

ISLAND LOVE

Written by B Budd Smith

From the story by John Selby

WGAW (c) 2016-2022

Draft #7

831-345-8191

FADE IN:

EXT. HAWAIIAN SUGAR PLANTATION - DAY

Looking from across a jungle gorge through the oval of a hand-held telescope, we see a neighboring plantation, with equipment barns, worker's shacks, smoke-stack and cane refinery - the run-down but still-operating Cromme family sugar plantation.

The telescope POV zooms in on the large old colonial-style house and overgrown gardens. The sound of a live local Hawaiian band warming up can be heard -

EXT. CROMME HOUSE BACK YARD [CONTINUOUS]

In the back yard, a big local luau/barbecue is being prepared, with Filipino and Hawaiian help preparing picnic tables, flower arrangements, pit-roast pig etc.

An 18-year-old, hauntingly-beautiful white girl - Rebecca - comes walking out of the house toward the picnic tables, carrying two large pitchers. She tosses her long dark hair and laughs lightly about something with the household help.

The telescope is momentarily aimed at her shapely legs and then rising to her breasts, then her face -

EXT. HILLTOP ACROSS THE LAGOON

A middle-aged man, GATLIN MCGRABBIN (physically powerful, dominated by raw masculine impulses) is looking through a hi-power portable telescope placed on his pickup hood.

Gatlin takes his eye from the telescope - shakes his head.

GATLIN

(muttering)

God - Rebecca. What do you expect me to do, just go jump off the cliff?

The SOUND of a jet overhead catches his attention and he glances at his watch, then looks up -

GATLIN (cont'd)

(to himself)

Ah, Mickey's flight!

EXT. BACK YARD CROMME PLANTATION HOUSE [CONTINUOUS]

Rebecca likewise hears the sound of the jet, looks to her own watch, then looks up, her expression suddenly animated.

INT. PASSENGER JET [CONTINUOUS]

A young man, 19, MICHAEL MCGRABBIN (slender, handsome, inward-tuned) is sitting in his seat with mini practice keyboard in his lap. He looks down at the island below.

EXT. BACK YARD [CONTINUOUS]

Still looking up at the descending jet, Rebecca puts a hand over her breast, caught in a moment of eager passion -

Excited, she goes running away from the party preparations, down along a trail through tropical woods alongside the plantation's private LAGOON.

The SOUNDS of surf and birds overwhelm the Hawaiian music - and then we begin to hear a strong young male voice intoning a traditional Hawaiian chant.

EXT. TROPICAL WOODS [CONTINUOUS]

Rebecca comes to a stop, standing in lush jungle, looking through ancient trees toward the chanting.

We see overgrown stone walls - an old Hawaiian settlement reduced to abandoned half-wall RUINS.

EXT. HAWAIIAN RUINS [CONTINUOUS]

A solitary sincere young Hawaiian man wearing shorts, with long black hair - LOKOKANI - is performing an ancient native ritual with total mastery.

He makes a dramatic dance move - and the shot becomes visually aglow, showing the dancer in a transformed CGI environment -

EXT. SAME LOCATION BACK IN 1897 - DAY

In a FLASHBACK we see rapid-shifting, live-action and CGI images of these SAME RUINS as they looked over a hundred years ago - with two dozen native Hawaiian huts, plus well-tended taro patches, and the Polynesian canoes of a traditional Hawaiian village.

With mixed CGI imagery, Lokokani is dancing ceremoniously with half a dozen other native men, while maybe 50 adults and children watch or continue with communal activities -

Suddenly a bunch of drunk HIRED HANDS from the adjoining sugar plantation come busting in upon the peaceful scene. Brandishing guns and lit torches, they roughly chase the native inhabitants off, and torch the grass/bamboo huts.

GRAVESs are being looted, and Hawaiian artifacts loaded onto a wagon and hauled away - the great wooden FIGURINE of the Hawaiian shark god, in front of a rustic native temple, is purposely torched.

EXT. RUINS - PRESENT MOMENT

Rebecca stands there after the flashback is gone, looking stunned by the historic vision she's just experienced.

