



# *Hoheria Blossom*

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*Intermediate*  
*3 min read*

Do you know the Lovely Ladies of the Bush? They swing on the tips of the Hoheria tree, with their floating white gowns and tossing silvery ringlets, and are so light and graceful that they float on the wind as they swing. If you could *only* see the Lovely Ladies dancing! But very few have been lucky enough for that!

They dance on the wind, holding to the tips of the Hoheria and their white gowns flutter and swirl, and their ringlets float and sway, and sometimes in the joy of the dance a Lovely Lady lets go of her branch and comes fluttering down to earth.

Then she can dance no more, but lies very still. It is rather sad, because once she has let go she may not go back and dance on the tree for a whole long year, and it is looked on rather as a disgrace to be the first to fall.

However, she has not to wait long for company. For one by one, the Lovely Ladies, wild with the joy of the mazy dance, the soft rush of the wind and the laughing and clapping of the little leaves, loose their hold, and drift to earth light as thistle-down, and that is the end of their dancing for that year. Where do they go to while the year goes by? I have never found out, but I think it most likely that they go to the place they came from.

The Lovely Ladies have a song which they and the wind sing together as they dance, and the way it is sung makes everyone that hears it, mad to dance too. This is it:

*“The wind is shaking the Hoheria tree,*

*Cling, Maidens, cling!”*

*“I’ll dance with you if you’ll dance with me,*

*Swing, Maidens, swing!”*

*“So up with a windy rush we go,*

*Floating, fluttering, to and fro,”*

*“Sing for the joy of it, Maidens, Oh!*

*Sing, Maidens, sing!”*

The Piccaninnies simply love to watch the Lovely Ladies dancing, and long to be able to dance in the same way. When they hear the song, their little brown toes go fidgeting among the moss and leaves, and their heads nod-nodding to the air.

Once they found a Hoheria tree after all the Lovely Ladies had left it, and now, they thought, was their chance. They swarmed all over the tree, clutched the tips of the delicate branches, and began working themselves up and down like mad.

It was great fun, but with their chubby little brown bodies, short legs, and shock heads, it did not look quite the same thing, and three Bush Babies riding that way on a good-natured kiwi, laughed so much (and even the kiwi, which is a grave bird, looked up and smiled) that the Piccaninnies, feeling rather foolish, dropped to the the ground and ran away and hid in the fern.

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