

## Chapter XII

### Family Honeymoon Part II

June 14, 1947 – July 1, 1947

There was one thing that both Sheffield and Ramona wanted to do while they were there, and that was to visit Pearl Harbor. He wanted to go to the air station and she wanted to go to the hospital. So on Saturday afternoon they dropped the kids off at the Queen Theater in Kaimuki for an afternoon matinee, with enough change for some popcorn and a bus ticket back to the market. The matinee was a double feature of "The Return of Rusty" and "For the Love of Rusty". The kids had seen the "The Adventures of Rusty" when it came out in the fall of 1945, but had missed "The Return of Rusty" when it was released the following year because of their mother's illness. "For the Love of Rusty" was the third film in the series about the adventures of a German shepherd named Rusty and his boy, Danny Mitchell who was about the same age as Craig and Norma.

Just outside of the main gate, Sheffield relived the horrible scene of Geannie's red Buick convertible, riddled with bullets and splattered with blood, off the side of the road. Every time he passed that spot, the haunting scene always flashed through his mind.

At the gate, they showed their credentials identifying him as retired rear admiral and she as a retired commander. The guard at the gate let them in with no questions asked. They drove into the parking lot at the hospital and that is where they parted company. Sheffield caught the ferry over to Ford Island where the carrier Shangri La by chance happened to be docked, having only arrived that morning. Sheffield had no idea she would be there.

He requested permission to go aboard, which was granted. He was even more surprised to learn that her commanding officer was Captain Seymour Whithouse, who had been the air on the Reprisal and later the air officer on his staff.

When Captain Whithouse was informed that a retired Rear Admiral by the name of Sheffield Brason had come aboard, he personally went down to the quarter deck to greet his former boss. Sheffield learned that they were on their way home after a cruise to the West Pacific, which included a stopover in Australia. The two had a good reunion and visited about their years of service together aboard the Reprisal.

Ramona went to the hospital where she had spent so much of her nursing career. Naturally she didn't encounter anyone that she knew from back then. However, she did run into one of her former nursing students from Bethesda.

As Ramona wandered around reminiscing, she found herself in the activities center. She noticed that Geannie's piano was no longer there. She asked the attendant on duty at the desk, "Whatever happened to the piano that used to be over in the corner?"

The attendant replied, "The room is going to be remodeled and it is in storage awaiting disposal."

Ramona thanked him and made her way to the storage warehouse. All of a sudden, she was a woman on a mission. She knew exactly where it was, it was the warehouse across the parking lot. She walked in the front door into an office area and was asked by a sailor, a storekeeper third class, "Can I help you ma'am."

Without bothering to explain herself to him, she answered, "Yes. I would like to speak to the officer in charge."

"May I tell him who you are?"

"Yes. I am Commander Ramona Brason, U.S. Navy retired."

The sailor went to the door of an office in the next room and a moment later, a lieutenant approached the counter where Ramona was waiting. "What can I do for you Commander?" He addressed her as such even though she was in civilian clothes.

"I understand that you have the piano that used to be in the activities room stored here awaiting disposal."

"Yes, ma'am."

"What is to become of it?"

"We haven't determined just what to do with it yet. It'll probably be donated to the community or something. Why?"

"About six years ago I donated it to the hospital in memory of a dear friend who was killed during the attack. It had belonged to her and I'd like to have it back, since you're going to excess it anyway."

"Do you have any proof?"

"Not unless you have record of it in your files."

"That's highly unlikely, ma'am."

"Alright then, there is a brass plate attached to the front that says, 'In memory of Gean Marie Brason Dec. 7, 1898 – Dec. 7, 1941'."

The lieutenant said, "Let's go take a look."

As Ramona followed him into the warehouse, she continued her explanation. "What's your name, Lieutenant?"

"Lind, ma'am."

"You see Lieutenant Lind, a couple of years later, I married her husband who had bought it for her as a gift. They hauled it back and forth across the country and when he was came here, they brought it with them. At the time of the attack, he was on Admiral Halsey's staff. From there he went on to command a carrier and was eventually promoted to admiral."

The lieutenant listened intently to the story and was inclined to do what he could to grant her

request. "Here it is." he said "It's just like you said."

"It looks to be in great shape."

Lieutenant Lind said, "I could excess to you, but there is some paperwork involved."

