



### LEGEND OF THE NAUPAKA PLANT

Long long ago, in the days when all naupaka had complete flowers, there was a beautiful Hawaiian princess known as Naupaka. One day, the villagers noticed that Naupaka looked sad. They approached her and asked what was troubling her. “I am in love with a man named Kauai, replied the princess. But Kauai is not of noble birth – he is a commoner and I am not allowed to marry anyone beneath my royal status.”

Naupaka and Kauai traveled long and far, hiding in order to be together, and seeking a solution to their dilemma. They climbed up a mountain to see a kahuna who was known to be very wise and powerful. He had no clear answer for the young lovers. “There is nothing I can do, he told them, but you should pray at this heiau.”

They prayed to the gods and suddenly rain began to fall. They took the rain as a sign, and their hearts torn by sorrow, Naupaka and Kauai embraced for a final time. Then Naupaka took a flower, tore it in half and gave one half to Kauai. “Our parents and even the gods don’t want us to be together, she said. You go live down by the water, while I will stay in the high forest.”

The gods took pity on the lovers and turned them each into a plant with half-flowers, one the beach naupaka and the other the mountain naupaka. The very next day the plants began to bloom in only half-flowers. The lovers and the flowers were no longer whole.

If you find a naupaka plant with a whole flower, we can rejoice – it means the lovers finally got together.