

✧ PROLOGUE ✧

Stanford University
March 24, 1905

At precisely one o'clock, the great university bell tolled. Eight student athletes approached the casket and draped it with the Stanford University ensign.

The students braced the casket against their shoulders and shuffled their feet to align their step and, in a slow, deliberate cadence, carried Mrs. Stanford's body to the waiting hearse.

Solemnly, they slid the casket into the hearse. Wood grated on steel.

The carriage master brushed the rim of his top hat. The students stepped back, and an honor guard of professors flanked the carriage. The sleeves of their robes billowed in the rain-misted wind.

The horses, shrouded in black hoods, shivered their heads and jingled their reins. The carriage master snapped his whip and the cortege began. It wound down the south valley toward Memorial Church.

Hundreds of mourners took up the somber walk. As they walked, the university bell tolled one deep stroke for each minute of their one-hour journey. Over six thousand bade her farewell—students, servants, clergy and politicians, captains of industry and impoverished faculty. They crammed the chapel and spilled into the quadrangle. Some huddled in

grief, some sobbed openly. Few of them dared ask, "Who could have done such a thing?"

But the statement of the Stanford University Board of Trustees was firm: "Jane Lathrop Stanford, our Founder and Mother, died of natural causes."

Murder would not be considered.

✧ CHAPTER ONE ✧

Waikiki

February 14, 1905

Hattie Lehua pulled a manila folder from a cubbyhole in her desk. It was labeled "Assistant to the Head of Housekeeping." She slid the position description out of the folder and reread the first requirement to apply. "Five years' experience in bookkeeping." She underlined the words twice.

She tore a sheet from a ledger and listed her experience yet one more time. No matter how hard she tried, it totaled three and a half years. She circled the numbers, bearing down on the pencil so hard she snapped the point.

Hattie had outstanding references. Her business teacher from Kamehameha School for Girls said she was "intelligent and loyal." Headmistress Brown wrote that she was "a girl of high moral standard, reliable, with unlimited potential."

What she needed was a letter from an accountant. But the only accountant she knew was her Uncle Makia, and he was an officer in the court of the deposed Queen Lili'uokalani. Hattie was afraid to admit knowing him because Mr. St. Clair might suspect she was a Royalist sympathizer.

Mr. William St. Clair, The Palms Hotel manager, had arrived in Hawai'i during "the troubled times."

He was at 'Iolani Palace when the kingdom's flag was lowered and the Stars and Stripes were raised—the day the Hawaiians wept and U.S. Marines stood guard.

The night of "the Uprising," St. Clair was having dinner at a friend's home near Thomas Square. He was close enough to hear the gunshots, and he watched from the window as the wounded were carried away.

Mr. St. Clair believed everything the Annexation Committee told him, including the rumor that Queen Lili'uokalani had ordered all traitors to be beheaded. They warned him about Royalist spies infiltrating hotels; they suggested he sleep with a loaded pistol.

No, Hattie thought, she couldn't list her uncle as a reference. She was scribbling "Who else?" when Mrs. Martin knocked on the door.

"Hattie?" Mrs. Martin was the head of house-keeping. St. Clair had hired her from the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco.

Hattie quickly shoved the folder back in a cubby. "Yes, ma'am."

Mrs. Martin cradled account ledgers in her arms. "I've been going over these entries all morning." She set the ledgers on Hattie's desk. "We spent eight dollars for new towels last month. It must be the laundry workers. They must be stealing them."

Hattie offered no defense. First of all, she knew it was useless, and secondly, she knew it could be true. Laundry workers were the lowest paid of all hotel employees.

"We had an average of twenty-six guests per day last month, and we bought sixteen towels." She

jabbed at the number. "They've got to be stealing."

Hattie began, "We lost ten . . ."

Mrs. Martin held up her hand. "Please, not that story again."

Hattie had already told Mrs. Martin that Elijah Benning and his O'ahu College friends stole ten towels and two surfboards from the cabanas last month. But, they were O'ahu College boys, and the Bennings were regulars at The Palms for dinner.

"I'll speak to the laundry mistress," Hattie said.

"Mr. St. Clair wants the December books closed—today of all days. We have eleven guests from the Steamship *Korea*, and, so far, Mr. Heuish wants to be moved to a corner room, Miss Moore is suffering from seasickness, and the Stanford party hasn't arrived yet. We'll be burning the night oil tonight, Hattie."

On Boat Days, Mrs. Martin and Hattie worked long into the night.