"Of course there is." Ramona answered. As she followed him back into the office. "After all this is the Navy, there's paperwork for everything."

Lieutenant Lind pulled a form from a drawer and asked her for the necessary information. After filling out the form, he said, "Of course, you will be responsible for the cost of shipping it to Virginia."

"I realize that and I'm prepared to do that." She pulled one hundred dollars from her purse and laid it on the counter. "How far will that go?" she asked .

"A long ways."

"Good." Ramona said. "If there is any left over, donate it to the hospital in my name. If it isn't enough, send me a bill for the difference."

"Yes, ma'am. I can do that. Is this the address to ship it to?"

"That's correct."

"Here's what I'll do." Lieutenant Lind said. "I'll have it wrapped in padding and have it crated up and sent out on the next freighter headed for the west coast. From there, I'll have it shipped cross country by rail. Will that work for you."

"That's perfect. Lieutenant."

"Let me make out a receipt for the hundred dollars." He wrote it out and and handed it to her.

"Thanks for taking it off my hands, Commander Brason. I would guess that it will take six weeks at the most to get to you."

"That's just fine, Lieutenant. Thank you so much. Our daughters will be thrilled to get back to their piano lessons. Have a good day."

"And good day to you, ma'am."

Ramona had spent so much time on her mission to rescue Geannie's piano that she forfeited the rest of her visit down memory lane and went to the hospital cafeteria where she and Sheffield had arranged to meet. She was running late and was surprised that he wasn't there yet.

About twenty minutes later he showed up. "Sorry that I'm late. Sweetheart."

"Where've you been, Babe?"

Over a cup of coffee, they shared what they had been up to.

"You won't believe this but I ran into an old friend. Do you see that carrier over there?"

"Yeah"

"Well Seymour Whithouse is her captain. We got carried away talking about all of our adventures

together. How was your visit at the hospital?"

"You won't believe what I've been up to. I got as far as the activities room only to discover that Geannie's piano was gone. I tracked it down and found it in the warehouse marked to be excessed so I took it off their hands for them. Won't it look great in our house?"

"That's great. I'll never forget the day that Shorty and Freddy went over to San Diego with me to get it. And then the look on her face when she pulled the cover off of it. I can't believe that you rescued it. Norma will be happy about this. She was telling me on the plane coming over that she would love to get back into piano lessons."

"I know, both she and Janet have told me the same thing. I can't wait to tell them."

They left the hospital and drove back out to the beach house where they found the kids down on the beach. The girls were overjoyed at the good news. Craig, on the other hand was disappointed that he didn't get to see the Shangri La. After all of Sheffield's talk about carriers, he wanted to see one up close for himself.

"I'll tell you what, Craig. She'll be here until Tuesday. How about if I take you back over on Monday. I know the captain and I'll bet he'll let you come aboard and have a look around. How does that sound?"

For the rest of the weekend, that was all Craig could talk about.

For a nice leisurely week, it went all too fast. That weekend, time literally flew by because at two o'clock in the morning on Sunday June 8<sup>th</sup>, the clocks in Hawaii were set ahead one half an hour; thirty minutes that would never be regained. The Hawaiian time zone had always been two and half hours behind the Pacific time zone on the west coast. From that day onward, it was only a two hour difference.

That day, they attended services at the Harris United Methodist Church in downtown Honolulu where Sheffield, Geannie and the kids had attended and where Ramona was first introduced to going to church. Pastor Robbins was still there as were many others who still remembered them.

On Monday morning, as promised, Sheffield took Craig over to Pearl Harbor. He explained some of the facts about the attack, but Craig already knew a lot about it. For him it was a treat to actually see the place where history took place. Sheffield arranged for a launch to take them over to Ford Island and had the coxswain take them by the Arizona so Craig could get a good look at it.

On the way out, Sheffield told how the Arizona had always been special to him because his first midshipman's cruise was aboard her during a war patrol off the east coast during the summer of 1918 during the First World War.

As they came along the hulk Sheffield had the coxswain pass by very slowly so he could explain to his son, "Take a good look Craig. What you see here is something you nor any other American should ever forget. This is what's left of a once proud ship." Pointing toward the stern, Sheffield continued. "Can you see her outline under the water?"