As she gazes vaguely at Lokokani, he stops dancing - and stands staring intently at her.

Birds chirp, the sound of the surf is rhythmic, soothing. We begin to HEAR the sound of a BULLDOZER.

Lokokani looks up in the direction of the sound.

EXT. ACROSS THE LAGOON [CONTINUOUS]

On the other side of the wide lagoon is a beautiful little cove and beach, with a tall cliff to the right and a steep terraced hill to the left, with vague signs of overgrown Hawaiian ruins here and there.

A big D8 BULLDOZER is atop the hill, coming to a halt. The engine sound drops to a low diesel purr.

EXT. TOP OF HILL [CONTINUOUS]

A PICKUP drives fast along a dirt road, comes to a stop a hundred feet up above the bulldozer, with Gatlin at the wheel.

He stops the pickup and gets out - stands looking down over the private beach and lagoon without seeing Rebecca and Lokokani way over on the other side.

Gatlin looks conflicted - then makes up his mind about something - takes off walking fast down toward the awaiting bulldozer.

EXT. BULLDOZER ON HILLSIDE [CONTINUOUS]

Gatlin jumps up onto the Cat to talk with the DRIVER.

GATLIN

(with authority)

OK, gimme an easy grade, something we can drive down 4-wheel - my wife, you know, her bum knee and all. Let's give her a nice surprise.

The driver, a local Hawaiian, is hesitant about the job.

DRIVER

But - so close to those ruins down there, no permit or anything?

GATLIN

(off-hand)

Hey, there's acres of ruins, one little road isn't gonna hurt anything, all this is just terraces over here anyway, no graves. My wife deserves to come down to her own beach, for Christ's sake.

Gatlin jumps off the Cat and walks away.

The bulldozer driver pulls out a small whiskey bottle and takes a drink - then guns the dozer - down goes the blade -

EXT. THE RUINS BY THE LAGOON [CONTINUOUS]

Across the lagoon, Rebecca watches as Lokokani, down below, stands, staring aghast at what's happening over on the neighboring plantation.

Lokokani shouts into the din of the engine -

LOKOKANI

Hey, what - you can't do that!

But the crashing sound of the bulldozer blade plowing into rock ruins mostly obliterates his voice.

Frantic, Lokokani dives into the lagoon, swims across -

EXT. GATLIN'S PICKUP [CONTINUOUS]

Gatlin walks back up to his pickup - turns to watch the bulldozer working a moment - then gets into his pickup.

Lokokani comes running up fast to the pickup - grabs and opens Gatlin's door.

LOKOKANI

(enraged)

Damn you, Gatlin - stop that dozer,
you got no right!

GATLIN

(remaining calm)

Off my case, Loko, I'm staying way to
the north of your sacred ruins.
Anyway that's my land, all this side
of the lagoon.

FLASHBACK:

We see another very short FLASHBACK to the original
desecration of this area -

END FLASHBACK:

EXT. PICKUP ABOVE BULLDOZER

Gatlin and Lokokani watch the CAT make a turn that heads
toward graves hidden under hao bushes, pushing aside large
stones and rock structures -

LOKOKANI

(panicking)

Stop him, he's headed straight for a
grave site!

GATLIN

(losing patience)

Ease up - no graves there.

Lokokani reaches into the cab and grabs Gatlin's shoulder
menacingly - we see Gatlin react, reach for a PISTOL -

The bulldozer noise stops suddenly. Lokokani looks in that
direction again - and Gatlin comes out of the pickup.

Both he and Lokokani hurry down toward the dozer.

EXT. THE DOZER [CONTINUOUS]

The driver comes down off the dozer.

DRIVER

(wildly to Gatlin)

I just wiped out an entire Hawaiian family burial site - we're in deep shit now, the spirits coming. I'm out'a here!

The driver looks guiltily at Lokokani - takes off fast.

Lokokani runs around the bulldozer - skeletal remains of adults and children are strewn all around in the dirt, bones broken, skulls crushed. Sacred artifacts such as feathered capes, bowls, poi pounders are everywhere.

Lokokani sinks to his knees in tears of rage and loss. Gatlin grimaces, shocked by the extent of the destruction.