"Bring your accounts to the front verandah. We'll work out there while we wait for Mrs. Stanford." Mrs. Martin paused at the door. Her voice softened. "You're my best girl, Hattie. I hope you know that. You'd make a fine assistant if Mr. St. Clair can be convinced of performance over experience. But it won't be easy to persuade him." Her voice warned Hattie against hope.

"Yes, ma'am."

"But we can try."

Hattie never believed she had a chance at the position, even though, at twenty years old, she was the youngest bookkeeper The Palms Hotel had ever appointed. Mrs. Martin hired her as a clerk one week after her graduation in June of 1902. Within a year,

she was promoted to bookkeeper.

"I'll be on the verandah shortly."

Hattie collected the ledgers and grabbed a few extra pencils. On her way out, she checked herself in the mirror and smiled. "Hattie Lehua, assistant to the head of housekeeping."

Hattie had a wide smile, her lips were full, her nose slightly flared. Her eyes were keenly black, and her ears had a cup to them that her mother said was "to capture the sounds of the ocean." Hattie's mother was full Hawaiian, descended from the Pahanui line. Her father was German. He was an engineer who had worked in Lahaina for three years then returned to his wife and children in Europe.

Hattie locked her office door and made her way through the lobby. On Boat Days, the lobby was crisscrossed with bellboys wheeling dollies stacked with trunks. Maids scurried to deliver welcome baskets of mango and papaya, and newly registered guests sipped pineapple tea from crystal tumblers. As she walked through the lobby, Hattie caught snatches of their conversations. A gentleman in a blue blazer discussed the war in Manchuria. As he spoke, the woman on the settee across from him questioned why the United States should become involved in foreign matters.

"I've told you repeatedly." His voice was forceful. "The Japanese attacked Port Arthur. It was a sneak attack. There was no honor in it at all!"

The woman took a long draw of her cigarette. Her emerald ring caught the sunlight. "I still don't think it's any of our concern." She flicked cigarette ashes into the brass tray.

Hattie studied how the woman moved only

from her waist, how she crossed her legs at her ankles, how she looked directly at the gentleman.

The woman caught Hattie's eye. She lifted her empty glass and shook it. The ice cubes clinked. "More tea would be wonderful."

Hattie forced a smile and told the woman she would get a hostess, but the woman shoved the glass into Hattie's hand. "A bit more sugar this time."

Hattie juggled the ledgers, took the tumbler, and headed to the dining room where she spotted her cousin Koa. He was leaning against a column; his arms were crossed.

Koa Lyons was the desk clerk in charge of safe-deposit boxes. On Boat Days, he wore a white shirt and white trousers with a red cummerbund tied at the waist. Koa was grinning. "A bit more sugar this time," he whispered as Hattie came closer.

"Do me a favor, Koa, would you get the tea?"

"And what do I get for doing it for you?"

Hattie had no patience with Koa's nonsense. "Never mind." She started to walk away.

"Just kidding, cousin." He took the tumbler from her. "And I'll make sure it's extra sweet." He winked.

Hattie went out to the front verandah and set out the ledgers on a white wicker table. She settled in and looked over at the guests in their rocking chairs.

The Palms Hotel opened in 1901. It was dubbed the Grand Lady of Waikīkī and quickly became the resort of choice for European royalty and new-money Americans. The building was painted all white—the front verandah, the ocean-side *lānai*, the rooftop garden, even the cupola from where the American flag flew. Only the ceiling of the front verandah was light blue due to the stubbornness of

Hawaiian painters who claimed blue would discourage bees from making nests.

The architect raged. "The ceiling must be white to reflect light into the crevices of the columns."

The painters painted it blue.

There were ten columns at the entrance of The Palms—Corinthian columns carved by Portuguese craftsmen and erected by Japanese laborers. There were six columns on the front verandah, and four flanked the porte cochere.

Mrs. Martin arrived on the porch with Koa following right after her. "Make sure you do everything precisely according to hotel policy. I want you to reserve three safe-deposit boxes for Mrs. Stanford. And, Hattie . . ." Mrs. Martin pointed at her. "I need you to make a copy of Mrs. Stanford's safe-deposit inventory. Schedule a clerk from First National Bank to witness an inventory match and have a second hotel employee present."

Koa said, "We didn't do this much for Miss Roosevelt."

