

The dream dissolved and I opened my eyes to a nighttime world of black on black.

“What?” I said, rolling toward Margie’s shadow next to me.

“Shush,” Margie scolded.

“What is it?” I asked softly, hoping my voice was now at a more acceptable level.

“I’m not sure,” Margie’s whisper was barely audible – and very sexy. “Something woke me.”

I pushed up on my elbows and cocked an ear toward the door to the hallway. Nothing.

All I could hear was the distant surf and the 'clackity-clack-clack' that stupid thorny plant outside our bedroom makes in the slightest breeze. Of course my hearing isn’t superhuman like Margie’s so I couldn’t be certain there wasn’t something I was missing.

“I don’t hear nothing,” I said ungrammatically and lay down and pulled the thin blanket over my bare shoulders. “If it’s a burglar, Magoo will bark.”

At the sound of his name, Magoo, our oversized flop-eared Yorkie who sleeps between us on our king-size mattress and takes up twice as much acreage as either Margie or me, wriggled and stretched then flopped back down.

Margie however was not so easily dissuaded. “Something’s wrong,” she insisted.

“Go back to sleep,” I said firmly as I burrowed back into my warm pillow, trying desperately to reenter that dream. There was something especially good about to happen and I wanted to find out what it was.

Of course I knew I’d never be allowed to go back to sleep. I felt Margie throw off the covers and slip out of bed. I felt Magoo rise and follow her, though I’m certain he was hoping she was headed to the kitchen for a late night snack.

With a groan of protest, I pulled myself from the bed found my slippers and robe and followed the fading shadows of Margie and Magoo into the living room.

By the time I arrived in the living room Margie was already tiptoeing through the open doors that lead out to our small yard, spacious lanai, and oversized pool. Magoo was still with her, though likely he was disappointed to discover the kitchen was not Margie’s destination.

By the time I reached the other side of the living room Margie was out beyond the pool standing tippy toe on the low rock wall peering over the tall hibiscus bushes that separate our home from the fourth fairway of the Kona Coast golf course. Her filmy nightgown billowed in the soft breeze and clung to her lean frame. A sliver of moon lit the scene and danced off Margie’s blond curls.

*Hmmm. Perhaps getting up in the middle of the night wasn’t going to be so bad after all.*

I skirted the pool and stepped behind Margie opened my robe and gathered her in to shield her from the cool night air. She pulled the robe close and her warm flesh heated mine but her attention and gaze was focused beyond the hedge.

I rested my cheek against hers and looked out into the night.

As I already told you, our house sits above the fourth fairway on one of the Big Island’s prime golf courses. It has a panoramic view of Keauhou which includes much of the golf course, the lower portion of Alii Drive, the roof tops of half a dozen well-manicured condo developments, Keauhou Bay and, of course, the vast, deep waters of the Pacific ocean. It’s a gorgeous view night or day and in the quiet night air under the moon glow everything seemed warm and wonderful and very normal.

I yawned and belched softly – an action I immediately regretted since I knew it would make it harder to turn Margie’s attention in the direction I was headed.

“Charming,” Margie admonished.

“Sorry,” I offered lamely. “There’s nothing out there, Margie. Come to bed.”

I tried to guide her gently away. She resisted.

“There is too something out there!”

“Where?”

She pointed into the darkness. "In the middle of the fairway."

I squinted at the spot she pointed to. There was, in fact, a large object in the middle of the fairway but it was impossible to tell what it was. I was quite certain it was simply exposed lava, which is a common obstacle on Big Island fairways.

"It's only lava," I said and nuzzled Margie's neck.

Margie didn't pull away, but she was determined.

"It is not lava," she said and wriggled free of my robe corral and pushed through the bushes. "It wasn't there yesterday."

"Margie..." I meant only to complain, but it came out more of a whine and then I too pushed through the bushes and followed after her and Magoo.

