

# Chair and Umbrella, \$25

*by* John Wentworth Chapin

The sun hammered the blue and white umbrella; she gauged the sun coming through the white stripes and guessed that she could burn under that brutality. If white t-shirts are only an SPF of 8, she couldn't even imagine what a white nylon-mesh umbrella on this godforsaken beach might be in terms of protection. She wasn't taking any chances. There are certain things you don't mess around with, and the Maui sun is one them. She'd made sure that the children were slathered in PABA-free 70 before she looked after her own flesh. She eased back in her chaise longue, but before she could relax, she had to think about her scalp. Her hair was pulled back tightly; a razor-sharp part bifurcated her hair above her right eyebrow. She'd gotten unwanted sun on her scalp before. She didn't want to put on a hat, but certainly, with the unreliable protection of the umbrella, she couldn't be sure that she wouldn't burn along her part. She picked up the spray sunscreen she'd used on her thighs and read the ingredients; she wasn't sure what might be bad for her hair, but there was no point in taking chances. She decided to use the same crème she'd used on her face. No point in taking chances.

Where were the kids? She scanned the beach; a lone floating dinosaur bobbed in the churning surf.

