



J.C.

TWO LONOS

**A one-act play by Jean Charlot
based on a creative interpretation of the
death in Hawaii of Captain Cook.
Working from original Hawaiian sources,
Charlot's characterization
differs somewhat from the figure that
emerges in the usual English versions.
Two Lonos was written first in
Hawaiian, then translated into English.**

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CAST

MOAPU, a fisherman.	KALOLA, his wife.
MOHO, a pig-farmer.	KA'ILIKI'I, a young priest.
KAUAKAPIKI, a laborer.	KOA, a priest.
KU'OHU, a kahuna.	KE'O'O, a high priest.
KALANIOPU'U, King of Hawaii.	CAPTAIN COOK.
KIWALAO, his son.	PHILLIPS, lieutenant of marines.
KAMEHAMEHA, his nephew.	People, guards, attendants, runner.

SCENE 1. *The People.* Waimea, Island of Kauai. January 25, 1778.

SCENE 2. *The Chiefs.* Wailuaki, Island of Maui. November 30, 1778.

SCENE 3. *The Wise Men.* Kaawaloa, Island of Hawaii. February 14, 1779.

SCENE 1

The People. Island of Kauai. January 25, 1778. Waimea beach at night. CAPTAIN COOK'S ships have left the day before. Foreground, a crowd seen from the back, men squatting in a semi-circle around an open fire. Facing them, standing on a slight elevation, the successive storytellers.

Set apart, a group of girls. They share between them a small square mirror and take turns looking into it, making faces at it, arranging their hairdos. The girls pay only occasional attention to what else goes on. The first storyteller is MOAPU, an old fisherman. Skin black, hair white. A net thrown over his shoulder trails behind him.

MOAPU:

The moon had risen. This strange thing sailed by. About the length of a large war-canoe, but so very much taller! First its prow passed me by, pointed like the spear-sharp nose of the

swordfish. Cords hung loose from it, like seaweed clings to driftwood. The hull came into sight, pocked with holes, square ones, with shiny things half-seen in the dark, round ones lighted like *hukui* lamps. Looking up, I saw on top the great canoe a fabulous sight, a whole forest slid from the uplands into the ocean, tree trunks branching out, aerial roots hanging from their very tops, and wind-filled *tapa* sheets, shrouds or sails, shaped like giant sting-rays. As the great thing passed me by, the last I saw of it was its high rear, flat like the snout of the hammerhead shark. I let out a yell, dropped most of my gear and all of my catch. Paddled faster than I had ever, to the beach and safety.

(Moapu wipes the sweat off his forehead, gathers his net, sits himself among the heavers. MOHO, a pig-farmer, replaces him. A grey loincloth.)

MOHO:

Next morning at sunup, I paddled close to the thally, bringing a piglet for barter. They signalled for me to climb aboard. So I did. It stank of staleness. Maybe that very same canoe our ancestors glimpsed far-off at sea, seen once every other generation.

Their faces and hands were white. Dark blue and flabby their skin. Their features bony. Heads horned like the moon. And their speech sheer gibberish. One of the crew loosened its outer skin. I saw another skin underneath, the color and texture of bleached *tapa* cloth. Even their feet were made of black hide outside and lined inside with white hide.

(Acts his words.)

They hoard treasure in their insides. Stuffed in a hole that runs deep through their body. They thrust their whole hand into it, and out comes the hardware, things that make noise, beads, nose-blowers, iron things, and every other kind of stuff.

From their puny looks, if they were ghosts at all, I'd say they are ghosts of women.

(Discreet giggles from the girls, unnoticed by the hearers.)

I broke in a cold sweat. I jumped overboard, leaving my piglet to its fate.

(Takes an iron nail out of a fold of his malo. Holds it up for all to see.)

They threw that iron thing down into my canoe. No more barter for me!

(Moho replaces the nail inside his malo, joins the others. KAUKAPIKI, a laborer, replaces him. Malo and simple tapa cape. Holds a short length of sugar cane.)

KAUKAPIKI:

The strangers are not ghosts and they are not women. I should know. I worked for them. Thin and hungry they were. Must have come a long way from a land of famine to fill up their bellies in this land of plenty!