GATLIN

Oh shit, I had no idea. Now why'd this have to happen - goddamn!

Gatlin turns, walks quickly away.

Lokokani, mourning his disturbed ancestors, looks up at Gatlin's disappearing back in acute anger -

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. ROAD LEAVING AIRPORT - DAU

A JAGUAR sedan pulls out of the airport drive and takes a right turn north onto the main county road. The sedan roars along, with young Michael McGrabbin staring out at the beauty of the island.

His mother, Vanessa - a slight British-bred woman, mid-forties - is driving. She looks tensely at her son and he meets her eyes, smiles.

MICHAEL

(bright)

Hey Mom - great to be back.

She doesn't answer. Emotions cloud her face.

MICHAEL (cont'd)

What is it? (Beat) Pops?

She tries to speak without getting emotional.

VANESSA

(British accent)

I so want this summer to be a happy family time but yes, your father. He's caught up again, fighting all the McGrabbin family devils, and you know him - alcohol. I must tell you, Mickey, this time I'm at my absolute limits.

Michael doesn't respond. He stares at the passing scenery.

He sees a rather run-down but once-classy formal entrance go by. An old sign says: CROMME PLANTATION. Michael nods at the entrance.

MICHAEL

Uhm - so how's Becky?

VANESSA

Oh, fine, fine. We haven't seen her much recently. Your father's fighting again with her father, this time over the new development project. But oh, she's grown, she's so beautiful.

MICHAEL

Yeah. We've stayed a bit in touch.

EXT. NEAR THE LAGOON - DAY

Rebecca comes running fast up from the lagoon toward the run-down Cromme polantation, her expression wild with shock and aggression -

INT. CROMME PLANTATION HOUSE [CONTINUOUS]

Rebecca comes running inside the house to the kitchen where her mother GLENNA (forties, bright-spirited) is overseeing several cooks preparing dishes for the party.

REBECCA

God, Mom - I could kill him!

Glenna pauses in her work.

GLENNA

What happened - kill who?

REBECCA

I can't believe he - Gatlin! He's a monster.

Rebecca collapses into a chair, overwhelmed with feelings -

GLENNNA

(shocked)

Oh no, he didn't, you didn't let him touch you - God, if you two've actually gone and -

REBECCA

Mom!

GLENNNA

Becky, he's your father's age - I've seen how you flirt with him every time - he'll assume you want to -

REBECCA

Mom - are you kidding? Do you think I'd actually let him -

GLENNNA

Maybe to you it's just flirting but I know Gatlin, he'll expect you to -

REBECCA

But you know I love Michael, not his father.

GLENNNA

Then you'd better make sure you don't lead that man on any further.

REBECCA

I haven't led him anywhere. And what he's done, it's something far worse than if he'd kissed me - or whatever you're imagining. It's the lagoon, Mom, the graves, his bulldozer - that access road he's been threatening to make down to the beach.

GLENNNA

(beat)

Oh no - he wouldn't.

REBECCA

He did - just now!

GLENNNA

But, what's Vince going to say - his heart - and on his birthday too.

REBECCA
 And now I'm afraid Lokokani's going
 to kill Gatlin, he's in a wild rage.

EXT. FARTHER DOWN THE BEACH TOWARD TOWN [CONTINUOUS]

Lokokani is moving fast along the rugged beach, hopping from one large volcanic rock the next.

He stops - stares out to sea as if sensing something - and shouts loudly in Hawaiian - waits a moment -

Out to sea, the fin of a large SHARK cuts the water.

A short FLASHBACK shows the great wooden SHARK GOD at the old Hawaiian temple, going up in flames -

LOKOKANI (V.O.)
 (threateningly)
 Now we gobble them, gobble them.

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. THE MCGRABBIN PLANTATION - DAY

From high above, the Jaguar sedan is seen driving along the county road. The sedan turns right onto the McGrabbin plantation, just north of the Cromme plantation - separated by the river gorge and lagoon.

From our drone shot (plus CGI) we see that most of the McGrabbin sugar-cane fields have been left to go fallow. On the north end of the property, a high-end residential REAL ESTATE DEVELOPMENT with twenty luxury houses is in progress.