Craig acknowledged that he did.

“You can make her stern but more noticeable are were her aft gun turrets were. Those are what these circular objects are.” he said pointing them out. “The one is submerged, but you can clearly see the number three barbette above the water, the turrets themselves have been removed. And those are the air ducts that furnished fresh air inside the ship. Now up here,” he said pointing to the midship section is the aft portion of the superstructure. Do you see those square openings? Those are the intake ducts for the boilers and the circular shape just ahead of them is were the stack was.”

Wide eyed, Craig took it all in as Sheffield continued to explain, “The forward section is where the greatest damage occurred. Notice how the deck is all crumpled and collapsed. There's whats left of the forward turret. It is still in place but the gun barrels have been removed. And look just ahead of that, the forward turret is still in place with its guns. Now see how the bow is still intact? Thats what left of it. During the course of the war everything else was cut away. See over there. Thats fuel oil from her bunkers bubbling to the surface. They were ruptured causing them to leak.

“Did you know that there are eleven hundred and two men entombed inside?”

“I read something about that.” Craig answered.

Sheffield continued, “Look to the other side of the harbor. Thats were the first wave of Japanese planes swept in. Once over the water, they dropped their torpedoes that wrecked havoc with battleship row. They were all raised, repaired and returned to service, all except for the Arizona and the Oklahoma. She was just up ahead, but I read that just last month she was taken under tow to west coast for salvage but sunk about five hundred miles from here.

“By the time I got here that morning after being shot down over by Ewa, the damage had been done. I can still see the thick smoke rising above the harbor from the fires. But after I got to the hospital and Ramona told me what happened to Geannie and the kids, everything was blur after that.

“When I left here in April of forty two, everything was pretty much still were it was but when I came through in September of forty five, all that was left was the Arizona and the Oklahoma, which had been raised by then. Oh and the old Utah is still over on the other side of Ford Island. So Craig, Its important that you and all Americans remember what happened here so it doesn't happen again.”

Craig remained silent after the somber history lesson. When he was finished, Sheffield instructed the coxswain to to continue on. As the approached the dock, they went right passed the Shangri La and they got a good look at her.

Once they went ashore, Sheffield took him up the gangway and explained their presence to the officer of the deck and requested permission to come aboard. Again Seymour came to greet them. When he learned that Craig wanted to have a look around, the captain assigned someone to give them a tour of the

ship, which terminated on the bridge. They were invited in and Seymour gave the young man a personal tour of the bridge. He ended up telling some stories about his father from the good old days. Probably the biggest thrill was when he and Sheffield got to sit in the cockpit of a pair of F8F Bearcats parked side by side in the hangar.

After leaving the ship, Craig was on cloud nine. All the way home, it was all he could talk about. Once they got home, he had to tell Ramona and his sisters all about it. He was still going on about it the next morning. While they were having lunch on the patio, lo and behold, the Shangri La and the two destroyers accompanying her passed by just off shore as they got under way for the west coast. They watched the ships steam past, until they disappeared behind Koko Head.

Ramona had given a lot of thought to the fact that someone was interested in her beach house. She realized that now she had a family that it wouldn't be practicable to keep it. It had only been used for a short amount of time each year since she returned to the states. It was nice that it was had been available on those occasions, but those occasions would be fewer and further between in the future. Besides, it was getting old and was in need of some serious repairs and remodeling. Sitting empty for so long had taken its toll on it. After all, Sheffield still had his stake in the Austin cabin. It was close to home and made a nice get away.

She had bought it in 1930 at a foreclosure auction for twenty five hundred dollars cash, and she owned it free and clear. She only used it when she wasn't on duty or on call at the hospital. Otherwise she had lived in an apartment in the nurses dormitory on the base next to the hospital. It had been built in 1923 and didn't have electricity or running water. During the first couple of years, she had it hooked up to both.

She discussed her reasoning with Sheffield, who agreed. So she called the number on the card. Since she never did have a telephone installed, she called him from the pay telephone at the Market. It put her in touch with James Cook Kolekona, who happened to be a prominent community leader and wealthy businessman. "Mr. Kolekona, This is Ramona Brason." she began. "I understand that you're interested in my beach house out on Highway Seventy Two."

