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Children of the Mists

Written by Lexa Dudley

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Children of the Mists

Lexa Dudley

*Children
of the Mists*



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To Kit
For all your continued patience and help.
Thank you.

To the Spirit of Sardinia.
Just as I feel I have it in my hold at last
I know, like the breeze, it has already passed.

Naschet su Sardu suggetu a milli cumandamentos.
The Sardinian is born subject to a thousand commands.

To all the Sardinian people, who have retained their
independence, and pride through their strong sense of identity
and attachment to their beloved land.
Who, although they have been occupied since Nuraghic times,
have managed to retain their language, and are devoted to their
traditions and customs that, throughout their history, have
resonated in their hearts and souls.
May it always be that way.

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To my doctor, who kindly gave me the medical information.

To Signore Giacomo Mura living in Ozieri.

To Cris Coe, who generously painted the cover for me.

And to all my friends who have encouraged me to write.

Thank you

Siamo Spagnoli, Africani, Fenici, Cartaginesi, Romani, Arabi,
Pisani, Bizantini, Piemontesi.

Siamo le ginestre d'oro giallo che spiovono sui sentieri rocciosi
come grandi lampade accese.

Siamo la solitudine selvaggia, il silenzio immenso e profondo, lo
splendore del cielo, il bianco fiore del cisto.

Siamo il regno ininterrotto del lentisco, delle onde che ruscellano
i graniti antichi, della rosa canina, del vento, dell'immensità del
mare.

Siamo una terra antica di lunghi silenzi, di orizzonti ampi e puri, di
piante fosche, di montagne bruciate dal sole e dalla vendetta.

Noi siamo sardi.

We are Spanish, Africans, Phoenicians, Carthaginians, Romans,
Arabs, Pisans, Byzantine, Piedmontese.

We are the golden yellow gorse on the rocky trails that droops as
large, lighted lamps.

We are the wild solitude, the vast and deep silence, the splendour
of the sky, the white flower of Cistus.

We are the uninterrupted reign of the mastic tree, the waves that
flow through the ancient granites, the reign of the rosehips, the
wind, the immensity of the sea.

We are an ancient land of long silences, and also of wide horizons,
of bleak plants, of mountains burned by the sun and revenge.

We are Sardinian.

Graize Deledda (Nuoro 27th Sept 1871 - Rome 15th Aug 1936)

INTRODUCTION

Sardinia is still the ‘Unknown Island’. It is a land of immense beauty with majestic mountains, magical, ancient places and stunning beaches.

A land of people that has been occupied since the Nuragic times. The coming of the Phoenicians changed their land forever, as the island came under someone else’s rules and taxes.

The people who came took everything: their wealth, their lands, timber, minerals and people for slaves. Through all they have remained true to their culture, believing that *Furat chi benit dae su mare*, those who come from the sea steal. The true Sards are not fishermen, but the ancient farmers, keepers of their languages and traditions, which they have held on to with tenacity through difficult, and sometimes life-threatening times.

In April 1395 Eleanora d’Aboera laid out the laws for the Sardinian people, called the *Carta de Logu*; a document well advanced for its time, giving women rights to own land and to reject a forced marriage. No one could negotiate the sale of a horse in front of the animal, nor could a saddled horse be sold to a stranger; and this reveals an understanding of the Sards, their love of horses, and their long-held superstitions.

My love for Sardinia started in 1972 when I first visited the island with my family. I was amazed to find how proud these people are of their heritage. On being asked a question about some place or ancient site, they took pleasure in explaining everything they knew about it, then passing me on to someone else for further information. In my books, Sardinia is a character in her own right, and her strengths and weaknesses are all portrayed.

My friends in Sardinia say I am a Sard, and to me that is the greatest compliment I could have. I find them curious, friendly and

loyal. If you make a friend of a Sard, then you have that friendship for life. Sardinia is the home of my soul. My love for the island and its people, is the reason I wrote *The Whispering Wind*, and this book, *Children of the Mists*, in the hope that others would find a little of what I have found and love about the island.

I have travelled all over Sardinia, taking whichever son happened to be interested at the time, or travelling on my own. I soon learnt that I had to pretend to be due to meet someone in another village as I was always offered food and drink. Although I spoke no Italian in those days, everyone made sure I had everything I needed. I have never felt threatened or afraid travelling on my own, or with my children. I knew there would be someone who would help me if I needed it; and I also learnt the Sards live more in the expectation of love, rather than death.

I have seen Sardinia change over the past forty-three years, as another invasion arrived in the form of the tourist. Many with just two weeks' holiday are content to sit on the beautiful beaches and take the sun, but those who can find time to travel the island will find themselves well rewarded.

Towns have grown; dirt roads have been concreted over, but the towns still hold on to their traditions and festivals. Their big Festas, like Sagra Sant' Efsio, Sartillia and Cavalcata Sard, are still held for themselves, although everyone is welcome.

I hold Sardinia in my heart, afraid for her future as the young have to find work elsewhere, and they do not transplant well. They are born in paradise – why would they ever want to leave?

Independence is something I feel would benefit the island. Her taxes could be used for the local people and not sent to the Continent to be distributed as if a colony, an outpost of Italy. Where the Italians put everything they don't want on the mainland, and still regard the Sards as shepherds and small-islanders.

There are one and a half million Sardinians living on an island the size of Wales, but there are three million sheep and goats. It is still an agricultural land. Wine is produced, and has greatly improved since the 1970s. The cheese production is the greatest

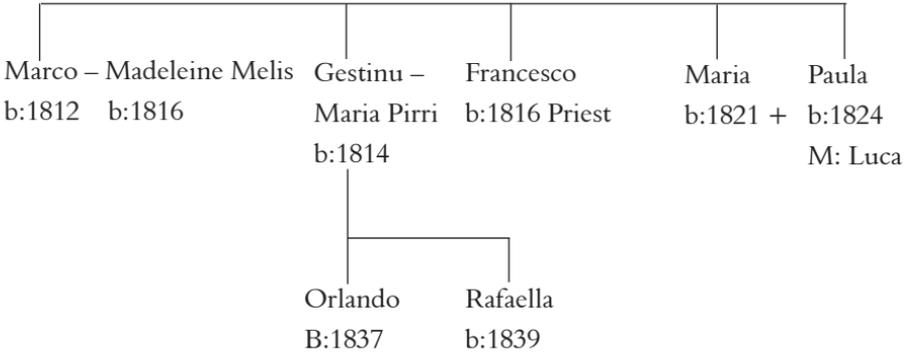
in all Italy. There *Pecorino Sardo*, also known as *Fiore Sardo*, was awarded Denominazione d'Origine in 1991 and granted protected designation of origin in 1996. They are still self-sufficient in the production of wheat, and their fruit and vegetables are second to none.

