

# The Birth of Hawaii

by an anonymous author

Haumea waiting for her child to be born, was told by the elders of her village that a "spirit child" will be born to you on a night when the earth shakes, lighting splits the sky and thunder rolls down the valley. That night arrived and Haumea went into a cave and came forth with a child. They named her Pelehonuamea.

Pele was different from her brothers and sisters. She would not play with them in the water. Her uncle, Lonomakua was the "keeper of the flame". he knew all of the secrets of fire, but till now had no one to pass this knowledge to. When Pele was a few days old, he saw the reflection of fire in her eyes.

The island Pele and her village were living on was being consumed by frequent volcanic eruptions. The villagers and Pele's jealous sister Namaka blamed Pele and Lonomakua for this. Banished from the island, Pele and some of her sisters and brothers, who loved her, sailed away. The amakua (guardian) shark god Kamohoali'i safe guarded Pele's journey. Lonomakua gave Pele a magic stick "Pa'oa" to help her find fire at her new home. Her mother gave Pele a magic egg.

For many months Pele followed a star from the northeast, which shown brighter than the rest, and migrated toward it. One morning, Pele awoke to the smell of something familiar in the air. In the distance could be seen a high mountain with a smoky haze hiding its peak. Pele knew she had found her new home. She named the island Hawai'i.

Pele, carrying her magic stick Pa'oa, went up to the mountain where a part of the earth collapsed into the ground. She and placed the stick into the ground. Pele called this place Kilauea. Inside the Kilauea Crater was a large pit. She named it Halema'uma'u, maumau being the fern jungle surround the volcano. Halema'uma'u would be her new home.

There was a fire God living on Kilauea named 'Ailaau (forest-eater). He and Pele both wanted Kilauea for their home. They started throwing fire balls at each other causing considerable damage. 'Ailaau fled and still hides in the caverns under the earth. Pele alone would rule the Island of Hawai'i. The people of the island loved and respected the Goddess Pele. The egg her mother gave Pele hatched into a beautiful girl. Pele named her new sister, Hi'iaka'i-ka-

poli-o-Pele (Hi'iaka of the bosom of Pele). Kamohoali'i, the shark god taught Hi'iaka the art of surfing.

Pele fell in love with a man she saw in a dream. His name was Lohi'au, a chief of the island of Kaua'i. Pele sent her sister Hi'iaka to fetch Lohi'au on Kaua'i to bring him back to Hawai'i to live with Pele. Hi'iaka would have forty days to bring Lohi'au back or Pele would punish the girl by hurting Hi'iaka's girl friend Hopoe. Upon reaching Kaua'i, Hi'iaka found Lohi'au dead. She quickly rubbed his body with herbs and chanted to the Gods for help; bringing the young chief of Kaua'i back to life. Grateful for Hi'iaka's help, Lohi'au agreed to return with her to the Big Island.

The forty days had passed. Pele suspected that Hi'iaka and Lohi'au had fallen in love and were not coming back. In her fury, Pele caused an eruption which turned Hopoe into stone. On her return to Hawai'i with Lohi'au, Hi'iaka found Hopoe, a statue in stone. Hi'iaka, filled with sadness and anger decided to take revenge. Leading Lohi'au to the edge of the Halema'uma'u crater where Pele could see them, Hi'iaka put her arms around Lohi'au and embraced him. Furious, Pele covered Lohi'au with lava and flames.

The two sisters, anger subsided, were remorseful. One lost a friend the other a lover. Pele decided to bring Lohi'au back to life to let him choose which sister he would love. Pele was sure Lohi'au would choose her. Lohi'au chose Hi'iaka. Pele, with aloha, gave the two lovers her blessing and Hi'iaka and Lohi'au sailed back to Kaua'i.

Pele still lives on Hawai'i where she rules as the fire Goddess of the volcanoes. The smell of sulphur reminds the natives that she is still there in her home, Halema'uma'u. Her fiery lava building a new island to the south, still submerged, named Loahi.

The people of Hawai'i still melo o Pele (sing and chant for Pele) and Kilauea.

"E ola mau, e Pele e!

'Eli'eli kau mai!"

Long life to you, Pele.

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