times. They are my friends. I don't know why you are so bothered.

GEORGE

I don't want you taking even the smallest risk, especially a futile one.

NAIA

And I don't want always to regret not getting the flowers, wondering if they could have cured him.

GEORGE

You are as stubborn as Alan.

NAIA

Is it stubborn to do something good for Alan?

GEORGE

Look. Forget the flowers. The French oculist said nothing can give Alan back his eyesight.

NAIA

Well, I'll prove him wrong.

Naia runs off.

EXT. AT THE RAVINE, BELOW THE ROCK FACE – DAY

GEORGE

Did you know she's as stubborn as you are, jackass?

ALAN

Yes I did.

GEORGE

The General's coming means he's probably relented.

ALAN

No, Mac. He meant every word.

GEORGE

When he sees Naia and Tua...

ALAN

Their blood is chocolate ink to him. No. I'm staying here.

GEORGE

Then why is he coming?

ALAN

To try to convince me to return alone to England. He does not want me to waste my life in the Islands.

GEORGE

I'm sorry to hear that. Shall we make a move, then?

ALAN

You go on, Mac. I'll wait for Naia.

GEORGE

I don't know that I should.

ALAN

Ever the nursemaid! I really can take care of myself, Mac. And Naia will be back soon. You still here?

GEORGE

Are you sure?

ALAN

Of course, I'm sure.

GEORGE

(Taking his fish and rod.)

Okay. So long!

Alan waves and lies back with both hands behind his head.
George turns back concerned but then continues on his way.

Montage:

Naia climbs. She stops to look, then continues.

Alan on the riverbank, apparently asleep.

George paddles away in his canoe.

Naia plucks flowers on a high cliff wall.

George, in his canoe, arrives at Vaihiva pier.

Naia still looks for flowers. Her foot slips. She almost falls. She manages to steady herself. She catches her breath.

George gets out of the canoe with his fish and rod and marches across the busy lawn.

The natives greet him and he returns their salutations.

Alan, on the riverbank, sits up with an anxious look.

ALAN

Naia? ... Naia?

Alan finds his stick, rises and makes his halting way along the riverbank. Long shadows presage the approach of night. Every so often, he calls ‘Naia’ louder each time. Alan falters up an ascending path into the forest. His feet bumble along, climbing with increasing difficulty. Alan is in deep concentration as he progresses slowly. He stops.

ALAN

Naia!

The echoes fade. He moves again. Alan’s feet are near the cliff edge. His foot slips. He throws himself against the side of the hill. Alan breathes hard. He is lost and in a desperate plight.

ALAN

N A I A!

His voice echoes and re-echoes.

EXT. LAUNCH APPROACHING MAURI'S HOUSE AND GROUNDS – EVENING

People run to the pier with garlands, songs, and cheers. Tyson joins the General at the rails.

HARDIE

A decent looking place, Tyson.

TYSON

It’s not a grass hut on stilts.

Mauri and George on the verandah watch the launch approach.

MAURI

Where are Naia and Alan?

GEORGE

They should have been here by now.

MAURI

Where did you leave them, Toti?

GEORGE

At the entrance to the ravine. Naia insisted on going to gather the flowers for Alan’s eyes.

MAURI

Aue! Not alone!

GEORGE

I tried to stop her, Mauri, but....

Mauri rushes down the steps calling to her father. George watches as he sees Mauri talk earnestly and urgently to Raitua. Raitua's face mirrors his daughter's anxiety. Mauri turns toward George and waves. George walks toward them. Without waiting for his approach, Mauri calls out.

MAURI

Go with him, Toti. Show him where you left them. Do you know the way?

George nods. He and Raitua trot over the lawn to the pier. They get into the canoe and paddle away. Much cheering from the pier as the launch approaches.

EXT. THE CLEARING AND THE HIGH JUNGLE PATH – NIGHT

George leads Raitua into the clearing by the river.

GEORGE

Here, Raitua. This is where I left him.

RAITUA

HE-E-HE-E-HE-HE!

Echoes and re-echoes. George puts hands to mouth to call but Raitua firmly lowers them. He gestures to George to follow him. He moves off with George in his wake.

Raitua begins to gather dry palm fronds. He ties them into bunches, then sets them alight, then gives George one bunch and keeps the other. George follows him up the path.