It is my fervent hope that there will be another Eleanora d'Aborea to take them forward into an independent island with a glowing future.

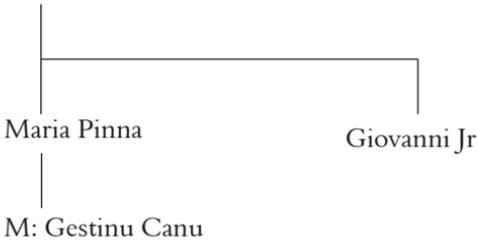
CANU FAMILY TREE

Carlo Canu – Teresa Matta

b:1791 b:1792



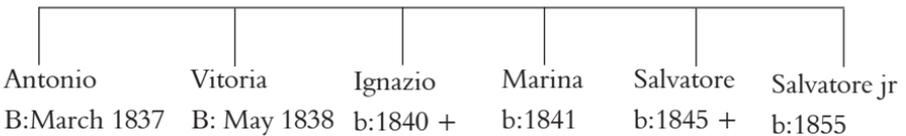
Giovanni Pinni – Maria



SANNA FAMILY TREE

Salvatore M: Gabriella Melloni

b:1816 b:1818



PROLOGUE

At Sos Lampidos classes finished early, as the midday heat became oppressive. Raffaella had spent the morning looking out of the window, lost in a world of her own. She thought about Antoneddu, who had gone to help his father with the sheep. She had pleaded with Zia Paola to let her go too, but her aunt had been adamant that she stay with her brother and Antoneddu's sisters and not miss the lessons.

Now free at last, Raffaella ran from the farmhouse, down the wide track to the lower meadows below. She reached an old olive tree, and hitching up her skirt, she climbed up into its branches.

From her vantage point, she was in time to see Antoneddu riding up the meadow toward her. She called and waved to him, and smiled to herself. He looked so handsome with his strong, broad shoulders, and although only a couple of years older than her, looked more than his fourteen years.

Seeing her, Antoneddu reined in his horse and, dismounted and stood under the tree.

'What on earth are you doing up there? If your brother could see you now, you'd be in big trouble,' he said, looking up at her and smiling.

'I am Christopher Columbus in the foc'sle of his great ship. We learnt about him today. Come up here with me, and I will tell you about him. Classes aren't the same without you. Everyone is so serious, and they don't ask interesting questions like you do. Please come up and join me,' she begged.

At that moment, a swirling breeze raced up the valley, catching the olive tree, taking Raffaella's headdress and blowing it out of her reach, where it flapped against a branch in the gaining wind. The darkening sky, heavy with storm clouds, came chasing up

behind the wind as the first large blobs of rain fell on the dry ground.

Raffaella made a grab for her headscarf, at the same time treading on another bough. A loud crack resounded as the branch gave way, and with a scream, she fell.

Antoneddu, who had watched her every move, caught her and held her in his strong arms. Her face was scratched and blood-smearred, as were her hands, making her look every inch the tomboy she was.

He smiled, and still holding the young slip of a girl, said with tenderness,

‘I’ve got you, Raffaella. I’ve got you; you know I’ll always keep you safe.’

PART ONE

CHAPTER ONE

Punta Néula, Sardinia Early April 1855

The Sanna family sat around the large, hand-hewn table. Their meal was ready, and the smell of the thick broth filled the room that served as both living room, and kitchen for the family.

Marina watched her father as he pulled her mother to one side and, leant forward over the fire to lift a heavy pot from its trivet, and carried it to the table, placing it in front of her.

Marina took the ladle to serve the broth, but the sound of barking from the dogs made her hesitate. Everyone strained their ears, trying to make out any unfamiliar noise above the increasing racket from the animals. In a moment, the barking stopped and faded to a muted whimper.

There came the sound of footsteps across the dust-baked yard; then scratching and clawing at the handle as someone tried to open the latch. Four pairs of eyes were riveted on the great wooden door. Salvatore leapt to his feet and, reaching up to the beam above where he sat, he took down his loaded shotgun from its hiding place. He signalled to his eldest daughter, Vitoria, to open the door and at the same time put his finger to his lips to make sure they all stayed quiet.

‘Salvatore, be careful for pity’s sake, it might be Antonio,’ whispered Gabriella, fearing their son may have returned from the plains with the sheep.

‘It’s not Antonio; all the dogs know him,’ growled Salvatore again, nodding to Vitoria, and at the same time waving his gun impatiently. Gabriella watched as her daughter pulled back the bar holding the latch. The door swung inward and a mud-splattered, blood-smearred young man fell to his knees on the old tiled floor. He clutched a wound in his right shoulder, and his face registered pain.

‘Holy Mother preserve us, it’s Cousin Gavinu!’ cried Marina, dropping the ladle back into the broth and making the sign of the cross as she pushed past her mother, falling to her knees beside the young man. ‘Oh, Gavinu, what has happened? It’s Marina. You’re all right now, and you are safe. Please, tell us what has happened!’ wailed the young girl.

Salvatore stood watching his youngest daughter, his gun still pointing at the intruder. Gabriella stepped forward, took the gun from her husband and placed it in the corner out of harm’s way.

‘Help him, quickly,’ she cried, trying to galvanise Salvatore into action. ‘He’s losing blood, hurry with some dressings.’

‘I’ll fetch them, Mamma,’ called Marina as she took a lamp and fled to the large anteroom where Gabriella kept all her salves and herbs and Salvatore had his wine vats.

Vitoria, meanwhile, closed and barred the door and helped her father move Gavinu to the fireside. She then hurried to the shuttered window and flung it open.

‘There’s a light from the top window at Sos Lampidos,’ she called to her father. ‘The Carabinieri must be there as someone has hung the warning lamp in the attic.’

‘Bring a lamp over here, Vitoria, I need some light,’ Gabriella called as she tried to look at the young man’s shoulder.

Vitoria did as asked; fetched a lantern from near the fire and held it up for her mother. Gavinu groaned as Gabriella gently but firmly pulled his shirt away from the wound.

Marina returned with a collection of salves and bandages and helped her mother by holding Gavinu’s wounded arm.

‘How did you get this, Gavinu?’ asked Gabriella in her soft manner.

‘The Carabinieri shot me, cousin. Ugo is dead.’ The young man sobbed. ‘They are after me. I gave them the slip at Sos Lampidos.’ He winced, drawing in air between his teeth from the pain as Gabriella cleaned the wound with vinegar. Marina gave his hand a comforting squeeze and smiled at him.

