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The Old Pali Lookout

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The Old Pali Lookout

Missie Yamamura

2nd Place in our Halloween Scary Story Contest

Aside from being a hot tourist destination, Hawaii is one of the most isolated island chains on Earth. Add to that a mix of Hawaiian and immigrant cultures, each with their own supernatural beliefs, and you have a potent recipe for eerie late-night stories. I grew up reading Glen Grant's *Chicken Skin Tales*, a compilation of ancient Hawaiian folklore, as a kid. My mother quickly noticed my obsession with the book, so in fear of her having sleepless nights over my festering nightmares, she hid it from my reach. Everyone on the island knows someone who's seen or felt something, and we readily share these stories over family dinners and pau hanas, recounting every chilling detail until it's almost as if we've experienced it ourselves. Most amateur ghost hunters make the rookie mistake of hanging out at graveyards, hoping to spot an orb or some ghostly figure. Despite this notion, I realized from the countless myths I had read that hauntings usually occur in places where people died or spent the majority of their lives. As Halloween was approaching, my twelve-year-old self secretly hoped to see something. Out of all the stories I had read, one myth piqued my interest for a potential haunting centered around the Pali highway.

All locals know that you just don't carry any pork products over the Pali Highway, especially at night. That's because the pig god Kamapua'a lives on the windward side of the island, and his ex-girlfriend, volcano goddess Pele, lives on the leeward side of the island. Because of a dispute, they agreed not to bother each other; as a result, we commoners aren't supposed to take pork from one side to the other side, since it would technically break that agreement. Adjacent to this chilling highway lies the Old Pali Lookout, where King Kamehameha defeated four-hundred warriors by throwing them off this cliff.

Countless nights of my imagination growing more elaborate and restless, I finally divulged my game plan to my older sister...who was in. As soon as night fell, we stopped by our nearest 7-Eleven to pick up manapuas (pork buns) and pork hash, taking our new purchases to the lookout point. When our car came to a complete stop, I was immediately covered in goose bumps that felt like minute cactus needles had lodged into every pore of my skin. While carrying the pork items, I stood frozen at the invisible line from the windward to the leeward side. My sister yelled to put the food on the ground. As soon as I dropped the items, our flashlights slowly flickered, then gave their last breath of life. A few seconds later our flashlights came alive again. As we ran back to the car, I shined my light on the food. I swear it looked like the two pieces of pork hash were missing that night, but there was no way I was going back for a closer look. My sister and I will never know if the pork actually disappeared that night, but one thing is for certain: there is something very real about that pork over the Pali highway.