EXT. MCGRABBIN HOUSE [CONTINUOUS]

The Jaguar sedan comes up the long driveway, and parks at the old plantation house, which has been recently remodeled and has well-landscaped gardens and swimming pool.

INT. CAR [CONTINUOUS]

As Michael looks out the window at the house, Vanessa watches him closely.

MICHAEL
 (reflectively)
 Jeez -

VANESSA

What?

MICHAEL

It's just a shock somehow, after being away. Compared to my college friends' family homes, this is just totally some other world out here.

They stare at each other - then look and see Gatlin's pickup. It drives up fast, and Gatlin gets out, walks eagerly toward the Jaguar.

Michael and Vanessa share a final look - then Michael gets out of the car.

EXT. FRONT OF HOUSE [CONTINUOUS]

Michael finds himself engulfed in a bear hug from Gatlin.

GATLIN

(gregarious - warm)

Shit, look at you - been too long, Mickey, too long. You gotta give up all that East Coast school shit.

Michael shrugs his shoulders.

GATLIN (cont'd)

Well if nothing else will, your Becky's gonna keep you home this time, I was talking to her yesterday - she's on fire for ya.

MICHAEL

(a bit bashful)

Uhm, good.

GATLIN

Come on, go take a jump in the pool, cool off before we head over to her place for the birthday - we gotta get going soon or we'll miss the cake. She's expecting you - otherwise they wouldn't have invited me, you can be sure.

Michael looks back and forth from his mother, who's standing apart, to his father.

A very old JAPANESE GARDENER comes walking up, bows formally to Michael - and Michael bows formally back.

Gatlin takes Michael's suitcase out of the trunk. Vanessa comes over to him and he spontaneously reaches for her, kisses her.

But she reacts - pushes away.

VANESSA
(harsh)
You've been drinking, you promised
not to today - damn you!

Angry, she heads into the house.

Michael has seen this - he shakes his head unhappily.

DISSOLVE TO:

INT. MCGRABBIN HOUSE, UPSTAIRS BATHROOM - DAY

Vanessa is doing her make-up, her expression tense. In her mirror, she sees Gatlin come in behind her.

VANESSA
(emotional)
I'd rather stay home if you're
drinking.

Gatlin looks eager to get along.

GATLIN
(conciliatory)
Hey, two drinks max, I promise.

With tenderness, he comes up behind her, touches her bare shoulders - but she distastefully pushes his fingers away.

VANESSA
(rejecting)
Don't.

He turns, frustrated - stomps out of the room.

INT. LIVING ROOM [CONTINUOUS]

The large old room is full of elegant European heirlooms, fine furniture. Covering an entire wall is a collection of OLD PHOTOGRAPHS of the McGrabbin family, several generations born here in Hawaii, and also earlier ancestors posed back in Scotland.

Gatlin comes downstairs, frowns at the photos a moment - then goes over and pours a drink from the liquor cabinet.

He turns at the sound of someone entering the house. It's Michael with towel around him, wet from his swim. They eye each other - then Gatlin downs his drink.

GATLIN

(friendly/gruff)

Hey mate - get dressed, time to call on your beloved. What's the matter, you look pale - nervous about seeing Becky? Listen to me, don't let women get to you, they'll tear you apart - look at me.

Gatlin turns, pours another shot.

MICHAEL

Becky doesn't scare me.

GATLIN

Well if I was in your shoes, she'd have me melted right down.

He downs his drink, able to drink a lot and hold it well.

Michael heads for the stairs.

GATLIN (cont'd)

(going on)

You don't know how lucky you are to have the hottest female on this entire island so hot for ya.

Michael pauses, turns around.

MICHAEL

Sounds like you're the one in love with her.

GATLIN

Like every other red-blooded man on the island.

MICHAEL

Mom says her dad's mad as hell at you for that housing project.

GATLIN

(defensive)

So I'm raising houses instead of cane - saving the McGrabbin holdings for you is what. Cane's suicide these days. Vince is crazy, keeping cane going - end of an era is all.

(MORE)