"Oh yes. I was hoping that I'd hear from you. The folks down at the market told me that they expected you'd be here sometime this summer. If you hadn't of showed up by the fall, I was going to try to contact you."

"I've been here for a week or so and I have given it some serious thought. I think its time that I let go of it. Would you like to come out and let me show it to you?"

"Oh, no. Mrs. Brason. I've seen the property. You see, I bought the parcel next to you earlier this year. I'm not interested in the house, I just want the land. Don't take this as an offense, but I would tear

down the house to make room for the house I envision building on the combined property.”

“It is an old house and would need a lot of work to bring it up to snuff anyway.”

“I would however like to meet with you to discuss an offer. When would be a good time?”

“Oh about anytime.”

“How about tomorrow morning at ten o'clock?”

“I'll be here. I look forward to meeting with you. Goodbye Mr. Kolekona.”

Ramona walked back to the house to tell Sheffield about her conversation and pending appointment. He had to agree with her that it was time. He didn't see where it would be feasible to come back each year like they had for the last four years.

The next morning, Mr. Kolekona showed up right on time. He was a large man of native descent. Despite his position and wealth, he was a rather down to earth kind of fellow with a jolly rolling laugh. Together he and Ramona walked around the property and down to the dock. He wanted to keep the dock for a place to keep his yacht tied up. It was worth a lot more to him than the house. From the dock, he painted a picture of what he planned to build. It was a very lavish picture at that.

They walked back up to the house and sat on the patio, looking over the ocean. The view was worth a lot to him as well. Ramona offered him a Coca-cola as they talked further. Halfway through his bottle, he said, “I'm willing to offer you twelve thousand five hundred dollars for it.”

Ramona nearly choked and it was all she could do to keep from spewing her drink all over. She didn't think it was worth that much, but obviously he did. That was ten thousand dollars more than she had bought it for seventeen years ago. First her inheritance, and now this! “It's a deal.” she said extending her hand to seal the deal. She went on to tell him that she had begun to invest in property and had been quite successful thus far.

He was surprised that a woman would be involved in such a venture. He pulled out his checkbook and wrote out a check for the full amount and handed it to her. “Now if you'd be so kind as to sign over the deed.”

“Yes, of course. I'll be right back.” Ramona went into the house and went into her bedroom and pushed the bed to one side. Getting down on her knees, she lifted a hinged floorboard and removed a strong box. Next she removed the key that was on a hook screwed into the floor joist and unlocked the box and removed a piece of paper. She put everything back and returned the patio. “May I borrow your pen?”

“Certainly.” he said as he handed it over.

Before signing the deed over to him, she asked, “We will be here until the end of the month. Will that be a problem?”

“I've waited this long, what's a couple more weeks. Feel free to stay here and when you leave, I'll

take possession after you're gone.”

“Alright then, how about I date it June thirtieth?”

“That will be fine. I will wait until then to have it recorded.” Mr. Kolekona stood up and again offered his hand.” Thank you Missus Brason. It has been a real pleasure. The next time you happen to be in the Islands, stop by and I'd love to show you what I've done with the place.” He tipped his hat and said, “Good day madam.”

Sheffield and the kids had remained in the house out of the way while she conducted her businesses. When Mr. Kolekona left, Sheffield came out onto patio to see how it went. Ramona waved the check in front of him and said, “Can you believe this? I just sold it for twelve thousand five hundred dollars.”

Sheffield whistled and exclaimed, “Wow. That's a lot of money. What are you going to do with it?”

“Why invest it in more property back home. This sure beats working for living.” She put her arms around his neck and added, “Just because your so good to me, I just might buy that airplane you've been talking about for you.”

Ramona went downtown to the Bank of Hawaii and presented the check. Sure enough it was good. She had them transfer all but five hundred dollars to her bank in Virginia and put the rest in her purse. That night she treated her family to dinner at a very nice place.

Sunday June 15<sup>th</sup> was Fathers Day. Again they attended services. Ramona and the girls had made a special treat for Sheffield for the occasion. It was her famous coconut cream pie made from coconut milk, fresh coconut, and pineapple. The kids had made homemade cards for him, expressing their love and appreciation for all that he had done for them. They stopped just short as referring to him as Dad. The rest of the day was spent talking about the adventure they had planned for the week.