Like the plover bird! It flies in from who knows where, so weak that its thin legs double under it at landing. It eats, and eats, and eats. When it flies back to that same whatchamacallit it came from, it is so fat it can hardly take off! I was at hand when the strangers beached the small boat and walked inland for water. I

helped fill and roll on board the foreign water gourds. Larger by far than our largest.

(Sits down, legs extended. Holds sugar cane horizontally with both hands as if manning oars. Action matches words.)

When they paddle, they fold in two so that their chin touches their knees. Next, they heave backwards, with their head smack in the lap of the rower back of them. What a sight! Every one of them stretched out, belly up, like babes at the breast. One, two. One, two.

(Spectators swing with the motion. Laughter.)

When the boat nears the ship with its load of fresh water, round faces fill up the round holes cut in that bulging hull. I came to know each. I gave them nicknames. There, Greasy-Snout, and here Take-a-Peek, and the Peeping-One, and Snoopy. Two fellows there were on top ship, with long tubes in their eyes.

(Handles the sugar cane as if it were a telescope.)

By day, they scan the horizon. By night, they scan the stars. Long-Eyes and Roving-Eyes I call them. None of these fellows were ghosts. They ate too much. And none were women. Ask your women. They know!

(Heads turn towards the women. A pause. The one now busy primping her hair in front of the mirror stops. Speaks in a matter-of-fact voice.)

WOMAN:

Sure, they are men, and no doubt! Still, when they are made love to, should one of us try as much as a nail scratch or a friendly bite, the fellow screeches like an owl!

(Shrugs her shoulders. Resumes her primping.

Now Kauakapiki takes off his cape. He wraps it around his buttocks and along his legs, winds a tapa strip about his head, pirate-fashion. Puts the sugar cane in his mouth, puffs on it as on a pipe. Then sticks the stem at his side, between hip and malo, as a sword. He struts about, unsheathes the stem, brandishes it.)

KAUKAPIKI:

Thus speaks the foreigner:

(Syllables pronounced with an exaggerated English accent.)

Hikapalale, hikapalale, hioluai, oa laki, wala-walaki, walawalaki, poha, aloha kahiki, aloha haehae, aloha ka wahine, aloha ke keiki, aloha ka hale.

(Hearers rhythmically clap their appreciation. Kauakapiki hastily joins the audience as KU'OHU, a kahuna, comes out of the dark into the light of the open fire. Ku'ohu is robed in white, with head and shoulder leis, both of maile leaves. Holds a fly whisk. All bow from the waist. At a motion of the priest's hand, not unlike a blessing, all straighten up at ease. Soon, the women shall join the men, in rapt attention.)

KU'OHU:

Each one of you describes what he saw, and does so truthfully enough. You, Moapu, the fisherman, slimy with fish gut. *(Moapu makes himself small.)* You, Moho, the pig-farmer, coated with muck. *(Moho, same reaction.)* And you, Kauakapiki, the laborer, a funny man stinking of sweat. *(Kauakapiki, same reaction.)* Truth is, the three of you are blockheads. You noticed little and understood even less than you saw. I, Ku'ohu, the priest, was sent on board ship by our high chief, Ka'eo. To neutralize if possible what lethal taboos still clung to its great bulk. I offered a swine for a sacrifice. I girded with crimson *tapa* the loins and shoulders of chiefly Pakuke, whose ship it is. I prayed long and loud, swiftly and in depth. Had I failed to do so, you three garrulous storytellers would be quite silent today. In fact, stone-dead. For it is within our priestly prerogatives to propitiate daemons and godlings and, as far as is permissible, gods.

Here is the true story, the whole story. Indeed, our ancestors all heard of the great ship that forever plies its rounds far beyond our horizon. They never saw its hull, but, at times, would glimpse its full-blown *makahiki* sails silhouetted against the setting sun. And they understood the ship's mission.

Long ago, far away, the ancestors of our ancestors lived on some large island anchored infinitely farther at sea than the farthest of the many Kahikis our storytellers chant about. One day, these men and their women took to sea, headed this way. On their trek, fathers and sons were born, lived and died in their canoes at sea. Never reaching land in their lifetime, knowing only the sea and the stars.