‘I saw Raffaella there,’ he continued. ‘She told me to cut down the ravine and double back at the ford. I set my horse free. The Carabinieri won’t find that crossing in the dark, so they will have to go upriver to the bridge, but they’ll be here soon. Please, cousin, please help me. I beg you to give me the shelter of your hospitality.’ He had a pitiful, pleading look in his eyes. Only a lad of sixteen, but the fearful look of a hunted animal added years to his young features.

Gabriella turned toward her daughter. ‘Vitoria, take the lamp and help your father.’

Vitoria took the lamp and hurried to the storeroom to make good the hiding place for their cousin, while Gabriella and Marina bound the wound and bandaged the arm close to Gavinu’s chest to stop any movement. Salvatore, returning from the storeroom, glanced towards Sos Lampidos and noticed the light had already been extinguished; meaning the Carabinieri had indeed left.

It had been a long-standing arrangement between the two families, the Cannas at Sos Lampidos, and the Sannas here at Punta Néula. A white light meant the arrival of the despised Carabinieri, while a red shade over the lamp meant they needed immediate help.

‘We shall have to hurry,’ said Salvatore as he listened for the sound of hoof-beats.

Gabriella finished the bandaging, and the two girls, with Salvatore, helped Gavinu into the storeroom and bundled him, without ceremony, into the family’s secret hiding place.

Gabriella looked around the main room to make sure everything was in order and, collecting the soiled bandages and swabs, she burnt them. There could be no possible trace of their visitor.

Vitoria put her lamp back on its hook by the fireplace, next to the one Marina had taken to the storeroom; another final check and they returned to the table to resume their meal. They again sat down at the table, but the distinct sound of hoof-beats could now be heard above the increased baying of the dogs. The pounding

hooves stopped, and a sharp command was given in Piedmontese. Loud oaths were followed by a repeated banging on the farm door as the visitors tried in vain to quieten the relentless barking from the dogs, and enter the relative safety of the house.

Gabriella watched as Salvatore rose from the table and walked to the door. He drew back the bar with the same slow deliberation, but the door was flung back against the wall with a deafening thud, throwing him off balance.

‘Call off your dogs,’ commanded the Captain holding his lantern high, the light catching his strong features.

Salvatore whistled to his hounds and called to them to go to their kennel.

‘Now, where is he?’ demanded the Captain. He stood large in the doorway. He came from the Continent, with his height and stature. The white cross-band of his distinctive uniform stood out in the dim light. The Captain took a step into the room. Marina noticed he carried not only his shotgun, but also a pair of pistols which were tucked into his broad leather belt.

‘We know he is here,’ continued the Captain, coming towards them and at last finding the courtesy to remove his red hackled hat, which he tucked under his left arm. His four subordinates followed their Captain into the room; they were older and also armed, and each one carried a lantern. They had a formidable appearance, with their dark bearded faces in striking contrast with their young Captain, who was clean-shaven except for his thin, waxed moustache; their features all picked out by their flickering lamps.

The Captain again stepped forward. ‘You are his cousins, and it is obvious you will shelter him,’ he snarled.

Salvatore turned to face the young intruder, and in his slow, deliberate way asked, ‘First, under whose authority do you come into my house, frightening my family? And second, for whom are you searching?’

‘We come, Pastore, under the authority of Savoy and the King of Sardinia,’ replied the Captain, with an arrogant note of contempt creeping into his voice.

‘But we have no dealings with the Piedmontese or the House of Savoy; I am a freeborn, land-owning Sard.’

‘Come, peasant, don’t waste my time,’ cut in the Captain as he replaced his hat on his head and put his lantern at his feet. He then raised his shotgun to Salvatore’s chest. ‘We are looking for your cousin, Gavinu Piddu. He is wanted for sheep-rustling and attempted murder.’

Marina gasped and put her hand to her mouth. The Captain turned and gave her a long, enquiring look.

‘I’ve not seen him for many months,’ replied Salvatore. ‘He came here in the autumn to help us round up our sheep, before my son drove them down to the plains of Chiliviana for their winter grazing. Let me see now – it would have been late October, early November. Gavinu was here for the feast of the dead, and talked with Antonio about going with him. It is a long walk to the plains and company is always welcome, and for all I know, he may well have gone with him for I have not seen him since...’

Salvatore’s words were drowned by the Captain’s orders to his men.

‘Search the place; leave nothing unturned. Do you understand?’

Two men, carrying their lanterns, came forward and were dispatched upstairs, while the remaining two were sent to the sheepfold.

‘Make sure nobody is hiding there. And don’t forget to prod all the straw well. Turn over the dung heap if necessary, remember these vermin crawl in anywhere,’ shouted the Captain, with a sharp note of sarcasm.

Marina watched the scene in silence, her heart beating fast, as she feared they would find Gavinu.

Salvatore walked across to the fireplace, reached up for his cigars from the box on the mantel and lit one, at the same time watching the Captain like a hawk. The Captain, for his part, stood clenching his fingers and grinding his teeth, making his moustache twitch from the pressure.

He placed his shotgun against the wall, picked up his lantern

and ambled into the dimly lit storeroom. He collected a mug, then eyeing the two large casks in front of him, helped himself to the contents of the first barrel. He took a draught, and cursed aloud as he spat out the mouthful and tipped the remains of the mug onto the dirt floor.

‘God in Heaven, will you damned Sardis never learn to make a decent wine?’ he exclaimed, drawing his hand across his contorted mouth in an attempt to rid himself of the vile flavour. He moved to the next cask and again helped himself. This one appeared to be more to his taste, for he drained the mug, then refilling it, he ambled back into the large room. He placed his lantern on the table and stood, his feet astride, in front of the glowing fire and let his eyes wander over the unfamiliar surroundings.

Dried herbs, gourds and figs festooned the ceiling, along with *bortarga*, dried mullet roe, which was considered a delicacy among the Sardis. On the far wall, he could just make out a huge collection of lances, long rifles, and a great assortment of hunting knives, all making a formidable arsenal. Off the large room, next to where the wine casks stood, he could hear the unrelenting clip-clop of a blindfolded donkey, the *mollentu*, as it walked round and round in its monotonous chore of grinding the family’s corn. The Captain sighed. Life had changed little on the island since Caesar’s time. How in God’s good name could they ever organise such a slow, barbaric people?

Marina watched the Captain, unmoved by his obvious disdain. She pulled the earthenware dish toward her, and was about to serve the broth, when the Captain put down his mug and strode over to the table, and taking the ladle from her, plunged it into the thick broth and drawing it to his lips, supped noisily.

Salvatore stood to rebuke him, but Gabriella waved her hand to stop his rebuff.

