

Mahina Rises

By John Blossom

Prologue

“Mahina, Daughter, listen carefully. Come to me and learn to fly! Here’s how you do it: Leave doubt and fear outside, even when things seem hopeless. Break down the wall that is blocking your portal and enter the lava tube. Walk until you feel our family’s power.

“When the time is right, stand as straight as you can with your eyes closed. Tighten all your muscles. Crinkle your brow. Concentrate harder than you have ever done before. Dig deeply, believe, and think, ‘Up, up, up!’

“When you feel yourself rising, trust yourself. Bend your knees and raise your heels to the back of your legs. Settle comfortably onto the cool damp air and lean forward. Open your eyes. Drift ahead and float deep into the tunnel.

“When a luminous cavern opens in front of you, look up and ascend through the bright opening in the roof toward the sun. Flying is our next power, your power. You will be the first to breathe the cool and pure high air carried by the winds, to zoom over hills, mountains, and trees, and to play tag with the birds. Clouds and rainbows will shimmer their grateful welcome for you to enjoy.

“You may have doubts and think about falling. Acknowledge these and let them go, but if the rainbows disappear, and the clouds get dark and stormy, descend and know that the earth is

suffering and expressing its confusion and anger. The Moemoea Family does not give up. Just hike back to the entrance and start over.

“Flying is the final expression of our family’s healing mana. Embrace it. Pass it on. Inside every human is a better world waiting to be discovered, and the planet’s storms will go away if everyone concentrates very hard. Oh, daughter, you are the next leader in a long line of powerful leaders! Revel in our cavern mana until every doubt disappears, and the earth and all living creatures breathe freely again. The time is now. You are needed. Don’t delay. Learn to fly, my daughter! Come to me and rise into your purpose and light!”

Chapter One

Mahina Moemoea lay under the covers with a frown on her face, remembering the thunder and lightning that accompanied the urgent but loving words in her dream. Was it really the voice of her mother who spoke to her from the cave every night? Yes, she felt it really was, but she had no way of knowing for sure because her mom and dad had died when she was too little to remember them.

She had only Olina to comfort her in the morning when she woke from her dreams. She reached across her pillow to pet the cat’s soft black and white fur. “I love you, Olina. You’re my beautiful girl,” she whispered.

It was windy out, and she could hear her tutu downstairs making breakfast with the radio on, but the busy clattering of pans on the stove was nearly drowned out by the fierce gusts hitting the house.

In the dim light, Mahina looked sleepily out her second-story window and longed to be able to fly in reality as she flew most nights in her dreams. Even in this wind, she could imagine soaring over the pastures of her ohana's thousand-acre homestead with her long black hair streaming behind her. She smiled. Every day the utter beauty of her nightly flying made her heart flutter with excitement, but this morning's dream settled with a different feeling. Her smile faded, and she rubbed her eyes.

The house shuddered again. The wind was really very strong. Her frown deepened when she noticed the eucalyptus trees along the pasture fence bending wildly in the growing dawn. Yikes, the hurricane!

She rolled out of bed, sending Olina flying, and scurried to the bathroom remembering the scary weather reports on the radio last night. Scary, especially because her parents had perished in the last hurricane, a category two that blew in shortly after she was born thirteen years ago. She wished she knew more about how they died, but it was a family tragedy that Tutu never liked talking about.

She splashed water on her face. This hurricane, Byron, was even bigger, the radio had said, like so many around the world these days. It was a category five hurricane, one that had never hit the Island of Hawaii before. Most storms skirted to the south, she learned, and Tutu had said everyone was counting on that. But hurricanes were tracking farther north now due to the warming oceans, and being so big and strong, Byron had a worrying chance of hitting them. The weather announcer said it measured four hundred miles wide and was located only a few hundred miles east when Tutu turned the radio off with shaky fingers and told her to go to bed.

"Tutu! What's happening? Is this the hurricane?" Mahina said, descending the stairs to the bright kitchen. The power was still on.

“No, Granddaughter,” said Tutu, reaching her rough and wrinkled hand over the stove to turn down the radio. “Not yet. It’s still over the ocean, moving slowly.”

“Any news?”

“Other than it will probably hurt the ones least responsible for it, our people, rather than the mainlanders who caused it? No. They are still saying it will likely veer south.”

“No one called from school?” Out the kitchen window, she saw that the wind had died down for the moment, but it was starting to rain hard.

“The rich people’s school? They don’t care about storms and the ‘āina’s problems. It’s more important to them to teach the next generation to be as destructive as the last one, right?”

“Oh, Tutu. Po’okela is not like that at all. I love it there, and it’s not just because they let me be a freshman. The teachers love Hawaii, and they care deeply about the environment, especially Ms. Reynolds. No one makes fun of me there. They like smart kids no matter how young they are.”

“Hmph,” said Tutu. “Well, you’ve got to go somewhere, unfortunately, and they did let you skip a grade and give you a full scholarship. Still, it’d be mo’ better if you could just stay on the ranch with me every day. You have the Moemoea Ohana’s size and strength, and I could use more of your help around here. But that’s against the law nowadays, even though it would be the best thing for you.” Tutu sighed. “Go get started on your chores so you won’t be late for the bus. Wear your raincoat and boots. I’ll have your breakfast and lunch made for you when you’re pau.”