But even this barren right of way, they had to wrench it away from the beasts and monsters

whose realm it always had been. True, man left to himself may best the biggest of beasts. In proof, is not whale ivory an ornament at the neck of the chiefs? But what may man hope to do, left to himself, face to face with these other beings, daemons or dragons, that dove into the ocean from outer space, or rose up from some netherworld? What of Kuilioloa, the sea hound that devours canoes and their human cargo as so many mollusks? What of Kahonunui-maeloku, the so-called Black Turtle? It sleeps on the unfathomable muds that coat the ocean's bottom. When hungry, it rises and floats as quietly as any island. Canoes beach themselves on its gently sloping slimy shell. Then it dives back to its blue-black home, sinks the canoes and tears to shreds their crews. What of Kaniu-kahiki, the Daemon Coconut? It stretches its elastic loins between islands, and sheds its innards as so many sea eggs that scatter with the currents to hatch in time more monsters.

Gods are needed to protect men from such. What you mistook for a ghost ship is in truth our heavenly guardian, appointed by Lono himself to shield us from the daemons of the deep.

Among you, there are some who climbed on board ship, and saw and held in their hands the giant pelt, larger by far than that of any dog on earth.

(Some heads nod in agreement.)

Is it not the hide of Kuilioloa, the mad salivating hound that infected our seven seas? The cannon balls you saw, piled up in the ship's belly, those are the seeds of Kaniu-kahiki, now barren forevermore! And what you commoners mistook for cordage and seaweeds are in fact the knotted, twisted, and spliced bowels of Black Turtle, its hard shell cracked open by a single gust of flame spewed out of Fire-Bamboo! How many among our people have longed to see this great canoe, our divine watchman of the seas! How they longed to see it, this devourer of dragons! Yet they failed to see it and died. Rejoice that it did happen at last, and in our lifetime, right here and now, in our very own Kauai!

Hail, O Lono!
ALL HEARERS:

(Deeply moved.)

Hail, O Lono!

SCENE 2

The Chiefs. *Island of Maui. November 30, 1778.*
Wailuaki, the encampment of the chiefs of Hawaii,
soon after the battle of Hamakualoa, fought against
Kahekili, King of Maui.

Strwn about, war paraphernalia, spears, helmets,
feather capes and cloaks. Framing the scene, two up-
right war gods, cylindrical bodies swaddled in crimson
tapa cloth, topped by masks of red feather mosaic,
with inlays of shell and dog teeth.

Throughout the scene, spearmen walk their rounds in
the background. Foreground, three chiefs, informally
clad, red malos and black tapa capes. Seated on a
rock, KALANIOPU'U, King of Hawaii. A very old
man, emaciated, soft-spoken, with innate authority.
Kneeling, head in his father's lap, his son and heir,
KIWALAO, an elegant weakling. On the other side,
also kneeling, his sturdy young nephew, KAMEHA-
MEHA.

KALANIOPU'U:

TOMORROW we re-embark and sail for our Ha-
wail. Another campaign is over. A few more
battles fought. Kahekili is bound to give up
some day. As before him did Kamehamehanui,
my once beloved brother-in-law. This war, it
started over twenty years ago. I am not certain
I remember what started it. We fought on Ha-
wail. We fought on Maui. Oahu was involved.
Molokai and Lanai. Even Niuhau and Ka'ula!
We fought the world over! I am not a young
warrior anymore, but to be an old warrior is
better than to be a dead warrior, as is now
Kamehamehanui.

(A pause.)

Young roosters, you are not paying attention.
All you can think of today is that huge foreign
canoe, anchored off-shore.

KAMEHAMEHA:

Uncle, I want to visit once more the foreign
ship!

KALANIOPU'U:

Of course. The young take to the new. Not so
the aged. Our Hawaii has seen such sights be-
fore. They come and go, these foreigners.
Being a foolish old king, fond of hulas, and
chants, and puppet plays, I know their stories
by heart. And their stories are history. Three
centuries ago, our great king, Liloa, was swad-
dled at death in foreign *tapa* cloth, like the

one our present visitors gave to chief Ka'eo,
on Kauai. And the priests swear that a set of
iron spearheads are hid inside that mortuary
bundle.