Sheffield arranged to charter a twenty eight and half foot single masted sailboat and on Monday morning, he and Craig rode the bus over to the marina to get it. They sailed it into the cove and tied it up at the dock, her four foot seven inch keel barely cleared the bottom. It was twenty one feet long at the waterline and was eight feet wide at its widest. The Hinckley H21 was built the year before by Hinckley Yachts in Maine. It was trucked across the county to Los Angeles and brought to Honolulu on a freighter. Named the Princess Kaiulani, after the last living member of the Hawaiian Royal Family, it was used as a charter boat.

Back in the summer of 1940 he had taken Geannie and the kids on a similar adventure and it turned out to be one of their fondest memories. He figured that if it was such success with his first family that he would try it with his second family.





While Sheffield and Craig went after the boat, Ramona and the girls had packed their clothes, bedding, and enough food for a week. The morning was spent loading the boat and making it livable. The boat had a spacious cabin with five feet ten inches of headroom and no mast obstructing the cabin. Access to the cabin was through a water tight hatch at the aft of the cabin, with three steps leading down into the cabin.

The galley was to the right with a sink, storage compartments, and a two burner stove that slid out of its recessed compartment on tracks. To the left was an insulated ice box. They loaded the food lockers and the ice box with groceries. Dish racks were provided for plates and glasses, and a drawer for silverware. Below the sink was a locker for pots and pans. The twenty seven gallon water tank was filled with fresh water before Sheffield left the marina. Their clothes and other items were stashed into closets and storage lockers.

Forward of the galley were two sleeping berths that doubled as seating, with storage lockers for bedding underneath. They were offset from each other slightly. Above them were two smaller bunks that folded up against the bulkhead, when not in uses. At the forward end of the cabin, a private lavatory was to left and a closet to the right. In the center was a ladder leading up to the main deck, accessible by another water tight hatch. An opening lead into the foc'sle where there was additional storage space as well as room for one person to sleep.

The trim on the sides and ends of the cabin was finished in mahogany. On either side were two ports made of heavy glass and a four inch port in the forward end of the cabin. The cabin walls, deck floor, and overhead were made of half inch waterproof plywood. The hatches were also trimmed with mahogany with brass fittings. The cabin was lit by brass Gimaballed kerosene lamps and electric lights powered by the boat's twelve volt battery.

The open cockpit aft of the the cabin had bench seating all around, with more storage below, which could double as open air berths. At the rear of the boat was the tiller for controlling the rudder.

The upper deck was made of three eights inch plywood with solid mahogany toe rails running all the way around the boat. The deck from the cabin forward was enclosed by railing A thirty six foot hollow Sitka spruce mast towered above the forward end of the cabin with a fifteen foot main sail boom. Between the main sail and jib, there was three hundred ninety one square feet of sail. Finally, there was a Grey Marine 4 cylinder gas engine, with the controls located at the forward end of the cockpit with the navigation controls.

Once they were ready to sail and everyone was aboard, Sheffield raised the jib and started the engine and took it out just off shore and dropped anchor. He spent the rest of the morning teaching everyone their jobs; whether it be manning the helm, handling sails, standing watch, or simply maintaining the boat and keeping it clean. Once he was confident that they understood what needed to be done, they had lunch before setting out. Sheffield had Craig hoist the main sail and they set sail for Molokai. After rounding Koko Head, Sheffield hugged the coastline, sailing with the wind.

"It seems like we're taking the long way?" Craig observed. "Why don't we just cut straight across?"

"That's a good question, Craig." Sheffield responded. "It may seem like the long way, but it's actually faster. You see, as we cross the channel, we'll have a cross wind. This way we'll cross at the shortest distance. The less time we spend in the channel will actually save us time. Does that make sense?"

Craig was satisfied with the answer, and soon understood why. At Makapu'u Point on the southeastern tip of Oahu they set out across the Kaiwi Channel. A moderate wind of eighteen knots was blowing through the channel from the southwest causing ten foot seas. Sheffield swung the boom about forty five degrees to port, allowing the sail to fill up like a balloon which altered the air flow, driving the boat in the direction he wanted to go.

As the boat pitched and rolled through the swells, it didn't take long for Norma to start feeling quite unsettled. After feeding her lunch to the fish, she felt much better.

"You poor dear." Ramona said. "We'll have to get you some ginger ale. It will settle your stomach."