"Miss Roosevelt didn't travel with \$75,000 worth of jewelry. According to Mr. St. Clair, Mrs. Stanford wears thousands of dollars of jewels each day, and she changes her jewelry daily. So, you can expect her secretary will be requesting access to the safe-deposit boxes often." Mrs. Martin sighed. "If it were up to me, I'd lock all her valuables in the bank."

Seventy-five thousand dollars was an inconceivable amount to Hattie. She knew that The Palms Hotel had cost \$140,000 to build and that a home in Nu'uanu was \$3,000, but they were amounts she couldn't fathom. A plantation worker made \$30 a month—that she could understand.

"And Koa," Mrs. Martin added. "Check to see if there's a message from the Stanford party."

Koa gave a slight bow. "It will be my absolute pleasure."

Mrs. Martin smiled. "Someday that charm of yours will be your undoing."

Koa was *hapa haole*, like Hattie—half-white, half-Hawaiian. His mother was Hawaiian; his father had been an American stevedore who died of mosquito fever.

"Now back to the books." Mrs. Martin swiveled the ledgers toward herself and began the accounts reconciliation. Mrs. Martin called out a date and Hattie called out the expenditures and occupancy.

Hattie's accounts were precise. Her books always balanced. The December records reconciled. It took almost an hour with all the interruptions from maids, messages from Mr. St. Clair, and Koa's report that the hotel had not heard from the Stanford party.

The two women continued to work. The trade winds died down and the air was still—unusual for a winter day. Sweat crept down Hattie's spine. Perspiration prickled her face. She looked over at Mrs. Martin. Despite the fact that Mrs. Martin was wearing a gray cotton dress, high collared and long sleeved, she showed no sign of discomfort. Her face wasn't flushed. Hattie thought it was a plain face, like the portraits of early missionaries' wives.

"The only conclusion to this inventory discrepancy is that the laundry workers are stealing." Mrs. Martin sat back.

Hattie didn't protest.

Mrs. Martin unclasped her watch brooch and pulled it out to check the time. It was two o'clock. "Mrs. Stanford should have been here hours ago."



On February 21, 1905, the SS *Korea* limped into Honolulu Harbor after having been battered by southwest gales for seven days. Her rails were bent and her hull splintered, and she sat heavy with munitions of war. Weighted down by seventy cannons, three hundred rifles, and two hundred pounds of nitrate, she ran aground in the harbor and was marooned on the Honolulu Lighthouse shoal.

From the beginning, it was a difficult crossing. The steamship's departure was delayed for two days by San Francisco's fog. Her captain was replaced, her engineer fell ill, and on her first night in open water a bale of wire broke loose and shattered a dining salon window.

On board the *Korea* were Lieutenant General and Mrs. Douglas MacArthur, Captain and Mrs. "Black Jack" Pershing, and Mrs. Jane Lathrop Stanford. The army officers were off to observe the Russian-Japanese war in Manchuria. Senator Stanford's widow was en route to Japan for an extended vacation.

The captain ordered the *Korea's* propellers reversed. Her engines whined, water churned, and passengers lined the deck. They watched as each attempt failed to free the ship.

Mrs. Stanford gripped the rail, white knuckled. She turned to her companion, Miss Benson. "This is a sign of things to come."

Miss Benson didn't respond. She stared at the foaming ocean.

"The trip was ill advised."

"It will be a fine trip." Miss Benson's voice was flat.

"I should have never left San Francisco."

The ship jolted and Mrs. Stanford staggered. But before Miss Benson could assist her mistress, Mrs. Stanford regained her balance.

At seventy-six years old, Mrs. Stanford was an imposing woman in both size and demeanor. Her voice had the resonance of an Episcopal bishop, and her carriage was commanding. She was a tall woman at five feet six, and she weighed at least 250 pounds, although she listed herself on the passenger manifest at a mere 160.

"This evening we will be at The Palms dining under the stars." Benson patted the matron's hand.

Mrs. Stanford withdrew her hand. Her face was set, her jaw tight. "This was never meant to be."

"Come, let's go for a stroll." Miss Benson reached for Mrs. Stanford's parasol, which was leaning against the rail. It was black silk with a mahogany handle that thickened toward the spokes since it was not a parasol at all, but a well-disguised cane. "Come." She put her arm around Mrs. Stanford.

"I'm afraid." Mrs. Stanford's breathing became rapid.

"It's all right."

"It's a sign." Mrs. Stanford's hands trembled. "Leland Jr. told me he was going to send me a sign. He visited me last night."