In the reign of Keali'ikaloa, son of Umi, son
of that very same Liloa, another visitation. A
great foreign canoe broke on the reefs close by
our Kealakekua. All men drowned but one,
by name Kanaloa. Washed ashore, he remained
prostrated on the beach the whole day, from
sunup to sundown, mumbling in his own
tongue. Was it fear of thanksgiving, who knows?
So long did he remain prostrated on that spot
that it is still named after him, Kulou, Prostra-
tion. He stayed, of course, and mated, and sired
blond ones.

Others came and went. More colorful than the
rather drab lot that today stands offshore.
Canopied hull, they say, and varicolored sails.
Chiefs cloaked in white and yellow, a giant
feather stuck in their broadbrimmed headgear.
These came this far in search of some yellow
metal, with the same idiot zest with which you
boys lust for iron. Not one ounce of what they
sought was to be had, so they went away. Leav-
ing behind them a very long dagger. For two
centuries now, some sort of a metal sickness
has eaten into its blade, but what remains is
still held awesome, and treasured by the priests.

KAMEHAMEHA:

Uncle, I want to visit once more the foreign
ship, and this time I want to stay on board
overnight.

KALANIOPU'U:

Overnight? To sleep, or to spy when the for-
eigners sleep? To guess at the weight of the
treasure of iron it contains. Check if a whole
army, twenty canoe-loads, could hide in that
single hull. And pry open the foreign weapons
to find out what it is in them that deals death.
You are bold enough, nephew, to try and bribe
some of the crew: its woodcarvers, ropemaker,
sailmakers, nailmakers, paddlers, and handlers
of fire-bamboos. Should they desert ship and
serve you, all of our islands could become
yours. You are an ambitious lad, my Kame-
hameha.

(Fondles Kiwalao's shoulders.)

You'll outlive me, nephew. And my son, my
beloved, my lei, my Kiwalao, may find himself

landless after I am gone. A wiser ruler would have you killed, nephew. Would that my son possessed half of that same inner drive that makes you crave for the fabulous cache of metal and power that oozes from every plank of that foreign canoe.

KIWALAO:

(Raises head. Spoken whiningly.)

Father, let cousin have his wish. Let him stay on board ship overnight.

KALANIOPU'U:

I get your point, son. Should your cousin sleep on board, should that ship sail away in the dark as stealthily as at night it anchored, tomorrow Kamehameha would head straight for a land of no return—Uli'uli, Melemele, Keokeo, whichever. And our dynastic problem would be solved. Answers are seldom that simple. Nephew may have his wish and stay on board overnight. But he will be returned safely in the morning. Despite his foreign swagger, Chief Pakuke truly is a high chief. And I trust him.

(Kiwalao sighs.)

For you, youngsters, Pakuke's visit colors the future. For me it reeks of death. More ships will follow these as chicks follow the hen. Tomorrow, our chiefs will display panoplies of fire-bamboos, and kill men a mile away at will. Old ways give way to new ways. I have seen the last of old Hawaii.

KAMEHAMEHA:

Then tell us, how was it in your days, uncle?

KALANIOPU'U:

In my youth, war was not a matter for craftiness and calculation. It was a sport, and the noblest of all, the one with the highest stakes. Its rules were exacting. Etiquette was rated over victory. It was the duty of the chief to be hospitable to his would-be conquerors. To help beach their war-canoes at landing, and feed the enemy hordes between slaughters. In battle, etiquette was punctilious. These were musts; dares and taunts and double-dares, and endless genealogies flaunted to and fro before the fighting could even begin.

You young men look to fire-sticks for an easy way out! In my youth, any weapon was base that could slay without equal danger to its owner. The one enemy it was licit to kill without warning was rats, with bow and arrow. Bows

and arrows can just as handily kill men, but etiquette forbade. It was proper to kill one at arm's length. Bare hands were rated the noblest weapon of all, because the most heroic.

KAMEHAMEHA:

Yours were great days, uncle. Tell us again what happened in the battle you fought against Alapa'inui, in Hawaii!

(Kiwalao gets up and languidly exits. A pause, as Kalaniopu'u watches him go.)

KALANIOPU'U:

As son Kiwalao silently suggests, both of you know my story by heart.

