

Naupaka

1. **O 'oe ku'u lei o Naupaka** *Oh, you are my lei, Naupaka*
Ke onaona a ke aloha *Encircling my heart, my love*
Hau'oli mau, kāua i nā pua la onaona *Each blossom within this lei adds to
happiness*
A pili mau loa ke aloha *With closeness that is binding, my love.*
He pua no 'oe *Your lips are the petals*
Ho'opa'a 'ia e ke kehau *Heaven kissed with the dew*
Kou maka palupalu *Your eyes are the raindrops*
Mau momi alohilohi *That sparkle just like a gem*
2. **Maliu mai e ku'u pua** *Oh come to me my precious flower,*
Na'u e inu i kou nani *Let me know your beauty*
Pūlama a mālama o Naupaka *To cherish and fondle, Naupaka*

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The Legend

Naupaka was a lovely ali'i wahine (princess) who lived near the beach in her family compound, surrounded by her loving caretakers. She had taken notice of a handsome young kanaka (commoner) who periodically walked past her compound on his way from his mountain home to the beach below. He was exceedingly handsome and from time to time their eyes would meet. As time went by she worked up the courage to speak to him, and thereafter she would look forward to his passing by with mounting expectation. A love began to develop between the two of them.

Back then, Hawaiian tradition strictly forbade those of royal blood to marry people from common decent. However Naupaka's father loved her very much, and had never denied her any request she had ever made of him. She decided to ask her father's permission to marry the handsome young kanaka. She told her father of her love for the young man and ask for his permission to break the kapu that separated the two of them. The father responded with sadness saying that it was not within his power to grant such an exception. He advised them to take a long journey to a faraway *heiau* (sacred place), where they should pray and ask the kahuna (high priest) for guidance.

Naupaka and Kau (the young man) traveled together for days, over the mountains and through the forests. When they arrived at the temple – exhausted but filled with hope – the young couple told their story. The priest shook his head and explained that he could not help them. The Hawaiian gods must decide. Soon the sky darkened and a storm arrived. This was a sign from the gods disapproving their relationship; the young couple knew what they had to do.

Naupaka took the white flower in her hair and tore it in half. She placed one half in Kau's hand and told him to return to the mountains. She would live a lonely life by the seashore. From that day to this one half of a flower blooms by the beach, it's white petals facing downward, in the mountains grows another plant with it's petals facing upward. It is said that when the flower from the mountain (*Naupaka Kuahiwi*) joins the seashore Naupaka (*Naupaka Kahakai*), both Hawaiian lovers are together once again. *A half of the Naupaka flower tells us hearts have been broken.*

Naupaka typically grow up to 10 feet tall and six to 15 feet wide. The plant has small clusters of small white flowers with light purple streaks. You may see them on almost every island. On Oahu, they can be found along the ocean.