‘Now, husband,’ she said in a soft tone, ‘men are always welcome to sup at our table. Remember, where there is a stranger, even if he is bad, there is God.’ She smiled at the Captain,

who made a faint effort to return the gesture. ‘Even if they are Piedmontese pigs,’ she added in *Sardu* with a smile.

The Captain slung the ladle back into the pot, about to give vent to his feelings, when his men returned from upstairs.

‘We have searched everywhere, Captain; there is no sign of him, sir.’

At that moment, the others returned from the stables. They looked dishevelled and were covered with straw, and shook their heads.

The Captain scowled and turned to Salvatore. ‘We will be back, and I promise you this, Pastore: if I find your cousin is here, or if he is seen in the area, I shall see that you suffer the full penalty of harbouring an outlaw. We will confiscate all your lands and stock, and your son will be sent to the mainland for war service. Is that understood?’

Without waiting for a reply, the Captain picked up his lamp, swung on his heels and marched out of the door, snapping his fingers to his men who followed behind him, the last of whom slammed the door. The sound of their horses’ hooves faded into the night and peace once more settled over the little mountain community.

‘Vitoria, you check they have all gone,’ whispered her father, ‘while I collect Gavinu.’

She did as her father bid her and went out into the star-flecked darkness. A solitary nightingale sang in the nearby olive grove, accompanied by a chorus of cicadas and frogs, but there hung a still, eerie silence in the valley without the sound of the sheep bells.

Vitoria looked towards Sos Lampidos and wondered about her beloved Orlando, and if he thought of her too. She smiled, and closed the door at the same time, drawing the bar across the latch to lock out any further intruders.

Inside, Salvatore busied himself in the storeroom. He slid out the front of the first large cask, revealing a cramped but adequate hideout complete with rough woollen bedding. Boards were laid

across the bottom, giving a flat area on which to lie, while the space below was sealed. It was topped up regularly with the wine dregs so it wouldn't appear empty, but the wine was of dreadful quality, as the Captain had found to his cost.

Salvatore helped Gavinu back to the main room, and sat him at the table on the chair Marina had placed next to hers. Marina went forward and took the pot from the trivet where she had put it to reheat, this time placing it in front of her mother.

Gabriella waddled toward the table. Her baby was due in a few weeks and every movement had become an effort. With all the family grown up, this child was a gift from God. She gave her husband a tender look. Salvatore, a short, swarthy man in his late thirties with a soft voice and a twinkle in his button brown eyes, returned the smile with profound tenderness.

'I think we are ready to eat now, Mamma,' Marina said, collecting another bowl from the large plate rack hanging on the wall.

She removed the lid from the pot. The steam rose in a giant cloud, making the candles in the lamp above the table flicker and jump, giving the room a peculiar glow which highlighted the faces of those who waited for their food in the otherwise darkened room.

Gabriella handed each one of them a generous bowlful of vegetable and meat broth, together with a large slice of fine white bread, ricotta cheese and salami, with a glass of Salvatore's house wine. Silence fell over the table as Salvatore said grace, and they ate their way through the food; the peace broken only by the slurping of soup or licking of lips in appreciation.

First, Vitoria, the eldest at nearly seventeen. A tall, elegant girl with long, raven-black hair, which she tucked under her white linen headdress. She had large black eyes and delicate features; a natural beauty and an exact copy of Gabriella when Salvatore first met and married her. Next to Vitoria sat Marina, at fourteen, three years her junior; a slender, leggy creature like an overgrown colt with brown hair and eyes to match. Her curly hair escaped in

tendrils from her cotton headdress in a rebellious mass. She sat beside Gavinu and helped him by breaking his bread into bite-size pieces and cutting his salami.

‘Tell me, cousin, where did you get the idea for the cask? I’ve never seen anything like it before,’ asked Gavinu, trying hard to delay the barrage of questions he knew they were all waiting to ask him.

‘Before we discuss that, I must know why the Carabinieri are after you,’ replied Salvatore. ‘And what’s this you say about Ugo being dead? Did you kill him?’

Gavinu looked around the table at each one of them in turn until his gaze fell on Marina.

Her big brown eyes stared up into his face as she watched him intently. He looked so handsome to her, in his wild, unshaven way, for although only sixteen he sported a strong growth of beard. To her he had seemed such a romantic figure, for as long as she could remember. He came from the mountains, and had black hair and piercing blue eyes. Although they only saw each other at festivals and the sheep fairs, she found him far more attractive than his brothers. Now he was injured, she saw herself as his helper and would give him her undivided attention.

Gavinu looked at Marina and addressed his reply to Salvatore’s question to her, flattered by her constant admiring looks.

‘It’s true, Ugo is dead, but I didn’t kill him.’

The girls gasped at the news and crossed themselves.

‘It was terrible,’ said Gavinu, with a break in his voice.

‘But how did it happen, and why?’ asked Salvatore, bewildered by the news.

‘It has been brewing for a long time. At Pinta Niedda, we have always grazed our sheep and goats across the common lands of the mountains and the valleys of Baddu Bunne, but then, two years ago, Don diVenti came to live nearby and has papers, he says, proving that he now owns all the Baddu Bunne.’

‘He probably does,’ said Salvatore, sounding tired. ‘Is he wealthy?’

‘Yes, he’s wealthy, but no more than some of our old Sard families from this area. How can a man like Don diVenti own Baddu Bunne?’ demanded Gavinu as anger started to well up inside him. ‘It’s common land, free for grazing and not bound by the feudal laws. They abolished feudalism twenty years ago. The enclosure laws surely don’t cover common land.’

‘Well, Babbu owns our land,’ cut in Marina.

‘I know that,’ Gavinu replied, with an impatient edge to his voice, ‘but he only owns the farmland. He doesn’t own the valleys of Sos Lamparigos or Littischedos or the mountains of Perda Longa or Perda Viasu, because you share the common rights of those with all the neighbouring landowners. But Salvatore is a Sard; of course he owns his land. It is his by right, his family has owned and worked the land in this area for generations. However, Don diVenti is different – he is a Piedmontese, a baron landowner. How can he, a Continental, own our mountains and valleys, that belong to the Sard people? He doesn’t even live here. He only comes for the shooting, and to organise the felling of the timber. Then the Pisans come to cut and pollard all that is left for charcoal.’

Salvatore sighed a deep sigh. He remembered his father saying the same words to him as he sat on his lap as a child, hungry from the famine that ravaged the island.