Later that afternoon they rounded Laau Point on the southwest tip of Molokai. Once across the channel, they again hugged the shoreline. A little while later they arrived at Kaunakakai Harbor located on Molokai's south shore and tied up at the pier and went ashore to explore.

One of the interesting places they visited was the Kapuaiwa Coconut Grove, a mile west of Kaunakakai. In the 1860s King Kamehameha V, whose nickname was Kapuaiwa, had one thousand coconut palm trees planted to represent each warrior in his mighty army. Of the original ten acre grove, several hundred trees were still standing.

That first night, they stayed on the boat. The bedding had to be taken out of the storage lockers so the beds could be made up. Sheffield and Ramona got the lower berths, the girls had the upper bunks, and Craig slept in the fore-cabin. The rocking of the boat was soothing as they settled in for the night, except for Norma who was still a little queasy.

The next morning after breakfast, they set off on the second day of their adventure. Sheffield set a southerly course toward the Island of Lanai, nine miles away. As they neared the island, he changed course to the east and sailed along the north shore of Lanai, past Shipwreck Beach, staying far enough out to avoid the reefs. That eight mile stretch of shoreline had wrecked numerous ships along the shallow, rocky shore.

The most recent was a cargo ship that ran aground during the war that was still pretty much intact, perched atop the reef.

Later in the morning, they put in at Lahaina on the west shore of Maui. Before being moved to Honolulu, Lahaina was the capital of the Kingdom of Hawaii from 1820 to 1845. It also once served served as a port for the whaling ships that hunted the waters around the Islands. Towering 5,787 above Lahaina is Pu'u Kukui, a peak formed by a dormant volcano. Pu'u Kukui is one of the wettest spots on Earth receiving an average of 386.5 inches of rain a year. After spending several hours ashore looking around, they sailed down the coast and put in at Kihei on the southwest shore where they spent the rest of the day exploring Kihei and Wailea and again spent the night on the boat.

On Wednesday morning they left Maui behind them and after rounding Pohakueaea Point on the south central coast of Maui, they headed southeast across the Alenuihaha Channel with the ten thousand foot Haleakala Summit on Maui behind them and the thirteen thousand eight hundred foot Mauna Kea on Hawaii looming ahead in the distance.

The Alenuihaha Chanel was the most difficult sailing that they had encountered. Because of the wind funnel effect between the islands, they faced a twenty knot wind along the south coast of Maui which made for a wet, bumpy ride. Ramona was at the tiller, while Sheffield and Craig manned the sails in the cross wind. By swinging the sails out, they diverted the wind toward the rear of the boat which pushed the boat forward. But it also caused it to lean away from the wind. Sheffield insisted that everyone had their life preservers on as they went about their work. Poor Norma was really struggling with seasickness, and ended up feeding her breakfast to the fish once again, despite the ginger ale.

After crossing the channel, the wind and the sea calmed down as they sailed parallel to the northeast shore of Hawaii. Sheffield let them removed their life preserves, but they were always within reach. Norma was feeling much better and was able to take her turn standing watch at the bow rail, just ahead of the jib sail. The purpose for the bow watch was to keep an eye out for debris in the water in the path of the boat. It was a relativity easy job but one that required vigilance.

All of a sudden she yelled, "What's that over there?" pointing off toward the east.

Her alert had Sheffield's immediate attention. He looked out toward the open ocean and saw two water spouts about two hundred yards out, one higher than to other. "Whales!" he hollered back.

That got everyone's attention. Ramona and Janet, who were in the galley preparing lunch, rushed up on deck in time to see two sets a flukes with water draining off of them. "They're humpbacks." she said excitedly. "Looks like a cow and calf."

Craig saw them just as their tails slapped the water and disappeared.

"Keep your eyes on the spot just ahead of that and you'll most likely see them again." Sheffield said.

He altered course to sail parallel with the heading the whales where on to bring them in closer.

“Typically humpback season is from November through April,” Ramona said, “when they migrate down from Alaska. But a few are known to stay here year around. It looks like we stumbled onto a couple of locals.”

Just then, a the black back of the larger cow crested the surface. A couple of seconds later, the calf was beside and slightly behind her. They were only visible for a few seconds and went under again. By then, the boat had closed to within a hundred and fifty yards.