KAMEHAMEHA:

For me, then.

KALANIOPU'U:

For you, then. It happened at Kualoa. In the thick of battle, I slipped on the smooth lava bed. Two of Alapa'i's champions rushed me. I held both at arm's length, off the ground, and crushed their bones without need of a weapon. I was an expert at *lua*, then. The art of breaking bones with one's bare hands. Few practice the craft nowadays. But here too, etiquette was a must. I composed a chant, that noon, strutting, somewhat as the cock crows, over the still warm corpses of my would-be killers.

(Clears his throat.)

The point of it is: both were adolescents, twins in beauty and twins in death.

(Chants in a quivering voice.)

Glorious shines the sun over Halali'i!

Weaned in vain on the waters of Kane, these two.

The warmth of noon fails to open the fallen *lehua* buds.

Twins, why sleep when the sun is at its zenith? Could you not have waited until dusk?

Glorious shines the sun over Halali'i!

(Spoken)

A bit of a brag, maybe, as befitted my youth. Nowadays, though, the way wars are fought, one would think that poetry and war have nothing in common. We knew better. We understood how these three shall forever remain inextricably spliced: War, Poetry, and Death.

KAMEHAMEHA:

Thank you, uncle, for telling me that story again. May I prove worthy of you!

KALANIOPU'U:

(Rises. Kamehameha rises.)

If you are to visit Pakuke tonight, it is time to robe yourself at your very best.

(Claps hands. Guards enter. They tie a whale's tooth necklace at Kamehameha's neck, put a short cape over his shoulders.)

Rather use my longest cloak, youngster, even though you don't rate it as yet. To project an image is important.

(The short cape is replaced by a long feather cloak. Then the helmet is carefully fitted on. Kamehameha is given a very long spear. He strikes a martial pose. Kalaniopu'u gives his nephew the critical eye.)

That should make them envious. They have nothing as beautiful, these foreigners, neither the body nor the cloak!

(Exit Kamehameha and guards. Kalaniopu'u calls after him.)

And don't you dare barter that cloak for iron daggers, or even a newfangled fire-bamboo. Remember! It's mine!

(A toothless laugh.)

SCENE 3

The Wise Men. *Island of Hawaii. February 14, 1779. Kalaniopu'u's enclosure at Kaualoa. Stage right, his sleeping hut. It is early morning. Seated on a mat, the king sips awa from a coconut cup proffered by an attendant. Sharing the mat, seated slightly behind the king, a woman passed middle age, KALOLA, his favorite wife. Enter three kahunas. KA'ILIKI'I, a young man. The middle aged KOA, with bushy hair and beard. KE'O'O, the high priest, old and bald. All three are draped in white. Ka'iliki'i and Koa wear leis of maile leaves on head and shoulders. Ke'o'o wears also the head-lei, but with a crimson tapa strip thrown over his shoulders. An attendant follows, draped in gray. He carries a knotted tapa bundle, a shallow wooden bowl, and a short bamboo container. KALANIOPU'U signals for the priests to be seated. They do so. The attendant puts down his bundle, kneels in the background. The king's own men discreetly exit.*

KALANIOPU'U:

Priests from the temple of Hikiau, Ke'o'o, Koa and Ka'iliki'i, I called you because my mind is ill at ease. You know that my faith in priests never was as intense as my faith in gods. Once, when I deemed it political to do so, I unhesitatingly baked one of your calling in the royal

oven, and baked him alive. Ka'akau was his name. But that is past history. One mellow . . . I also believe in omens, those inarticulate mumbblings used by the gods to advise men.

(Turns towards Kalola with tenderness.)

Of late, my wife and I, we have been troubled with omens. Dreams dreamed. Signs observed. Auguries detected. It all points to the coming of an overpowering dreadfulness. Mind you, this time, I am not pressing you professionals for the usual outpouring of soothing pap. No! I ask you to search in good faith for a clue to the meaning, if any, of those unbearable nightmares. Proceed!

(Ka'iliki'i detaches himself from the others, kneels facing the king. Attendant lays before him the wooden bowl. The young priest moves the bowl from side to side as attendant pours in a thin trickle of sand. Priest looks fixedly into the bowl. A pause.)