Raitua cups his free hand again and calls. He cups an ear but only echoes answer him. He moves forward. George follows. He steps behind Raitua in a high section. Raitua turns to check.

He points. George stretches his light out over the abyss but, apart from the immediate drop, there is a well of blackness before him. Raitua calls again. As the echoes die, another echo replies. Raitua stands still with concentration.

GEORGE

What is it?

Raitua lifts a hand and listens. The faint call repeated.

RAITUA

O, RAUA!

He leads George onward. They round a bend in the pathway.
Alan is there. Raitua arms him.

ALAN

RAITUA!!!

GEORGE

Alan, are you all right?

ALAN

I've got myself in a fine mess.

George steps forward to go to Alan. Raitua grips his arm. Raitua directs his light to the left. Naia's body lies there, one arm outstretched, a fist clutching a bunch of flowers. Raitua hands George his lighted torch and moves forward. He lifts the girl into his arms and places her tenderly over his shoulder. He takes his torch from George and carries her off.

ALAN

I'm terribly sorry I put you through all this, Mac.

GEORGE

It's all right.

ALAN

Thank you, Raitua. I got tired of waiting so, like an idiot, I followed Naia. She must be upset.

GEORGE

Yes.

ALAN

It's dark, isn't it?

GEORGE

Yes.

ALAN

Did she find her flowers?

GEORGE

Yes.

ALAN

I almost wish she hadn't. Has the launch arrived?

GEORGE

Yes.

ALAN

Is anything the matter, Mac?

GEORGE

No.

ALAN

Has the General seen Naia?

GEORGE

No. Not yet.

ALAN

Mac, something's wrong. What are you hiding from me?
Mac? ...Tell me.

GEORGE

There's been an accident.

ALAN

Father?

GEORGE

No.

ALAN

For God's sake, tell me, Mac.

GEORGE

Naia's had a fall.

ALAN

The whole truth, Mac.

GEORGE

Alan, old boy!

ALAN

She's dead, isn't she?

INT/EXT. THE LAWN & VERANDA OF MAURI'S HOME – NIGHT

Sounds of a Polynesian dirge. Hundreds of singers seated holding hands on the lawn. Tyson sits on the verandah smoking a cigar. The General emerges and joins him.

HARDIE

He won't talk to me, Tyson. How long will this weird music last?

TYSON

All night. Mauri must dread it.

HARDIE

Damned melancholy. Why does she permit it?

TYSON

Tradition, old man. It binds them just as it does us.

HARDIE

Extraordinary woman! Not a single tear at the funeral! What self-control!

TYSON

Stunned, I expect. She still doesn't believe it.

HARDIE

The girl was her only child?

TYSON

Yes. That's the tragedy.

HARDIE

I wish Alan would take an example from her instead of shutting himself up in a room that way!

TYSON

He's been hard hit, old friend.

HARDIE

So was I when his mother died. I didn't crawl into a hole and brood.

TYSON

Pity you never got to meet Naia.

HARDIE

It's not manly and definitely not what I expect of a Hardie.

TYSON

She reminded me quite a bit of Nina McLeod.

HARDIE

Lovely girl, Nina. Now she's the kind of girl I'd want for Alan. A real thoroughbred. Think I'll retire, though God knows I shan't be able to sleep.

TYSON

Shall we stay another day?

HARDIE

I'd rather not, if we can get Alan to agree to come away somehow.

TYSON

What about the boy?

HARDIE

For the present, Madam Mauri must keep him. It would be unfair to leave the grandmother without comfort. Alan must see that. The boy's future can be decided later. Goodnight.

TYSON

Good night.

Tyson, incredulous as the General enter the house, shakes his head, then pulls on his cigar.

INT/EXT. THE VERANDAH – NIGHT

Sound of singing. In a section of the verandah, George paces. He stops in front of a door. He goes to knock. Changes his mind. Walks to the verandah railings looks up skyward. The stars sparkle. The moon throws a silver glow over grounds. Mauri comes to George.

MAURI

You've not eaten, Toti. Your supper has been ready a long time.

GEORGE

I've been waiting.

MAURI

Have you knocked?

GEORGE

I must wait. He'll let me know.

MAURI

Have we really lost her, Toti? Is it true?

GEORGE

You know, there were times I thought, at a certain angle, she looked a bit like me. I belong to you too, Mauri. I always have. And I always will.