‘Much of our land is owned by those from other countries,’ said Salvatore. ‘Many of them never live on the land they buy, but have others to farm it for them. They cut down our forests for the timber and lay waste the land. They strip the soil of all its growth; take the silver and the gold and raid the copper mines, returning to the island for their hunting and to collect their fat profits.’ He paused to relight his cigar. ‘People just take from Sardinia; they never give.’ He sighed.

Marina watched her father as he became engulfed in the grey cloud of cigar smoke as he puffed on it to keep it alight, and the heavy smell of the rich tobacco filled the room.

Gabriella rose, collected her sewing and sat down again, listening to her family.

‘One problem that will come, though,’ Salvatore continued; ‘the strangers do not know the ways of our land. When they strip the forests and take the wood, without a thought for the future, they will turn it into a dry, barren land. A wilderness where life will become hard and the sun-baked soil fruitless, is all that will be left for our future generation’s heritage.’

A momentary silence fell across the table as they thought about the destructive violation of their beloved land.

‘Tell us about Pinta Niedda,’ begged Marina, moving her chair closer to Gavinu. She didn’t like it when her father became serious, for his words often bore a prophetic ring. Gavinu composed himself enough to continue with his story, and looking at Marina, gave her an understanding smile.

‘Don diVenti has many men to help him on the land,’ he continued, ‘and all of them come from either Piedmont or Savoy. They have cleared the land of stones, making wall enclosures where he keeps his pigs and cattle. He has walled and terraced vast areas, and planted vines that he brought from his native Piedmont. He has cultivated the olive trees and planted many new groves. He has built a large cantina to take the wine press, and another for the olives. People come from Sassari to buy his surplus, and he ships it from the island to Genoa and somewhere in France, where they say he knows the markets. He even has a separate outbuilding near the stables to house his mollentu for grinding the corn; he doesn’t keep it in the storeroom as we do.’

Gavinu paused and took a sip of wine, and looked around again at the various pairs of eyes fixed on him in amazement at his story. ‘Like you,’ continued the young man, ‘we let our sheep roam the common land.’ He waved his good arm and shrugged his shoulder. ‘Sometimes they go in among his olive groves and wander in his vineyards, I will own that,’ he said, pouting, ‘but Don diVenti says they cause damage. He has ridden over to us at Pinta Niedda several times to say he would either shoot the sheep, or keep them if they continued to roam over his land, and he or his men are always firing warning shots at us whenever we ride

too close. Do you know,' he said, wagging a finger at Salvatore, 'he doesn't even allow his hens in the vineyards? Babbu says he will have trouble with the beetle and it will destroy all the vines, not just his, but everyone else's in the area, just as it has in parts of the Continent, but he won't listen.'

Gavinu took another sip of his wine.

'Anyway, two days ago our sheep broke into his vineyard again. The following morning, I went out to find six of them with their throats cut and their carcasses thrown on our doorstep.

Babbu, Ugo and I left at once to go and collect what other sheep he may still have, but Don diVenti and his men were waiting for us. He accused us of sheep-stealing, then fired on us. The Don fired from the other side of the courtyard, and Ugo fell to the ground. I don't remember much after that. I know Babbu yelled at me to get out, but I wanted to see if I could help my brother. When I reached him, I knew there was nothing I could do for him. He was already dead. Killed by that Continental bastard.' His voice rose with his emotion.

Gavinu paused, trying hard to compose himself as the scene of that morning came rushing back with vivid and horrifying clarity. He took another swig of his wine in an attempt to stop his hand from trembling.

'I swung towards Don diVenti to avenge my brother's death. The Don had raised his gun to shoot me, but I fired first. I saw him fall, but then another shot rang out, and a terrible pain ripped through my shoulder. The Carabinieri had arrived from nowhere. God knows, they must have been told we would be there. I saw Babbu make good his escape, and I took to the mountains as fast as I could. I know my way around here like the back of my hand, which is more than can be said for the Carabinieri as most of them are Continentals. Although I hear they are recruiting young Sards as volunteers to join them now.' Gavinu looked pale, and tears stood out in his eyes as he recalled the tragic events.

'Are you sure Ugo is dead?' asked Gabriella, unable to take in all of Gavinu's story. She put down her sewing at her young

cousin's harrowing tale. 'How could this happen to you?' she said, shaking her head, unable to believe it. 'You are such a law-abiding family, good people and honest folk.'

Gavinu nodded and wiped his hand across his face to wipe away any tell tale tears that might give away the emotion he felt pent up inside him, and was trying so hard to control.

'I don't know Cousin Gabriella, but he was only nineteen. He had his birthday last month,' said Gavinu, catching his breath, 'and now he is dead, killed by that Continental pig.'

'Well,' said Salvatore 'it seems that Don diVenti is not dead yet.' He touched Gavinu's arm to reassure his young cousin. 'You are only wanted for attempted murder according to the Captain, who came here tonight.'

'Be that as it may,' cried Gavinu, his words snapping with bitter sharpness, 'but I tell you this, Cousin Salvatore: Don diVenti killed my brother and I shall avenge his death, as soon as I am able. They can dig his grave now, for it is sure that he will be in it before the next full moon. He is a doomed man. I swear it by all the saints, and on my dead brother's soul, I swear it.'

A long silence fell over the table, then Gabriella said in her soft manner, 'You will have to rest until that arm has healed, and you will be safe here. Heaven be praised, that bullet passed straight through so it shouldn't take too long. Had it been a shotgun it would have been a different story.'

'Shouldn't we let them know at Pinta Niedda that he is here and safe?' asked Marina, concerned for Gavinu, who still looked upset.

'No, Marina,' replied her father. 'The fewer people who know he is here, the better for all of us. They will understand at Pinta Niedda, and know that if the Carabinieri haven't found him and taken him into custody, then someone is sheltering him. I'll send word to them just as soon as I can, have no fear, and I will find out how Gavinu's father is too.'

Gavinu turned to Salvatore, bit hard on his lip and nodded. 'Thank you, cousin, for all your help.' Then after a short pause, he

added, 'You were going to tell me why you had the store hideout. Will you tell me now?'

Salvatore sighed. 'My brother Angelo and I made it. He was a good carpenter and part of his job was to make casks and barrels for people to store their wine or oil. He lived in hiding with us for almost a year. The Carabinieri never found him then. That was four summers ago now.'

'Why did he have to hide? What did he do?' enquired Gavinu, eager to know the details.

Salvatore shifted in his seat. It was not a story he relished telling. 'Angelo borrowed money from a Continental moneylender in Itteri,' he began. He took a piece of bread and wiped it around his bowl, savouring the last morsel of flavour. 'He needed the money for a month, to enable him to buy the land from his neighbour. He wanted it just until his sheep returned from the plains, and his lambs could be sold. He was too proud to come to me, the youngest brother, to ask for help, stupid fool; instead he asked a stranger, the man from whom he was buying the land. A Piedmontese, and eager to do the deal as he wanted to return to the Continent, he told him to see this moneylender, also a Piedmontese. They took the flock as security, saying that if the money wasn't paid in full by the end of the month, Angelo would forfeit not just the flock, but the land as well.'