After a couple of minutes, they spouted again and disappeared with a slap of their tails. This time they didn't surface again. Sheffield said, “They've taken a dive to feed. Just wait a few minutes and I'll bet we'll see them again.”

They watched as the minutes ticked by, then after ten or twelve minutes, they spouted again. A moment later their backs rose above the surface, as they went back down, they raised their tails and gave another slap. This time they could hear the sound of their tails smacking the water.

Again the minutes passed while the pair dove deep. The family on the boat waited patiently for another glimpse of the creatures. This time they stayed down longer. After fifteen minutes their patience was rewarded. All of a sudden, the cow shot out of the water sideways, as if in slow motion. She lifted nearly her entire body out of the water before crashing down on her back, sending up a huge plume of water. “Wow! Look at that.” was all anyone said. A split second later, the calf followed suit, but with a less spectacular leap.

Rather than than dive again, she rose out of the water and rolled onto one side, waving her long pectoral flipper in the air.

“Look she's waving at us.” Janet exclaimed.

“Actually she's trying to tell us go away and leave them alone.” Ramona said.

After waving, she lowered her flipper and rolled back into an upright position and swam along just under the surface. They both raised their tails as the commenced their dives and with a good slap, they were gone.

“So what did you think of the show?” Sheffield asked.

“That was really something.” Norma answered. The other kids had similar reactions.

“I think that we've seen the last of them. We'd better get back on course.” Sheffield said.

Everyone went back to work and before long, Ramona and Janet had lunch ready. Late in the afternoon, they sailed into Hilo Bay and made way for the marina where they tied up. They spent all of the rest of that day and all day the next exploring Hilo and the surrounding area. Everywhere they went, they saw the devastation of the tidal wave that hit the area the year before.

On Friday morning, they left Hilo and began the return trip to Oahu. This time they sailed along the North shore of Maui and stopped of in Kahului for the night. The next day they continued on along the north shore of Molokai. During the voyage they worked together, played together, and became closer. They got to see whales and dolphins, manta rays and a host of other marine life in their natural environment, something the kids would have never seen otherwise. They got to explore places on the other islands, even places where Sheffield and Ramona had never been before.

On Saturday afternoon, they stood into the cove and made way for the dock. As they came along side, Craig, now an able sailor, hopped out of the boat and onto the dock with the bitter end of the line in his hand. He pulled the boat in and secured it to the dock with a perfect bowline. He helped Ramona and his sisters out of the boat, then Sheffield began handing him all of their things which he placed on the dock.

Once the boat had been unloaded and cleaned up, Craig untied the boat and gave it a shove, away from the dock. Sheffield sailed out of the cove and rounded Diamond Head to the marina where he rented the Princess Kaiulani. By the time he got back, everything had been taken back up to the house and put away.

When they set out, they were well on their to having good suntans, except for Craig, who still had faint zebra stripes. By the time they returned, they all had a tan to be envied, even Craig's tan had evened out. Their adventure had been just what Sheffield had hoped for as it knit them closer together as family.

The rest of their vacation was spent going places and doing things as family. There were still plenty of places to go and things to do. For the remainder of the time, they soaked it all in knowing that they most likely wouldn't be back for perhaps a long time. They took advantage of the patio and the beach. They took day trips to various parts of the island and most of all they did it as a family.

One such trip was an overnigher. They drove up through the Central Valley, through the pineapple and sugar cane plantations, to Haleiwa on the North Shore of Oahu. The main attraction there was the beach. It wasn't just another beach. The beaches on the north shore were famous for the surf, and surfing. Ramona had tried surfing a time or two during all of her years in Hawaii, but wasn't all that good at it. At Craig's coaxing, he, Norma and Ramona rented some boards and went out with an instructor. Before long, Craig, a natural athlete, got the hang of it. Ramona remembered what she knew and soon Norma had it figured out. The waves that day were more suited to beginners than it was to the avid surfers who were looking for the big waves. Time after time, they paddled out and road the waves in. Meanwhile Sheffield and Janet went beachcombing, looking for sea shells and other treasures. Their biggest find was green sea turtle sleeping on the beach.