Takes her in his arms. Overwhelmed by grief and guilt, Mauri cries. She looks up into his condoling face and backs away shaking her head. She walks off. George looks after her in wonder. The singers continue.

General Hardie, in his dressing gown, sits by his bed, closes a book and stares.

Tyson, on another part of the verandah, puffs on his cigar.

Raitua, tears on his cheek, stands under a bright moonlit sky, silhouetted against a silver streaked sea.

George leans with his back to the verandah rails and stares at Alan's door.

INT. ALAN'S BEDROOM – NIGHT

Alan lies in bed, his eyes stare into space. The singing swells in intensity.

DISSOLVE to Naia rising from the sand. She dusts the sand from her legs and frock.

NAIA

What a time to be asleep! In the middle of the morning. I was up very early fishing.

DISSOLVE TO Alan's staring face on the pillow.

DISSOLVE TO Alan taking a garland of flowers from his neck and draping it over Naia.

ALAN

Mrs. Alan Hardie...

NAIA

Hardie *Vahine*.

He draws her to him and they kiss.

DISSOLVE TO Alan's staring face.

DISSOLVE TO Naia on the cutter in the storm.

NAIA

Oh, Alan! I am so sorry. But I do love you.

She kisses him, breaks away to try to jump ship.

ALAN

(Grabs hold of her)

Naia! No! Don't! Don't, my darling! I wouldn't want to live a day without you.

DISSOLVE TO Alan's staring face.

DISSOLVE TO Naia cradling their new-born baby in her arms.

NAIA

It's all right, Alan. Our son, Tua, he is here.

Alan's primeval laughter.

DISSOLVE TO Alan's face.

ALAN (V. O.)

I would not want to live a day without you.

Tears slide from the corners of his eyes. An eerie silence – the singing has stopped. Daylight has crept into the room. Alan gets out of bed unbuttoning his pyjama top.

EXT – THE VERANDAH OUTSIDE ALAN'S DOOR – DAY – CONTINUOUS

Alan in his glasses, with his stick and in a waistcloth drawn up between his thighs, steps out.

ALAN

Is anyone here? Mac?

At the verandah rails, he guides himself to the steps leading to the lawn. He steps down.

EXT. THE BEACH – CONTINUOUS

Alan's look is out to sea, as waves come rolling in.

He plants his stick in the sand, and throws his glasses by its side. He moves to waters' edge, wades in. With a spring, he swims out a few strokes. He turns on his back and lets the current take him.

INT. GEORGE'S BEDROOM – DAY

George in bed. Mauri shakes him awake.

MAURI

Toti! Toti! Where is Alan?

GEORGE

Alan? Alan!!!

George, now wide awake, jumps up.

EXT. VERANDAH – CONTINUOUS

George, in pyjamas, bare-foots it to Alan's door; dashes in.

INT. ALAN'S ROOM – CONTINUOUS

An empty bed. George turns back. Mauri is at the door.

MAURI

Quick! Get dressed.

He dashes past her, back to his room.

EXT. ON THE BEACH – DAY – CONTINUOUS

Alan's stick in the sand, the glasses by it. Mauri, the General, Raitua, Tyson and George round the cane. Mauri sinks to her knees. She speaks with no tears in her voice.

MAURI

Sorrow and death! Sorrow and death!

INT. MAURI'S LIVING ROOM – NEXT DAY

Tyson and George stand, Hardie is seated, the latter two sport black armbands.

Mauri enters in a long black dress leading Tua by the hand.

The General rises and bows formally. Mauri sits, placing Tua on her lap. Hardie sits too.

HARDIE

I wish to thank you for your great kindness to my son. I appreciate it deeply.

MAURI

Alan was very dear to me.

HARDIE

And you to him, I'm sure.

MAURI

Will you be leaving by the next steamer?

HARDIE

Yes.

MAURI

It is time then to speak what is on my mind. It will be hard to give Tua up, but your claim is stronger.

HARDIE

I cannot allow you to make such a sacrifice, Madame Mauri. The child's place is here, under your care.

MAURI

It is true, here he will be rich in lands and, at my death, would be heir to all I possess. But Alan wished his son educated in England.

HARDIE

My son would have changed his mind.

MAURI

You think so? Why?