Salvatore took a long draught of his wine; he felt all eyes on him, and clearing his throat, he continued. 'The end of the month came and Angelo had his sheep and therefore the money, so he went to the moneylender to repay his debt in full. It appeared the moneylender had left town, so he went to the landowner, but he had already left for Savoy. The man responsible for the land deals insisted the contract had been with the moneylender, and that Angelo would have to wait to see him on his return. The following day being Saturday, Angelo went to see the moneylender again, but his wife said he still wasn't home and to call on Monday. Angelo tried to leave the money with her, but she said she knew nothing of the contract or her husband's affairs.'

‘He returned on Monday, for being a good, church-abiding man, he obeyed the laws of God, and never carried out work on the Sabbath. Imagine his horror when he learned from the moneylender that his thirty days were up on the Sunday, and that he had lost both his sheep and his land.’ Again, Salvatore paused, this time to relight his cigar.

To the family, the story was as familiar as the cautionary tales they had heard as children. They had lived through the events, and knew and loved their Zio Angelo, but the chance of a story; however well they knew it, and however sad, was a rarity to be savoured.

‘Whatever did he do?’ asked Gavinu, wide-eyed with disbelief.

‘We went to see Gестinu Canu at Sos Lampidos,’ continued Salvatore, ‘but he could do nothing legally. His brother in Sassari tried to help. He is an important lawyer, with many Piedmontese clients, but all to no avail. Gестinu even went to the moneylender, but he wouldn’t listen. He offered to double the money, but the man didn’t want to know. Nothing, it seemed, would satisfy the land-greedy man. As you can imagine, my brother became desperate.’

Salvatore drew hard on his cigar, and his eyes misted over at the painful memory. ‘A week later,’ he said in a soft, deep voice with a slight break, ‘they found the moneylender dead, shot with his own gun, and the contract and the money lay in shreds over his body. My brother had taken his revenge. It didn’t take the Carabinieri long to come looking for him. He came here and stayed with us in the mountains, and we made the hideout together. The Piedmontese took over the farm, then felled all the timber and made a vast profit, but left a barren land.’

‘What happened then? Did your brother get away to the Limbara mountains to live with the other *fuori legge* or *banditti* that hide out up there?’ enthused Gavinu, caught up with the romance of the outlaw bandit living in the wild, helped by his family or loved ones, for the sake of honour and his pride.

‘No, Gavinu, he didn’t go to the mountains. The Carabinieri shot him when he visited his wife in Mores. She had taken the children and gone to live with her mother. They watched the place night and day. We begged him not to go, but he was headstrong and would have his own way. They gunned him down in front of the whole family. So, young man, you now know what happens to outlaws and *banditti*. It’s not all romance,’ concluded Salvatore, raising his mug and draining it to the last drop.

‘When does Antonio come home?’ asked Gavinu, eager to change the subject at the sight of his cousin’s obvious sadness.

‘We expect him any day now,’ replied Marina. ‘He promised he would be back with the herd before Mamma has her baby. Raffaella and Orlando came over from Sos Lampidos yesterday, asking the same question.’

Gabriella noticed Vitoria’s face light up at the mention of Orlando’s name, and recognised the same lovelorn look in Marina’s eyes for Gavinu, and she smiled to herself. Vitoria and Orlando were promised to each other in marriage; in a contract made between Gестinu and Salvatore, as Salvatore had saved his friend’s life when he first came to live in the mountains. Also, Orlando’s mother, Maria, wished to join the two families as she had grown up with the Sannas. The *Cujugnu* or engagement would be soon, before Orlando left for Sassari to study law with his uncle, Zio Marco.

A sudden wave of tiredness washed over Gabriella, and she lifted herself from her chair and began to clear the table.

‘No, Mamma, leave that, please,’ said Marina, shaking her head and wagging her finger in a friendly manner. ‘Please leave it and go to bed, you look tired. Vitoria and I will see to this, and we will make sure that Gavinu is settled for the night.’

Salvatore rose from his chair and walked over to a great chest in the corner of the room, where he took out a large sheepskin and handed it to Marina. ‘Gavinu, you will be comfortable on this in front of the fire,’ he said, then throwing his cigar stub into the

dying embers, he kissed his daughters and followed Gabriella to bed.

Salvatore lay unable to sleep as his mind turned over the events of the evening. Perhaps, with good fortune and God willing, Antonio would be home soon. It would be good to see his son again. He worried about Gavinu and the likelihood of the Carabinieri returning; if they found Gavinu at Punta Néula, Salvatore knew there would be trouble. The thought of Antonio having to go to the Continent for army service frightened him. Not until the early hours of the morning did he drop into a dream-filled sleep.

CHAPTER TWO

At Sos Lampidos, Raffaella Canu lay in her bed, suspended in that brief moment of time when sleep and waking merge into one, so she couldn't tell whether the sound of sheep bells was real, or if it came from her still dream-filled mind. All winter the valleys had been quiet, the sheep having gone to the plains, but now the familiar sound of tinkling bells filled the room.

Beams of light filtered through the holes in the wooden shutters. It caught the rough plasterwork and illuminated the pictures of her saints and the handwoven tapestries that covered the walls of her room. The vibrant colours of the hangings appeared blurred to Raffaella in her waking sleep.

A whistle, echoing up the valley and into her room, confirmed the reality she had been waiting for, and leaping from her bed, she threw open the creaky shutters. A flood of late spring light poured into her room, blinding her for a moment. The warmth from the sun felt comforting as Raffaella shielded her eyes against the glare, and searched the familiar landscape that spread before her.

Below this window was a yard filled with carts, and various implements for ploughing and reaping. Around the yard were the stalls which used to house the bullocks, and the vine-clad stables with their peeling plaster and neat terracotta tiles. The view of the mountains, was obscured from this window by a huge olive tree, double-dyed in pale green and silver, its shimmering magnificence shading the open area at the back of the house in the summer.

Although she couldn't see the river, Raffaella could hear it in the valley below as it grumbled and chattered its way over a bed of shiny, cold, grey stones; as it bubbled in the ravine with the

fullness of extra water from the melted snows of the distant, haze-green mountains.

