## Envoi

## W. Somerset Maugham

WHEN your ship leaves Honolulu they hang *leis* round your neck, garlands of sweet smelling flowers. The wharf is crowded and the band plays a melting Hawaiian tune. The people on board throw coloured streamers to those standing below, and the side of the ship is gay with the thin lines of paper, red and green and yellow and blue. When the ship moves slowly away the streamers break softly, and it is like the breaking of human ties. Men and women are joined together for a moment by a gaily coloured strip of paper, red and blue and green and yellow, and then life separates them and the paper is sundered, so easily, with a little sharp snap. For an hour the fragments trail down the hull and then they blow away. The flowers of your garlands fade and their scent is oppressive. You throw them overboard.