"It was just a dream."

"I should be with him."

"He's with his father," she soothed.

Mrs. Stanford's mouth was drawn downward. Miss Benson gently tucked a strand of Mrs. Stanford's hair back into her upsweep.

Mrs. Stanford's dreams of her late husband and son were becoming more frequent. And it was Miss Benson whom she called out to in the middle of the night, and it was Miss Benson who went to her mistress' room, wiped her forehead with cool towels, and sat with her until she returned to sleep. Recently, the dreams were becoming more grisly. There were recurring nightmares about Leland Jr. being swept away in a mob of thieves; in another, he was a crucified Christ.

Leland Stanford Jr. was the only child of Senator and Mrs. Stanford. He died of typhoid fever in Florence, Italy, at fifteen, tended to by his mother and the Sisters of the Holy Spirit. Nine years later, in 1893, Mrs. Stanford buried her husband. He, too, was reaching to her from beyond the grave. In her dreams, the senator screamed out her name as he was being burned in a circle of fire, or grasped for her hand as he was drowned. But the most horrific of her visions was about herself—a fantasy in which a butler served her own grilled heart to her, thinly sliced on a silver platter.

And each time Mrs. Stanford called for Miss Benson in the middle of the night, Benson's control over the old woman tightened, and Mrs. Stanford's dependency on Benson deepened.

Gertrude Benson joined Mrs. Stanford in 1882, first as a bookkeeper, then as a companion. She sat next to Mrs. Stanford during Leland Jr.'s wake; she rode with her on the train when Senator Stanford's body was taken across the country. She accompanied her to university meetings, was privy to the Stanford finances, and traveled with her to Europe, Egypt, India, and Australia. The house servants, the univer-

sity board of trustees, attorneys, art dealers, and every dress shop owner who had ever fashioned a gown for Mrs. Stanford recognized Benson's power.

"Think of all the Stanford men and women who are waiting to see you. It will be a grand alumni dinner . . . and dear Dr. Townsend will be delighted to see you."

The ship pitched forward. Benson put her arm around Mrs. Stanford's waist. There was a grinding of gears and smoke spewed from the stern. There was a second jolt, and the *Korea* was free. The ship's captain announced that they would dock in fifteen minutes.

The *Korea* made her way through the harbor, threading through steamers, sampans, whalers, and fishing boats of every condition. It was noon when she finally docked at Alakea Wharf. Over the loudspeaker, the captain welcomed his passengers to Hawai'i. The dock was jammed with waiting family, police, press, and a gaggle of military officers. The Royal Hawaiian Band played "My Waikiki Home." *Lei* sellers, with garlands of jasmine and plumeria hanging from their arms, lifted their hands to passengers who threw pennies in the harbor to half-naked native boys, who dove to retrieve the coins.

Miss Benson turned to Mae McCauley, Mrs. Stanford's personal maid. "Get the day bag," she ordered.

Mae McCauley was sitting at the edge of a rattan deck chair. She was folded forward with her head in her lap. Her red hair closed around her like a curtain. Mae looked up. "Yes, ma'am." Her freckled complexion was tinged green.

For seven of the eight days at sea, Mae had been curled in her bed, clutching a chamber pot to her

chest. As Mae got up, Mrs. Stanford said, "No. Not yet." Mrs. Stanford stood fast. "Not until every one of them is gone."

Miss Benson motioned Mae to sit down.

Mrs. Stanford stayed at the rail. She watched as Charles Dole, Mr. and Mrs. Andrade, Jenny Cooke, and Edward Rice disembarked. She cringed when the reporters pressed forward and aimed their cameras at Hawai'i's returning elite.

When Lieutenant General and Mrs. Douglas MacArthur appeared on the Korea's deck, the army officers let out a cheer and a chorus of "On, Brave Army Team." They drowned out the Royal Hawaiian Band. Reporters broke through the line; they surged the gangway. The police couldn't keep order.

"Look at them," Mrs. Stanford clucked.

Then Captain and Mrs. Pershing descended and a second cheer went up, and the officers let loose a rendition of "Here Comes the Bride" that was more spirited than on key.

"The press is making fools of them," Mrs. Stanford sniped.

"The Pershings seem to be enjoying it," Miss Benson said.

"They're being made into an amusement."

"We can all use a bit of amusement these days."

"The press will never have its day with me. Never."

