

### Mo'olelo o Māui

One fine sunny day, Māui and his brothers went fishing. They paddled their canoe far out to sea. Māui took out his special bone fishhook and prayed to the gods to make it very powerful. The winds blew softly around the canoe as it floated over the rolling sea. The brothers patiently waited for the fish to come.

They watched the sun climb higher and higher in the sky. They grew tired. *Auwē!* Where were the fish? After many hours had passed, the brothers decided to head for home. They were disappointed as they turned their canoe around and paddled toward shore. After they had paddled for a while they felt a strong pull on the canoe. Could they have caught a fish at last? Perhaps Māui's special hook had brought him luck!



The brothers became very excited and paddled faster and faster. Their arms grew tired. Whatever Māui had caught was very strong and very big! They began to wonder what could possibly be on Māui's hook. They were frightened by the thought of a huge, powerful fish. They begged Māui to cut the fishing line, but Māui refused and ordered his brothers to look straight ahead and continue paddling.

It took all of Māui's strength to hold on to the fishing line. His special fishhook had not failed him. What a fish he must have! His tired brothers no longer cared about the fish and wished Māui would cut the line. With aching arms, they kept on paddling and looked only to the front of the canoe.

Māui continued to pull on the line as hard as he could. But he soon realized there was no fish on the end of the line—it was land! As he pulled, he watched land rise slowly out of the sea! Māui was filled with wonder and excitement! With his powerful fishhook, he had caught a huge mass of land. Never had he caught anything so large! The brothers sensed Māui's excitement, but still they looked only to the front of the canoe.

Finally, one of Māui's brothers could stand it no longer. His tired muscles ached and he wanted to know what Māui had caught. As he turned to look, Māui lost some of the catch! Instead of a great mass of land, all he had was a group of islands. But what beautiful islands they were! And that, so the legend says, is the way our Hawaiian Islands came to be.

### Mo'olelo o Pele

Pele came to the Hawaiian Islands from a faraway land. She had quarreled with her powerful sister, Nāmakaokaha'i, a goddess of the sea. After their quarrel, Pele left to find a new home.

Pele went to Ni'ihau and dug a deep pit in a mountaintop with her 'ō'ō. She created a volcanic cone with a pit or crater inside it. She liked the hot fires. But her sister, Nāmaka, the sea goddess, followed Pele and destroyed her fiery home with the ocean waters.

Angrily, Pele fled to Kaua'i. There she used her 'ō'ō to dig a deep fiery pit. But again, the sea goddess followed her and put out the fire. Pele ran away to O'ahu and dug a new home there. But the sea goddess destroyed it. Pele angrily left and tried to make her home in a fiery pit on Moloka'i. Again, her sister, the sea goddess, destroyed it.

Pele fled to the island of Maui where she dug a deep fiery pit as her new home. Her sister followed her and destroyed her home once again. Pele was very angry and she and Nāmaka had a bitter quarrel. Pele was injured in the fight and left some of her bones on a hill in Hāna. Nāmaka thought she had finally stopped the fire-making of her sister, but she learned that the spirit of Pele had fled to the island of Hawai'i.

On Hawai'i, Pele, the volcano goddess, dug a deep, deep pit in the center of Kīlauea. In this fiery pit, Pele still makes her home. The island of Hawai'i continues to grow. Will the sea goddess catch up with Pele once again?



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(Adapted from: Jean Min, 1987, "Hawai'i: Its Volcanic Beginnings," Honolulu, Kamehameha Schools.)