

Lehua Mamo

Lyrics by Kalikolihau Hannahs

Music by Kellen Paik

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Hiehie ka lehua mamo
Pupua i ke Kanilehua

The yellow lehua blossom is superb
Blossoming forth in the Kanilehua rain

‘Ōkū mai nā lihilihi
Kohu pohākalā

The petals protrude forth
Like beams of sunlight

Kilipohe ka pua ‘ano lani
‘Upu a’e ka ‘ano‘i ‘o loko

This heavenly flower is elegant
Stirring a desire within

Ona ‘ia mai e ka mamo
Hahani i ka maka lehua

Greatly desired by the Mamo bird
Gently grazing its petals

Hā‘ale‘ale i ka pu‘uwai
Me ke aloha no ka pua mamo

My heart is filled
With love for the yellow lehua blossom

Ha‘ina mai ku‘u wehi
Ka lehua ha‘aheo o ka wao

Here is my song of affection
Honoring the proud lehua of the forest

The yellow lehua blossom, the lehua mamo, is a beloved flower of Hawai‘i. Flowers seen in mele are often a representation of a person close to the haku mele’s heart and this song is no exception. This is a love song that likens the lehua mamo to the object of affection. The favorite flower of lyric author, Lihau Hannahs, the lehua mamo is not as commonly seen as the brilliant red lehua and perhaps because of its relative rarity, it is does not appear as frequently in mele. Lihau wanted to recognize this beautiful flower and to forever memorialize her affection for it in song. She worked with partner Kellen Paik to create a melody that captures the sweet and endearing feelings that the flower stirs within when it’s seen.