



INTERNATIONAL BLUEGRASS MUSIC ASSOCIATION

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By Caroline Wright

It was a tough decision, maybe the toughest of my life.

When Nancy Cardwell offered me the full-time position with IBMA, resident in Nashville, it just about drove me crazy. What an honor, what an incredible opportunity! Even in Hawai'i, bluegrass is a huge part of my life. Now I had a chance to relocate to Music City and work for IBMA and be exposed to some of the very best bluegrass on the planet on a more or less constant basis!

Oh, it was so terribly, terribly hard to say *no*.

And it's really hard to explain why I would turn down such a magical opportunity. But here's the story:

For *weeks* after Nancy offered me the job, I agonized over the decision. I made lists, did research on Craigslist, tried to picture myself in a little cabin home on the hill, somewhere in East Nashville. At one point, a friend here in Hawai'i asked me what I would do with my life if money were no object.

I'd be writing full-time in a place on the beach on the North Shore of O'ahu! I said without hesitation.

Yeah, right! We both laughed, knowing it just wasn't going to happen.

Well, here's the picture, truly worth a thousand words:



Just a couple days before I had to make a decision about the IBMA position, I held out my hand to the universe to see what might fall into it, and into it fell? *this place*.

This will be my new backyard for the next eight months or longer. I've become a sitter for a house about 50 feet from the sea on the North Shore of O'ahu, where I am responsible for a couple of polite cats, a small, unruly herd of chickens, and the daily collection of a few delicious brown eggs.

In short, it's a writer's fantasy opportunity ? an extended creative retreat in a truly idyllic place. And the opportunity presented itself when I least expected it.

My Christian pals will tell me it's the Lord, working in His mysterious ways. My Buddhist buddies might tell me it's my good karma catching up with me. My Jewish friends might say it's because I'm a *mensch*! Whatever the reason, I've been given the gift of long periods of uninterrupted solitude in an extraordinarily beautiful location. I have a couple of long-simmering writing projects -- one that is bluegrass-related -- big projects that need time and space.

Which I've suddenly been given, in spades.

So I'm going to accept this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. It's not going to last forever; I might yet find myself drawn to Nashville, or somewhere else on the planet. But for now, I'm going to sit at the edge of the sea and do what I can to pull elusive, shimmering prose from it.

Warmest aloha,

Caroline

Caroline would like to say MAHALO (thank you) to Nancy Cardwell, Jill Crabtree, Katherine Coe, Lisa Jacobi, Judy McDonough, John Fabke, Tom Kopp, Ben Surratt, Caroline Isachsen, Ricky & Sharon White Skaggs, Sam Bush, Playing On The Planet, Erin Erdos, Shelley & Jason Burlison, John McEuen, John Cowan, John Carter, Laura, & Anna Maybelle Cash, and the officers and board of IBMA for the extraordinary experiences? and all of YOU, for reading IB and supporting IBMA and bluegrass music!

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