KA'ILIKI'I:

(Sing-song voice, high-pitched.)

A messenger, Lono from the heavens.

A stranger, Lono from a faraway land.

(Empties the bowl by turning it upside down. Resumes his former place. Attendant retrieves the bowl.)

KALANIOPU'U:

(A shrug.)

Not very enlightening. A silly ditty, presumably borrowed from those that children hum at their games.

(Koa takes the place vacated by Ka'iliki'i.)

KOA:

A most holy text indeed, one we believe to have been revealed rather than composed. It dates from the reign of Ku'ali'i. To disregard it would prove unwise. To disdain it could be dangerous. Generations of priests, in the quiet of the temple precincts, have pondered over this divine ditty. As yet, none has reached its innermost substance. The coming of the foreigners sheds new light on its meaning. Perhaps, alas, too late!

(Koa turns towards Ka'iliki'i.)

KA'ILIKI'I:

(Sing-song, as before.)

A messenger, Lono from the heavens.

A stranger, Lono from a faraway land.

KOA:

A messenger. A foreigner. Both Lonos. Identical

and yet dissimilar. One a man. One a god. So many saw the foreign ships. On Kauai. On Maui, and now on our Hawaii. Masts higher than any temple tower, crews more like ghosts than men. It was natural for commoners to believe that Lono had returned. Country priests, hardly more versed in the mysteries, elaborated on the rustic version. In their lore, Lono the foreigner became Lono the messenger, descended from heaven.

(Turns towards Ka'iliki'i.)

KA'ILIKI'I:

(As before.)

A messenger, Lono from the heavens.

A stranger, Lono from a faraway land.

KOA:

Pakuke is, of course, Lono the foreigner. We, wise men, knew it. And you, King, you knew it. Our common guilt has been to keep the pretence alive. It seemed, somehow, political. The king was seen speaking mouth to mouth with the god. We priests could display for the faithful a live god instead of a wooden image. We sinned against the spirit, and today the backlash of our guilt is upon us. Lono the messenger, the true one, is angered. No king or priest could shield himself from his wrath. Unless . . .

KALANIOPU'U:

Unless?

KOA:

Unless a sacrificial victim be found commensurate with the enormity of the guilt.

KALANIOPU'U:

Would the corpse of an old king, displayed on the altar, pacify the gods?

(From behind, Kalola embraces him, puts her hand over his mouth. He gently pushes it aside.)

KOA:

For this once, even the body of a king is not enough.

(Koa resumes his former place, replaced by the high priest, Ke'o'o.)

KE'O'O:

To soothe the gods, one must sacrifice a god!

KALANIOPU'U:

And where may one find such a good-natured god?

KE'O'O:

Lono the foreigner, a practical man, was quick to take advantage of his assumed godhood. Com-

moners freely gave him of their taro, breadfruit and hogs. Chiefs brought helmets, cloaks and feathered staffs. On Kauai, the High Chiefess Kamakahahelei gave Pakuke for wife her one daughter, beauteous Lelemahaolani.

Our guilt compounded your guilt. We anointed his head with sacred oil, draped his shoulders in crimson *tapa*, hoisted him on top of the temple tower. Pakuke accepted it all. A dangerous game, to play at being god. Unknown to himself, Lono the foreigner partook of the godhood of that other Lono, Lono the messenger. Truly a god's revenge. Man into god!

KALANIOPU'U:

Dare you suggest then that Pakuke should be slain, and his body exposed on the altar?

(Priests maintain a stony silence.)

Our kingly hospitality is involved and, to put it bluntly, friendship. I love Pakuke, even though his manners be overbearing, his clothing absurd, and his language hardly better than the grunt of a hog. Loving him, I refuse.

KE'O'O:

Nothing having been asked, what is there to refuse?

(Signals to attendant, who comes forward, unties the tapa bundle. Iron daggers clatter to the ground at the king's feet.)

The foreigners, our guests, wrecked the temple enclosure and burned its sacred wood. When I objected, they threw these things at me. As a barter, they said. Daggers in the temple! An abomination!

(Kalaniopu'u takes a dagger, tries its edge over a finger tip.)

KALANIOPU'U:

Iron daggers, harder than the hardest, sharper than the sharpest.