She went to the other window and flung the shutters against the vine-covered walls. The mountains, with their rich covering of *macchia* and cork forests, rose from all sides and towered over the small farmsteads that clung lovingly to the sides of the ravine. A mist still lingered in places around the valley, shrouding the vivid green of the flowering lentisk, bramble, *Cistus* rose, together with splashes of yellow euphorbia, and the pale asphodel. The granite rocks, jutting out from the green blanket of vegetation, rose like silent, ashen ghosts.

Raffaella reflected on last night's events and wondered if Gavinu had made it to Punta Néula. She had been the one who had slipped away and put the warning lamp in the attic window when the Carabinieri arrived asking questions, while her brother Orlando and her aunt, Zia Paola, had kept them talking.

She looked across to the Sanna's farm at Punta Néula, which was perched on an outcrop of rock on the other side of the ravine, and bathed in yellow sunlight above vaporous, wispy clouds that still lingered in the shaded valley below.

Again, the shrill whistle echoed around the mountains. Raffaella strained her eyes as she peered out across the landscape. Now she saw what she searched for: hundreds of sheep moving down the pass. They were difficult to make out at first as they merged with the rock fall, but sure enough, on the small pasture where the Sanna's kept their sheep during shearing time, they were there.

The sound of their bells and bleating filled the valleys again after the silent winter. The clanging and tinkling bells from Gестinu and Salvatore's sheep became a background noise that melted into the spring and summer scenery, but when winter came the long, silent nights were still and unnerving.

Raffaella's heart leapt in pure delight. Antoneddu was back: he had been gone five months, and now she could see him again.

She washed and attended to her toilet, and then dressed in the

new cotton shirt she had embroidered during the endless winter months, under the watchful eye of her Zia Paola. She pulled on her homespun *orbace* skirt and cursed under her breath as she fumbled with the laces of her bodice. She brushed her hair and put it up with combs, leaving her head uncovered. She often went without the traditional head covering, and was always being told off by Zia Paola and her father.

A quick glance in her mirror, she pinched her cheeks to give them a bit of colour. She tucked the hem of her skirt into the waistband, to keep it from dragging in the long grasses; slipped on her little shoes, and then fled along the corridor to see her brother.

‘Orlando, wake up,’ she cried, as she burst into his room. ‘Orlando, for pity’s sake wake up,’ she cried again, desperate to shake him out of his deep sleep. ‘Orlando! Antoneddu is back with Sergio and Ignazio – you can see your sheep and all the new lambs.’

Orlando stirred. He was never at his best in the morning.

‘Oh hurry, do please hurry,’ she begged, eager to be gone. She looked around the room, then noticing his wash bowl and jug, she grabbed his towel, soaking it in the cold water, and squeezed it over her brother.

Orlando, leaping from his bed, cursed the saints that he had such an ungodly young sister. Raffaella didn’t wait to hear his rebuke, but raced downstairs and into the kitchen, calling to Zia Paola, who was busy helping Elena bake bread.

‘Antoneddu is back,’ she cried, as she took a piece of the newly baked loaf from the table.

‘Not all day at Punta Néula, Raffaella – remember your father is coming home from Ozieri tonight,’ called her aunt.

But Raffaella headed out of the kitchen door, past the veranda with its collection of pots, housing every variety of geraniums imaginable. Through the stable courtyard, with its fresh-sounding water running into the trough for the house and the animals, she went out of the gates, past an olive tree, and down the path that led to the lower meadows. The ground was still damp underfoot,

with wet flowers and grasses that stung her feet and legs as she picked her way down the track to the pastures below. The whole area teemed with sheep and the air was full of their bleating as ewes called to their young, and they in turn searched for their mothers.

On she ran; up the stony path from which the sheep came on the last part of their journey from the plains. At the top of the ridge, she stopped to catch her breath. The early morning air caught the back of her throat, and the stitch in her side made her hold her ribs to stop the stabbing pain. Sure enough, coming through the pass were Antoneddu and her father's shepherd, Sergio, both riding and bringing up the stragglers of the vast herds.

Raffaella felt overjoyed, the pain gone in her excitement. Antonio, seeing her standing silhouetted against the haze-blue sky, dismounted and held his arms out to welcome her. She ran towards him in greeting. The next moment she was enfolded in his strong embrace, and she held onto him as if she wanted this moment to last forever. Antonio drew away, and held her at arm's length so he could have a good look at her. Raffaella drank in the sight of him with pleasure. He looked every inch a man with his broad shoulders and dark, deep-set eyes, although he was only two years older than her. His face was unshaven, and the heavy growth of beard added to his eighteen years. He was wearing his *berrita*, but it could not restrain his curling hair. His shirt was dust-stained and covered with horsehair, as were his white breeches and black kilt. Also, she recognised the all-too-familiar smell of sheep on his clothes. She smiled. He looked brown and well, and she sighed, happy to see him again.

'My dear little Raffaella, how you have grown, and how I've missed you this winter,' he said, taking her hand.

'Oh Antoneddu, I'm so pleased you're back. Orlando will be here any minute. Tell me, did you have a good winter? I thought about you a lot, and I've missed you too, really I have,' she enthused.

Antonio laughed. Raffaella always called him by his childhood name of Antoneddu, although everyone else called him Antonio,

but he liked it, and was pleased with the intimate nature of the nickname.

‘Tell me, *sa sposixedda mia*ⁱ, has Mamma had her baby yet?’ he asked, concerned.

‘No. No, not yet, but she is very near. Zia Paola said last week that we’ll be moving to Punta Néula soon to help Gabriella,’ she replied, looking into his dark, searching eyes.

‘Come here, Raffaella,’ said Antonio, pulling her towards him; at the same time swinging his horse around so Sergio could not see them. ‘My God, Raffaella, I’ve missed you,’ he said, taking her in his arms and kissing her with a passion she had not, until that moment, experienced. When she drew away from him, she felt dizzy and a little shaky at the knees. Antonio noticed with pleasure that her dark eyes betrayed the deep, awakening feelings he aroused in her.

‘I’ve run so fast before eating I feel faint,’ she said in all innocence.

Antonio laughed again and ruffled her hair. ‘You have a lot to learn, *bellaxeddu mia*ⁱⁱ and I will be happy to teach you.’

‘I’m not so little,’ she replied with an indignant air. ‘After all, I will be sixteen in October and Zia Paola says I’m almost a woman now, Antoneddu.’

A cry went up from the ridge, and they looked up to see Orlando waving in greeting, with Vitoria and Marina. They too had heard Antonio’s shrill whistle.

After all the embracing and greeting, and Orlando recalling the brutal way in which Raffaella had made him get out of bed, he and Antonio fell to talking about the business of the sheep with Sergio.

‘All the sheep have the sign, Orlando, so Sergio and Ignazio can sort the herds when they need to, so they can roam the pastures with ours.’

