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Kuokoa June 27, 1863

THE LEGEND OF MAUI  
(Ka Mo'olelo o Maui)

TRANSLATED BY MARY PUKUI

Maui was the son of Hina and Malo, that is, Ka'anomalo. The place (he lived) was at Kipahulu, here on Maui. It was on the beach. Malo was not the name of Hina's real husband, but he was just a person she met when she went to scrape sea weeds. The name of Hina's real husband was Akalana. Hina and Akalana <sup>(already)</sup> had three sons who were named Maui-mua, Maui-hope and Maui-ki'iki'i. Maui-akalana was the hero of this tale we are hearing about. This was how that Maui was conceived.

Hina made tapas in a cave under a precipice called Oheo. There she remained to beat tapa and having a longing for sea weeds she grasped the the stick she used at the beach, a shallow dish and a beach bag and went. This was the very first time the chiefess went herself for sea weeds. Whenever she had a longing for sea weeds, her attendants went to get them. That was the custom but now she longed for sea weeds and went herself. As she went along the beach she did not go where the sea weeds were numerous or at a place that was near. She went right on to a place called Keanomalo. When she arrived there, she peered over and saw a red malo (loin cloth) lying there. She went down, picked it up and draped it over her skirt. Then she fell into a deep sleep. There she remained until afternoon and when she awoke she saw that the sun was moving westward. She arose but did not have the thing she longed for, sea weeds, ere she fell asleep. Her attendants came to seek her and found her going home. They asked her, "Where have you been all day?" Hina told them what had happened, as we had described it before, and Akalana replied, "We shall have a lord." They

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remained until the child was born and named Maui-akalana. They reared him until he grew up. Their food was uncooked, and their food were fruits ripened in the earth. There was no fire then to cook their food and there was no means of cooking taro, sweet potato, yam, ti root and other things that Akalana could get.

Maui asked Hina, "What can be used to cook our food?" His mother replied, "Fire is the thing that is used for cooking." "Who has the fire?" inquired Maui. His mother answered again, "The mud-hens have the fire." Then her son declared, "I shall go and fetch the fire." She said, "Are you strong? You must be very strong and swift, then can you obtain fire." "Yes," replied Maui.

Then Hina instructed him just what to do, "If you are going to fetch fire, you must not go to any of the birds except the smallest. It is the smallest of the mud-hens." Then he started off to get fire. He went to Wai'anae on O'ahu. The mud-hen's fire was lighted when he arrived but only the large mud-hens were there. They said, "Say, the red-headed mud-hen's food is done for here is Hina's swift son." The reason for their talking this way was that Maui had often pursued them and they knew how fast he was. When he tried to snatch the fire, they picked up everything, fire, bananas, ashes, wood and all and flew away. He was left disappointed. This occurred again and again until he found the smallest bird starting a fire and laying bananas on it. Maui grasped wood, bananas and bird and held them fast. He bent down to strangle the bird because he was angry with it for withholding the fire. The bird said, "Say, don't kill me or you will not obtain fire." He asked, "Then give me some." The bird re-

plied, "Then go and rub a taro stalk, there will you obtain it." He went to rub it and not a spark was found. Thus did the taro stalk become furrowed as we see it to this day. Maui begged again, "Give me some fire. If you do not, I shall kill you. You will find no escape." The bird answered again, "Go fetch a ti leaf." Maui fetched a ti leaf and rubbed it but it did not light. The furrow made by Maui's rubbing remains (to this day). Maui went back to kill the bird and it replied as it did before. It told Maui to rub water (wai). This was a riddle and did not refer to real water (wai) but to the tree called Waimea. He went to rub the water but obtained no fire. He returned and gave the bird a beating. Then it said, "Go fetch the wood of that tree standing there, the waimea." He rubbed it and fire was lighted. He burned the forehead of the bird with it and that is why the foreheads of the mudhens we see are red. Thus fire was gotten for us to this day.

After Maui obtained fire he told his mother about it. She answered, "Where is the help from you? You may think that I am doing well with my work. I beat my tapa but before even the pieces can be welded the sun has set. Weeks and months go by before a tapa is ready to trim. When it is put out to dry it does not dry at all before the sun sets. It is thus all the time and the only thing that helps in drying a tapa is to light a fire." The youth, Maui, replied, "Would it not be well if I went to cut off the sun's legs?" His mother asked, "Are you strong enough?" He said, "Yes, I am strong." Hina asked, "What have you that will conquer the sun?" He answered, "My own strength will prevent his escaping me." Hina agreed, "Go then but here are some things that will hold the sun for you." Hina gave him fifteen sennit ropes and told him, "This is not the

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only thing you will need. Go to your ancestress and she has the other things that you'll need to conquer the sun. She will give you explicit directions, for it is she who feeds the sun. The name of the ancestress is Wiliwili-puha (Hollow-wiliwili tree). When you come to the large, growing wiliwili tree, you will find your ancestress there. The name of the house where the sun is fed is Hale-a-ka-la." Hina instructed him carefully, "Wait until the first cock crow, then the second and the third. Watch until a large old woman comes out. That is your ancestress. She will start a fire and put some bananas on it. Reach down and steal the hand of bananas. When she sniffs this way and that and then sniffs upward and ask the question, "Whose mischievous one are you?" Tell her, "Yours?" If she asks again, "Mine by whom?" Answer, "Yours by Hina." The mother taught him all he was to do and then he started off to Kaupo. From a place directly above Nu'u, Maui ascended to the place Hina pointed out to him.