KE'O'O:

You are welcome to keep them. In return, may we ask of you a favor. Should Lono happen to die, see to it that his body be brought to the temple. And leave the rest to us.

KALANIOPU'U:

No harm in saying yes. Friend Lono is healthy and strong. And tomorrow he sails away! Obviously, ancient one, you and I are meant to die before him!

(Dismisses priests and attendant with a gesture. They rise, back towards exit.)

I to sleep.

(Helped by Kalola, the king exits, entering the

low door of his sleeping house. Two spearmen enter, stand guard at the door. Kalola squats alone on the royal mat.)

KE'O'O:

(To Ka'iliki'i.)

You stay. When this so-called Lono, Pakuke, appears, pray! The litany of oblation.

(Gives Ka'iliki'i the strip of crimson tapa cloth.

Exits with Koa and attendant.)

(Turmoil offstage. Enter a RUNNER, followed by a cluster of angry men.)

RUNNER:

(To guards.)

I must see the king.

(Guards cross their spears over the door, to signify entrance is taboo.)

Chief Kalimu has been murdered. For no reason. The foreigners fired at him from the ship while he was paddling across the bay.

(Ominous voices from within the mob. Some seize the daggers lying on the ground, slip them at their hip, inside the malo. A pause. A crescendo of voices off-stage.)

VOICES:

(Off-stage.)

Lono has landed!

Lono is on his way!

O, Lono!

O, Lono!

(Enter CAPTAIN COOK and PHILLIPS, young lieutenant of marines. Both are in full dress uniform, black ribbon at their powdered perriquet, three-cornered hat, brass buckles at their shoes. Cook has a sword at his side, holds a double-barrelled gun. Phillips is unarmed. Both shall speak with a highly mannered English accent, to contrast with the plain speaking of the other actors. The people readily make way, giving them free passage.)

PHILLIPS:

Begging pardon, sir. Is it not a bit of a foolhardy thing just to walk in and kidnap their king?

CAPTAIN COOK:

Not a bit, Mister Phillips. A trifle naive, rather, these natives. To them, by gad, I am God!

(Emphatic gesture to guards at door.)

Fetch me your king!

(Guards exit, entering the hut. Ka'iliki'i intones a mumbled litany, close to Cook's ear, tapa strip extended over the palms of both hands.)

KA'ILIKI'I:

O Lono, yours are the long clouds, the short clouds, the dark clouds, the red clouds, the clustered clouds. From Uli'uli, Melemele, Keokeo, Ulunui, Ha'eha'e, Omao'ku'ululu, when Laka of Lalohana. . .

CAPTAIN COOK:

(To priest.)

Why do you shut up!

(To Phillips.)

Mister Phillips, would you be so kind as to get in there and drag the old man out, or we'll never get done.

(Bending low, Phillips enters the hut. Ka'iliki'i continues unperturbed.)

KA'ILIKI'I:

. . . from Hakau'ai, the lower heavens, the higher heavens, from the upper regions, from the lower regions, the Kahiki of the West and the Kahiki of the East . . .

(Phillips emerges, holding the king, half-dazed with sleep, by the hand. Kalaniopu'u stops, takes in the scene, notes the empty tapa sheet that held the daggers. Kalola goes to him. The old couple embraces.)

KALOLA:

Then, the omens . . .

KALANIOPU'U:

(A gesture of helplessness.)

They concerned him, not us. At dusk, I shall return from the temple.

CAPTAIN COOK:

(Prying away the king from his wife.)

To the ship!

(The crowd kneels respectfully as the old king exits, a prisoner between Cook and Phillips. Then daggers are thrust out. All exit, leaving on stage only Ka'iliki'i. Center stage, the priest raises heavenwards the tapa strip extended over both palms. Words are now clearly articulated.)

KA'ILIKI'I:

Here is an offering, a gift. In exchange, grant life to the chief, life to our children until they reach the land of light . . .

(Offstage, close by, drowning the rest of his prayer, two gun shots. Shouts. A rolling volley of musketry. Turmoil. Ka'iliki'i remains standing in the liturgical posture, still mumbling, tapa strip raised to heaven.)

CURTAIN