The next day, they drove out along the North Shore to Kaena Point, the western most point on Oahu

and down the west coast. Cutting across to go up and around the north end of Pearl Harbor, they passed the Ewa Marine Air Station. Sheffield pulled off the highway and down a road and pulled off to the side. Speaking to the kids he said, "Do you see that patch of tall grass over there?"

They nodded their heads.

"That's where I parachuted to the ground after the plane that I was riding in was shot down on the morning of the attack. A squad of Marines, assuming that I was an enemy pilot, had me surrounded. I don't know who was more relieved that I wasn't, them or me. Anyway I pulled rank on them and took their jeep so I could get back to the base."

"You're not telling the whole story." Ramona interrupted. "He was wounded when his plane was shot down. I pulled a piece of metal out of his shoulder blade and stitched him up. That's where that little scar on his back came from."

He figured that they needed to hear the rest of the story of that day so on the way back, he showed them the spot where he had found their car. Ramona told how they had been brought to the hospital. Sandy was already dead, and Austin died soon after. Sheffield managed to tell them how Ramona had found him when he was searching the hospital for them and how she took him to Geannie and how she got to say goodbye.

He wanted to tell them the story so they knew and understood fully that he truly knew how they felt in losing their parents. Enough time had passed that it wasn't quite as painful to talk about. He concluded by saying, "Time has been a factor, but Ramona is who helped me through it the most, and now having the three of you has made my life complete again."

With only a few days remaining, Ramona began taking in inventory on what she had in the house. She divided it into three categories, what they could use and take home with them, what to donate to charity, and what could be left and hauled off with the rubble that her beach house would soon become. It had served her well all of those years and it was sad knowing the fate that awaited it. On Friday she had arranged for Goodwill to stop by on Monday after they left, to pick up the beds, dressers, furniture, and appliances and whatever else they found of value.

On Sunday they attended services and spent the rest of the day packing for the trip home. That night, they spent their last night ever in the beach house. While enjoying the evening on the patio, Craig said, "Sheffield, Ramona, we've been talking and there is something we want to tell you."

"Are we in trouble?" Ramona winked.

"No. We just want to say thank you for bringing us here. It has been a lot of fun, but more importantly it has helped us to get over losing Mom and Dad. Not only that but it has helped us to get used to being a family with you."

"Oh, thank you." Ramona responded.

Sheffield added, "That's what we brought you here for. We're glad that you've had fun. We did too."

"We were wondering." Craig continued. "Would it be alright if we started calling you Mom and Dad?"

"Of course. We'd love that, wouldn't we Sheffield? Come her and give your Mom a hug."

After her hug, Sheffield asked, "Hey, what about your dear old Dad?" He to got a hug from each of them as well.

They had to leave early the next morning in order to return the car and catch their flight. On the return trip they regained the two hours that they had lost on the flight from the West Coast. It was was six o'clock when the plane landed in Oakland which gave them a two hour lay over before their flight to Washington. That gave Ramona enough time to call Pat Owen. She learned that Mace's next assignment would take them to Washington in the fall. They made plans to get together sometime.

The flight to Washington departed at eight o'clock in the evening, about a half an before sunset. Already exhausted by the first eight hour leg of the flight home, it wasn't easy to sleep on the flight. From time to time one or another dozed off for a while. At first, the lights on the ground below were fascinating, but they soon lost their appeal as the DC-6 made its way across the continent. During the night, they regained three more hours. The sun rose more than hour before landing at Washington National Airport at seven in the morning.

With a three hour layover, there was time for breakfast before their flight for Roanoke took off. The weary travelers finally arrived home around noon after being gone for the entire month of June. It had been a great trip. It was just what was needed to solidify themselves as a family.

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The Queen Theater on Waialae Ave in Kaimuki was a 850-seat theater opened on June 29, 1936

The Rusty films were a series of eight children's movies made from 1945 through 1949

The USS Shangri La deployed to the West Pacific from March 31, to June 16, 1947 and stopped off in Pearl Harbor on her way back to San Diego and was in port from the 7<sup>th</sup> to the 10<sup>th</sup>. Seymour Whithouse is a fictional character. The actual commander of the Shangri La at the time was Captain Wilson P. Cogswell.

The Princess Kaiulani is a fictional boat, although Princess Kaiulani was a real person. The Hinckley H21 was as described, with the exception of the fold down upper bunks.