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He sat at the foot of the wiliwili tree until the first cock crow and the second and third. The name of the crowing rooster was Ka'auhelemaoa. When it crowed for the third time he peered and saw an old woman creeping along to cook bananas for the sun. She lighted a fire and placed a hand of bananas on it. Maui stole the hand of bananas. When the old woman reached to turn it over she found them gone and grunted, "Humph! Where did the bananas of my sun go to?" The old woman was blind and that was why she had not caught him stealing. She went to fetch another hand of bananas to roast and again it was taken. This happened again and again to the old woman's bananas. The old woman

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thought to herself, "This must be the work of a mischief maker." She sniffed this way and that and then upward. She asked, "Whose mischievous one are you?" Maui answered, "Yours." "Mine by whom?" she questioned. "Yours by Hina," replied Maui. Then he leaped down and sat in the old woman's lap. She asked, "What purpose brings you here?" He answered, "I have come to conquer the sun because it goes too fast and the tapas that Hina makes have no time to dry. Therefore I have come to conquer it." Then the old woman gave him a stone and a single sennit rope. When put with the others he had sixteen in all. The stone made the seventeenth article and that was to be used in conquering the sun. The day had begun to dawn and the sun was hungry for bananas. The old woman instructed him what to do, "Stay at the foot of this tree and when the first ray appears snare it with a sennit rope and tie it to the tree. Do that until all of the ropes are used. Then take the stone and use it for the body of the sun."

She stopped instructing the youth who went to dig a pit at the foot of the tree. He sat in it and he wasn't there long when the first leg of the sun appeared. He snared it fast with a sennit rope and so he continued with the second leg until fifteen were tied fast. The other leg <sup>was</sup> worked below and he waited for it to come up. It kept struggling below and then as it came up he snared it fast. <sup>the</sup> The sun saw that <sup>he</sup> had bound all of its legs it began to fall back. He tied the legs fast to the trunk of the tree and it was unable to retreat. It was tied fast. The body came up and he grasped the stone at once and raised it threateningly, then put it down again. The sun said, "Spare me." Maui answered, "Why should you be spared for you are unkind. You shall not be spared by me." "No

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spare me," pleaded the sun and they made an agreement between them. After that they talked <sup>about the matter</sup> when the sun should hasten, and agreed that for six months it might go fast and for six months, it was to go slowly. It was agreeable to both. That is why the sun remains long in the summers and for a short time in the winters, and mankind is benefitted thereby.

This was another of Maui's deeds in his youth after he had snared the sun and had obtained fire. He used to follow his brothers when they went fishing and sat at the stern. His brothers were angered and said, "Why do you persist on filling up the canoe?" He answered, "How can I fill it when I have a small body?" His brothers replied again, "You can see that the canoe, the <sup>only</sup> old means of getting out to sea, is very small." They took him and threw him overboard. He waited until they were ready to go again and persisted in wanting to sail to sea with them. Maui was vexed because all the fish his brothers brought back were sharks. He chanted for no reason at all, "If I were to sail to sea, the great ulua fish, Pimoe, will take my bait." Because he said that his brothers took him on board when they sailed again. They went to the fishing ground frequented by kahala fish. It was named Po'o, and is located directly outside of Kipahulu. The land mark is Ka-iwi-o-Pele, a place in Hana. After they had let down their stone anchor, he tossed in his fish hook, named Manaiakalani. His brothers also let down their hook and said, "Let the ulua grope for it," meaning, let the fish take the hook. Maui replied, "Let the shark grope." Thus did they do on the canoe. It was just as he said for a shark kept taking their hook until a fish took his. He chanted, "The ulua has groped." His brothers exclaimed together "A sharked has groped." He denied this, "No, an ulua has groped because I have let down my hook, Manaiakalani. The great ulua fish, Pimoe, has taken it and

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there it is struggling to cling to the sea floor." He said to his older brothers again, "There is nothing we can do but to cut your line and let the fish pull us along." They consented and cut their line. The ulua pulled them swiftly along. It pulled out his line until it was "restrained by a gourd," that is, the line had all given out. The fish towed them swiftly for two days before it came up to the surface. He said to his brothers, "This is the thing to do, if you would listen to what I have to say. You paddle our canoe and none of you look behind you. I shall pull in the line with the fish. If you look back the fish will break away." The brothers agreed and paddled the canoe while he pulled in the fish. It was almost at the back of the canoe when the brother at the stern turned to look. The line broke at once and the fish disappeared. The canoe and fish were widely separated. The breaking away of the fish was the reason the islands remained separated.

Perhaps there are more (about Maui) left but I am putting an end right here.

With gratitude, I remain,

Puaaloa.

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