The first-class passengers were followed by those in mid-class, then those in steerage. The docks cleared. The press had dispersed, the *lei* sellers had long gone, and the band packed up its instruments. Only the drayers were left—the drayers, the steve-

dores, and the waiting Thompson carriage sent by The Palms Hotel.

"Now," Mrs. Stanford ordered, and she took one grand step that set both Miss Benson and Mae McCauley in motion.

Captain Evans took Mrs. Stanford's hand and slightly bowed. "It was our pleasure to serve you, madam."

Mrs. Stanford acknowledged him with a nod of her head.

The captain snapped his fingers at a steward, who presented Mrs. Stanford with a bouquet of white roses. It was the bouquet given to her by Mrs. Gloss in San Francisco.

Miss Benson accepted the flowers, nestling them against her burgundy dress.

Mrs. Stanford was first down the gangway. She leaned heavily on her parasol, limping, but undaunted. She was wearing a navy cutaway suit that fell broadly across her hips and shoulders. The collar and cuffs were satin, and the skirt was sewn in nine gored panels.

Mrs. Stanford took her first steps on the dock. Miss Benson followed behind her. Last was Mae McCauley burdened down with the day bags and a brocade satchel.

At the corner of the wharf, a young blonde man, looking no more than eighteen, stood with one foot resting on a piling. He leaned forward with his elbow on his knee. A Brownie camera dangled from his wrist. He watched the Stanford party make their way down the gangway and across the dock toward the waiting Thompson carriage. He seemed

to be measuring their gait, as if he were calculating an attack.

"Mrs. Stanford." The young man stepped directly in her path. "I've heard you've come to Hawai'i under duress."

She was taken aback.

"It's been said you were poisoned . . ."

Mrs. Stanford reached behind for her companion. "Benson!"

"Get away!" Benson shoved him.

". . . in San Francisco," the reporter persisted.

"I do not speak to the press!" Mrs. Stanford shook.

He slid his camera off his wrist and aimed it at her. Mrs. Stanford covered her face. Then, from behind the reporter, a man swatted the camera from his hand—it crashed on the dock.

The man grabbed the reporter's lapels and twisted them around his fists. "There is no story here."

"There is a story." He sounded like a recalcitrant child. "And I'm going to get it." Then he wriggled himself free from the man's grasp.

The reporter looked frail in comparison to the man.

"Not while I'm around," said the man.

The reporter bent down to get his camera. As he stood up, he snapped a photo of Mrs. Stanford and ran.

The man ran after him. The reporter got to his bike, straddled it, and pedaled across the dock.

The man ran after him. "Stop him!"

The stevedores barely took notice.

"Stop him!"

The reporter was riding off his seat, hunched over his handlebars. He was just to the street when

the bike hit a patch of oil. The bike crashed, and the reporter was pinned underneath it.

The man caught up; he reached down and slid the camera off the handlebars.

"That's my camera!" The reporter scrambled to his feet.

The man opened the back of the camera and ripped the film from its barrel.

"You can't do that." The reporter's hands were scraped. His trousers were ripped.

"I just did." The man pushed the camera into the reporter's chest. "No picture and no story. Not while I'm around. Got it?"

The reporter didn't answer.

"Got it?" he repeated, louder.

"Got it." The reporter grunted and righted his bike, muttering, "But you can't be with her all the time."

As the reporter pedaled off, the man yelled out, "What's your name?"

"Charlie Banks." He rode away with his jacket tails flapping in the breeze.

The man shook his head. "Feisty kid." He banged the dirt off his straw skimmer and dusted off his trousers as he walked back to Mrs. Stanford.

He extended his hand. "Allow me to introduce myself. My name is Ted Cutler. I'm an accounts manager for Western Pacific Lumber. I was on the *Korea* with you."

"I am in your debt, Mr. Cutler." Mrs. Stanford turned. "May I introduce my secretary, Miss Benson?"

Cutler took Miss Benson's hand. "Pleased to meet you." He held his eyes to hers a moment longer than a gentleman should.

"Mr. Cutler." She nodded as if he were an inferior.

He returned her disdain with a smile.

Gertrude Benson was an attractive woman. She had a slim figure, her features were finely chiseled, and, despite the fact she fervently denied wearing any powder, her cheeks were always dusted with the slightest blush of rouge.

A uniformed agent from the Department of Agriculture interrupted. "Excuse me, ma'am." He made a feeble attempt at tipping his hat. "Those flowers aren't allowed into the territory." He jutted his chin toward the bouquet of roses.