HARDIE

He would have realised the child's place is here, where he was born.

MAURI

What does it matter where a child is born?

The General is silent. She rises and walks over to him, with Tua. Hardie rises. Mauri and then General are face to face.

MAURI

Answer me, General Hardie. Had Naia been English, would you feel the same way about Tua? Answer me.

HARDIE

There's no need for an answer, Madam Mauri. Naia was not English.

MAURI

If she were English, would your feelings be the same?

HARDIE

My feelings would not be the same.

Mauri returns to seat. Tua on her lap.

MAURI

I knew it was so. You can set your mind at rest.

HARDIE

I'm sorry, I don't understand.

MAURI

There have been many times when I was aware of the wrong I have done. I have felt their grief and anger in their graves. It is they who accuse me. The gods are angry too. I cannot risk Tua's life. I must speak the truth. The child has no drop of my blood.

HARDIE

He is your daughter's son.

MAURI

He is Naia's son.

TYSON

What are you telling us, Mauri?

MAURI

Naia – Naia was not my daughter.

TYSON

Then, whose daughter was she?

MAURI

Nina McLeod's.

George's shock is intense and palpable.

GEORGE

No! No!

He stares at Mauri with bulging eyes.

HARDIE

Nina McLeod's? But her child died with her at birth,

MAURI

Her child did not die at birth. Mine did.

Tyson, Hardie react. George continues to stare at Mauri.

MAURI

Toti...

George's stare is a glare of fury. His rage is such that he tries but fails to speak. He leaves the room in high dudgeon.

MAURI

Toti!! Toti! Will he ever forgive me?

TUA

Why is Uncle George angry, Grandma?

INT. GEORGE'S ROOM - DAY

George fully dressed lies on the bed, his back against the headboard. His eyes are moist. The General enters.

George rises. He tries hard to hold in his feelings.

HARDIE

I want to talk to you, George.

GEORGE

And I should like to talk to you, sir.

HARDIE

Sit down. Learning Naia was your sister must have come as a terrible shock to you.

GEORGE

Yes, sir, beyond bearing. I could have had a closer relationship with her. And Alan was more my brother than ever. We could have grown more devoted to one another. Now it's too late.

HARDIE

You could not have been any closer to Alan, my boy. And the news that Naia was your sister shocked all of us. (MORE)

HARDIE (Contd.)

I understand how you must feel. I admire the way you have taken it. Like a true Hardie.

GEORGE

(fighting tears)

Thank you, sir. But I'm not sure I am taking it all that well.

HARDIE

Pity the girl died before we knew she was your sister. There, there. None of that. Now, to the point of my visit. Now that we know my grandson has your blood, we shall rear him at home. I want him christened and given the name, Theo. Short as the name Tua and a good, strong English name.

GEORGE

Sir, you are, to all intents and purposes, my father. I am grateful for your care and attention. So, forgive me if I am blunt.

HARDIE

Oh poof. Don't consider it. I was fortunate to have you for a son. You were a source of great pride to me.

GEORGE

That may change today, sir.

HARDIE

Eh? What do you mean, George?

GEORGE

Do sit down, sir. Why did you reject the only grandson you will ever have, when you thought Naia was Polynesian? And now accept him only because Naia had the right blood?

HARDIE

(Now sitting)

Don't ask me that, George. I could not answer it.

GEORGE

I must have an answer, sir. I saw the boy as family and loved him even before I knew Naia was my sister. I could not have gone back home without him. We would have had to part company. I might have stayed here with Alan.

HARDIE

There are things, George, which are inexplicable, like my feelings about the blood in people's veins.

GEORGE

They are the same, sir, no different whatsoever from ours.

HARDIE

I said it was inexplicable. I have often wished I didn't feel this way. I had the impression you felt as I did.

GEORGE

Seeing Naia and Tua made those feelings vanish. To know now he is of my blood fills me with a love I have never felt before. How could you possibly have rejected the only grandson you will ever have?

HARDIE

(Rising, moved for the first time)

Don't judge me, George. I am no longer open to character change. You now remain my only son. Your children will be as much my grandchildren as Theo is. I need you more than you know. You too are not faultless. I know all of your shortcomings. I have never judged you. Please don't judge me, my boy. Don't judge me.

George, seeing such emotion in his foster father for the first time, rises and cautiously embraces the old man who, first, moves back. After a few moments, Hardie embraces George.