Margie marched quickly toward the object; I dragged along behind. My thought was that if I held back it would be just that much less of a walk back to the house and my bed (which would now be cold and uncomfortable) once Margie saw that the object was merely exposed lava as I'd told her.

Margie reached the 'lava,' and stopped. I heard Magoo growl softly, something he seldom does.

"I told you!" Margie called back in triumph without turning around.

"Okay, what is it?" I said without hastening my pace.

Margie put her hands on her hips and turned. "Come and see!"

I strolled down casually until I stood next to Margie and looked down. I do not know what I thought I'd see, but I assure you I did not expect to see what was there.

"Holy crap!" was what I said, though that doesn't reflect my full range of emotions.

There on the ground before us lay the body of a woman and even in the dim light you could see she'd been an attractive woman in life. She appeared to be in her mid to late thirties, with short blonde hair and a fair complexion. She was completely naked and her thin body was wildly contorted. It seems odd to say it, but the way she was laid out reminded me of one of those Egyptian wall paintings where the arms and head and legs are all unnaturally skewed. And I remember thinking that it looked as if she'd been *thrown* to the ground.

Her eyes were open and stared sightlessly up at me and Margie and the sky, and a single dark spot – a bullet hole? -- was clearly visible in the middle of her forehead. There was, however, no visible blood.

Now, you don't find dead bodies every day so it took me awhile to absorb the scene and when I had, I glanced around nervously, wondering whether we were really alone.

"We'd better call 9-1-1," I said.

"Ya think?" Margie taunted, squatting next to the body.

"Don't touch it!" I snapped.

"I'm just looking," Margie snapped back. "I think her neck's broken."

I looked again at the position of the body. Unless the woman was an owl, her neck was definitely broken.

"Ya think?" I said, mimicking Margie's taunt.

Margie looked up and stuck her tongue out at me and then stood up.

"Why would someone shoot her AND break her neck?"

"I don't know," I said, looking down at the body again. "Maybe they were really mad. A better question is: 'Why did they dump her here?'" I looked around again.

Margie looked at the ground. "I don't see any tracks or footprints."

I looked down too. I could see our footsteps in the grass but no others. "Let's go make that call. I'm not sure it's safe out here."

"You go. I'll stay here with her."

"No one's going to steal her!" I reasoned.

"I know. I just think I'd better stay. I'll be fine. Magoo's here."

I looked at tiny Magoo, who sniffed the body and growled softly again.

“Yeah, he’ll be a big help. Listen, Margie, I am not leaving you here.”

Margie crossed her arms and turned to me. It was too dark to see her eyes clearly, but I knew the look. It was the ‘I’m a big girl and survived just fine before you came along’ stare.

I stood my ground and met her eyes. Time ticked by. Margie finally dropped her arms in surrender.

“Oh, okay. I’m cold anyway. Come on Magoo.”

And so the three of us turned and headed back to the house, leaving the naked corpse in the middle of the fairway looking up at God.

I don’t know what Margie was thinking as we hurried along, but I was thinking how glad I was it wasn’t me out there -- or Margie.

As we pushed back through the bushes it started to rain lightly and by the time I got off the phone to the police, it was raining hard -- one of those tropical downpours that come out of nowhere and end as quickly as they start.

I went to stand behind Margie just inside the living room out of the rain. She had her robe and slippers now, but I put my arms around her and put my chin on her shoulder and together we watched the rain.

“Glad you decided to come in?”

Margie sighed. “We shouldn’t have left her in the rain.”

“You didn’t know it was going to rain.”

“Still...”

Margie was quiet a moment. “Why do people do things like that?”

I pulled Margie close and didn’t answer. The truth of the matter was, I didn’t have an answer and figured no one really did. I just held Margie and wondered if someone would be missing holding that woman on the fairway the same way I was holding Margie or if maybe the person who used to hold that woman on the fairway was the person who left her there.

Margie shivered in the damp air and I pulled her tight. Together, under the roar of the rain, we heard sirens.