Miss Benson raised her eyebrows.

"I've got to take them." The agent reached for the bouquet; Miss Benson tightened her grip.

"It's illegal to take roses into the territory." He sounded apologetic.

"The flowers belong to Mrs. Stanford." Miss Benson cocked her head. "Do you know who Mrs. Stanford is?"

"I do," he said. "She's been in the papers all week. But the roses are still illegal."

Once again, Mr. Cutler stepped forward. He put his arm around the agent and turned away from Miss Benson. The two men talked as they walked toward the Department of Agriculture buggy. They exchanged words, patted each other on the back, and glanced back at Miss Benson. The agent smirked. Mr. Cutler nodded. Then they both chuckled, and Mr. Cutler dug deep into his pocket. He pulled out his money clip and then shook the agent's hand.

The agent turned to Miss Benson, tipped his cap, then laid the bouquet in the front seat of his rig rather than tossing it on the pile of confiscated fruit and flowers.

When Ted Cutler returned to the Stanford party, he took Mrs. Stanford's arm and escorted her toward the waiting Thompson carriage. "My dear lady, I wouldn't be surprised if those roses were delivered to you before dinner."

"I am again in your debt."

Miss Benson bristled as Mr. Cutler assisted Mrs. Stanford into the buggy. And when he offered his arm to Benson, she summarily refused, taking the steps of the carriage briskly.

"I think you missed your call in life, Mr. Cutler," Mrs. Stanford remarked.

"How is that, madam?"

"I think you would make a brilliant bodyguard."

"Perhaps." Then he extended his hand to Mae McCauley, who feigned a smile and tottered into the backseat and hugged her belly.

"Mr. Cutler, may I offer you a ride for your efforts?" Mrs. Stanford asked.

He answered that he was staying at The Palms.

"As am I."

Mr. Cutler hopped in the back with Mae.

"We shall be stopping at the cable office en route," Mrs. Stanford announced.

"Now?" Miss Benson asked.

"Now, Miss Benson." At times Mrs. Stanford could be as formidable as she was frail.

"To what purpose?" Benson's eyebrows furrowed.

"To cable Dr. Ambrose." Mrs. Stanford smoothed the folds of her skirt.

"I'm sure Dr. Ambrose assumes we have arrived safely."

Mrs. Stanford took in a deep breath. Her nose flared slightly. She lifted her chin and faced forward.

She was not an attractive woman when she was angry. At her best, her features were blunt, her eyes protruded, and her mouth all but disappeared into a wrinkled, taut line.

"To the telegraph office," Mrs. Stanford ordered the driver.

Gertrude Benson straightened her back. She tugged on her gloves—handmade, French-ribbed silk gloves. She pushed each digit deep into the fabric, then made a fist of each hand.

A few minutes later, Mrs. Stanford commented to no one in particular, "I read Dr. Ambrose's report on faculty salaries during our crossing." She still faced forward, not directing herself to Miss Benson. "I need to cable my remarks to him." Statements like these were the closest she ever came to offering explanations to Miss Benson, or anyone else.

Mr. Cutler perked up. "President Ambrose of Stanford University?"

"The same," Mrs. Stanford answered.

"I'm a great fan of Stanford's football club." Mr. Cutler scooted forward on his seat. When he did, Mae McCauley pulled her skirt away from him.

Mrs. Stanford's smile dropped. "Yes, football was Dr. Ambrose's venture." Her disapproval was audible.

"My cousin hoped to win an athletic scholarship to the university," Mr. Cutler said.

"All of our students are on scholarship—for academic merit." Mrs. Stanford's tone sharpened. "The senator and I have not, nor will we ever, impose tuition on our students."

Mr. Cutler slid back in his seat. He seemed bewildered. Senator Stanford died in 1893.

Mr. Cutler was quiet for the rest of the trip to the cable office. And while Mrs. Stanford and Miss Benson were in the office, Mr. Cutler and Mae McCauley waited in the carriage. Cutler pivoted his head, reconnoitering the area, as watchful as a soldier in battle. And when Mrs. Stanford emerged, her dark mood was broken. She asked Mr. Cutler if this was his first trip to the islands.

"It is. But, unfortunately, it's just a stop off for me. I'm on my way to Japan for business."

"I believe we were meant to make an acquaintance, sir, since we, too, are going to Japan."

Miss Benson huffed. "How fortunate for us."

Mrs. Stanford glared at her and all conversation ceased.