C.U. Hardy kisses George's cheek.

A knock on the door. Hardie and George spring apart.

GEORGE

Come in.

Mauri stands at the open door.

MAURI

I'm sorry. I have interrupted you.

HARDIE

No, Madam Mauri, I was just leaving. (Goes)

MAURI

Toti.

GEORGE

We have nothing to say to one another, Madam Mauri.

MAURI

I have much to say to you, Toti, and you will listen to me.

GEORGE

I would rather not.

MAURI

When your mother died, I wanted so much to keep you. You were going to a home where you would be motherless. That is the way I saw Naia.

GEORGE

You had no right.

MAURI

That is true. I had no right but I had a duty.

GEORGE

A duty?

MAURI

It would be hard enough for a little boy to grow up in a household run only by a military man; it would have been utterly wrong for a girl.

George looks at Mauri with close to, but not up to, acceptance.

MAURI

Your mother and I were as close as sisters. I knew if Nina had been in my situation, she would have done no less for my baby, who also would have been an orphan.

GEORGE

Why didn't you tell me she was my sister? She and Tua were all I had in the world, and you kept that knowledge from me.

George's eyes are welling with tears.

MAURI

I was afraid. I did not know how Naia would take it. Had I known she would die just then, of course I would have told you. I am so, so very sorry. Will you forgive me?

George breaks down. Mauri takes him in her arms.

EXT. PAPEETE HARBOUR – NIGHT

A gaily-lit ship, hooter blasting, is leaving. People cheer, wave and cry. Passengers line the rails, among whom are the General, and George with a broad smile, holding Tua.

Both the General and he still have black armbands on their coat sleeves. The child claps.

The General waves and smiles.

Tyson and Dr Brocard wave back from the pier.

BROCARD

What a man! All that fuss about a cabin! I'm deeply sorry for 'Ardie, of course, but – *mon Dieu!*

TYSON

General Hardie is the type of Englishman your countrymen will never understand.

Ship leaves the dock. Tyson and Brocard walk toward the car.

TYSON

Now, there's a man who knows how to meet the worst life offers – and no one suspects he suffers.

BROCARD

What a strange, fantastic tale.

TYSON

I would not have felt free to tell you of it, except that we needed your signature as a witness.

They enter at the door of the car the driver holds open.

BROCARD

Not to have known the girl was his sister! I can understand Mcleod's bitterness toward Mauri.

TYSON

I sympathize a lot more with Mauri. She has lost her own self-respect.

BROCARD

Oh, *mon ami!* She stole a child and robbed her identity.

The car moves off.

Transition: EXT. THE CONSULATE VERANDA – NIGHT

They walk slowly to the railings. The ship has left Papeete, on its way to the open sea.

TYSON

You forget, she had just lost her own and the McLeod child was an orphan. Put yourself in her place. Her central motive was love.

Tyson and Brocard at the railings, looking out as the lighted ship as it moves away.

BROCARD

Oui. But why did she not reveal it when young 'Ardie married Naia? It may have prevented the tragedy.

TYSON

She reared the girl from birth. She regarded Naia as her own flesh and blood. But that's not all.

BROCARD

Pride, you mean?

TYSON

Yes. You'd understand if you'd lived here longer. The shame would have been unbearable. Public opinion plays a part in their lives scarcely conceivable to us. For a native of her position, it would have been horrendous. No one on the island must ever know the truth, not even Mauri's father.

BROCARD

Count on my discretion. Did young McLeod express how he felt at not knowing the girl was his sister?

They turn back and seat themselves at the table. A servant pours them wine.

TYSON

Or that his foster brother was also his brother-in-law. He is drowning in a sea of regret and pain.

BROCARD

What can one say? Some tragedies seem beyond reach of comment.

TYSON

One must fall upon '*ae*' as the natives say in the depths of grief. Or '*ay de mi*' or even '*alas*.'

BROCARD

Or no word at all. Silence, perhaps, is best.

TYSON

It is, undoubtedly.

The steamer is now well out to sea. A melancholy blast from the ship's hooter comes across the bay.

SERVANT

Dinner is served.

TYSON

Shall we go in? We'll take our wine with us.

They disappear into the house. Back to the view of the steamer on its way, giving one more long, lonely blast of its hooter.