‘That’s fine, Antonio, and thanks,’ replied Orlando as he slapped his old friend on the shoulder. ‘The weather must have been good on the plain, by the look of your sunburnt face and arms.’

‘Not bad, not bad at all. Good, mild weather and plenty of pasture have made many strong lambs this season.’

‘The snows have been gone from the mountains for three weeks now. We expected to see you earlier,’ said Vitoria, looking at her brother.

‘I would have been back sooner, but I had some business to attend to on the way home. Sergio and Ignazio also wanted to see their cousins at Badde Torzu, so we stayed there for a few days. Still, I’m home now and that’s all that matters,’ replied Antonio with a broad smile.

‘Where is Ignazio?’ asked Raffaella, looking around and searching for him among the sheep.

Ignazio, a child of the wild, was Sergio and Elena’s son. He had inherited both his parents’ fear and superstitions, and convictions that spirits lived in the dark where they hid in the caves. Much to the despair of Zia Paola, who found the habit he had of appearing out of nowhere unnerving.

‘He will be along later. He is with the stragglers,’ said Antonio, and he tweaked her nose with his forefingers, making her smile.

At Punta Néula, Salvatore embraced Antonio, and Gabriella cried out in her delight at seeing their son. She threw her arms around him in a warm welcome. Her obvious delight at having all her family under one roof again showed above all else as she clucked around her son like a plump mother hen. Antonio was her firstborn, and therefore special to her, and the winters always dragged when he was away. She turned to Raffaella.

‘You look happy now, my dear,’ she said with a tender smile.

Raffaella returned the look and then turned to Antonio, who gave her a broad wink.

The room hummed with gossip and idle chatter while the warm, comforting smell of cooking mingled among them. Marina told her brother about the arrival of their cousin Gavinu, and how the Carabinieri had come looking for him. When there was a lull in the conversation she turned her attention once more to Gavinu. Salvatore again asked Antonio about their sheep and how the

winter had been, and whether they had lost any lambs.

They all sat around the fire, and while Gabriella cut Antonio's hair, he tried again to reassure his father that the losses were only a few lambs and a couple of old ewes.

Raffaella watched Gabriella. She felt a twinge of jealousy at the touch and attention his mother could give to Antonio as she trimmed his hair and beard.

'Antoneddu,' ventured Raffaella, 'please don't take off your beard. I do like it so much that way.'

'Do you now, *bellaxedda mia*?' he said with a large grin on his face. 'Hear that, Mamma? She likes it that way. Well, *sa sposixedda mia* if that's what you want; it can stay, but it must be trimmed, all right?'

Raffaella nodded, and felt a glow of triumph flow through her at his smile.

'You haven't grown your beard then, Orlando?' chided Antonio. 'Don't you like it, or aren't you man enough yet?' he teased.

Orlando laughed. Although he was the same age as Antonio, he knew he would never be able to produce such a luxuriant growth as his friend.

'I don't like beards,' cut in Vitoria, always ready to leap to Orlando's defence. 'I think they are untidy and give a man an ill-kept appearance.'

Antonio and Raffaella looked at each other and laughed.

Five months had passed since they were all together last autumn. With Antonio away on the plains and Orlando at school at Iterri, time had slipped by. True, there had been days when Marina and Vitoria had ridden over to Sos Lampidos for their lessons with Raffaella, for Zia Paola insisted on the upkeep of their studies. There had been times, too, when Raffaella had ridden over to Punta Néula, to see Marina and Vitoria and to spend a day in glorious peace and happiness with her beloved Gabriella, who always treated her like another daughter. But somehow it was never the same without Antonio. He made everything happen and

encouraged everyone to join in; even Orlando and Vitoria came when Antonio organised them. The stronger character, Antonio held them all together. Orlando, on the other hand, was easily led. An acquiescent type, Orlando always followed the crowd, or the least line of resistance, with a love of the finer things in life and a loathing of hard manual work. Vitoria, too, had the same undemanding character, and for that alone they were well suited.

They were soon called to be seated at the table for the midday meal. Orlando sat next to Vitoria; Antonio sat in his usual place and pulled Raffaella down beside him. Gabriella noticed they were absorbed in each other's company since her son's return, and was happy for them. She knew that they shared the same strong, independent spirit, with a love of freedom and an acute passion for the wild.

Marina sat with Gavinu, for she had not left his side since his arrival; only to snatch a few hours' sleep, and to welcome her brother home. She had risen in the early hours of the morning to draw water for him and redress his wound.

Gabriella had taught Marina the art of healing with herbs so she would be able to carry on the work for the villagers after her death. She had learnt the art from her mother, Carmella, who had been widowed while still a young woman, and from her mother before her. Carmella, was the local *Accabadora*ⁱⁱⁱ, the woman who came in the night to send the sick and dying to a sweet death.

Marina had all the strong characteristics of her grandmother, with a great sense of loyalty and justice. Gabriella knew, deep down, that Marina would encourage Gavinu to seek revenge for his dead brother, and it worried her. She sighed. This 'calf-love' was more serious than the usual relationship between cousins.

That night, when Raffaella lay in her bed at Sos Lampidos, she turned the day's events over in her mind. In her hand rested a small wooden horse that Antoneddu had carved for her while he was away. Also on her side table were two new combs for her hair that he had carved from bone, and engraved with his name entwined with hers.

She had given him a knife. He had had his eighteenth birthday in March whilst away on the plains. She had worked hard over the past year, picking the wild asparagus in spring, and the asphodel in summer. She had helped the women to make their baskets, which Sergio and Ignazio sold in Ozieri, when they had taken their vegetables and carvings to the market. She had picked wool with other women from neighbouring homes, and helped to spin the yarn ready for weaving. She had worked hard in the garden for Zia Paola, and helped her to make the candles. She ran errands for her father, she had also helped Elena wash the linen in the river, and every *centesimi* went into her jar so she could buy Antoneddu the knife she knew he wanted.

Zia Paola had taken her to the knife-maker in Pattada, who knew Antonio, and told them which one he had often admired. Raffaella had counted out her hard-earned money with pride, and with a discount for friendship, she had been able to buy it herself.

The expression on Antoneddu's face when he opened the present was well worth all the hard work, and Raffaella had thrilled to the long kiss he had given her. He was home now, and they would be together every day. The thought filled her with unusual warmth, and a sense of well-being that she had never experienced before.

Raffaella had become aware that her childlike devotion to Antoneddu and her protective love had now turned into something different, stronger, and a warmth crept through her. The memory of Antoneddu's kiss came back to her again, giving her a deep, profound longing for the morrow.