



A GIFT FROM GLOW HAWAII

Hawai'i Within Me

BY OLELO PA'A OGAWA

E hō mai, e hō mai— grant me the wisdom to speak what this land has placed within me.



My first gift was breath. Hā— before I knew my own name, before I knew the word Hawai'i, I opened my body and received this place.

I breathed in mana, the life force moving through mountain, forest, ocean, sky. That first breath became my blood, my heartbeat, my awakening.

Hā— I receive what gives me life. Hā— I release what I am ready to let go. Between receiving and releasing, I remember: I am alive. I am held. I belong to this place, and this place lives within me.

E hō mai, e hō mai—

Then came the makani, the wind— sometimes a whisper through coconut leaves, sometimes a force that bends the trees and tells me: be still. To bend is not to break.

The sun gave me fire, warming my skin.

And Pele's fire never stops. Hawai'i is not a place that once was made. It is a place still making itself.

Beneath my feet, a rumble— faint as a held breath, building, tension gathering like a wave before it breaks.

A pause.

Then the burst— fire tearing open the dark, lava rising into sky, molten and magnificent, powerful beyond my words.

Then it settles. Then it waits. Then it rises again.

The same rhythm as my own breath— Hā— the island breathing fire the way I breathe air.

She is not destroying. She is saying: I continue to create. I am still becoming, my fire reaching past this island, out into the cosmos.

Even fire is sacred.

E hō mai, e hō mai—

Before entering the forest, we offered a pule: May we enter? May we gather? The forest held its breath— cool, damp, fragrant with moss, fern, misty rain. It fed us, but first it taught us: take only what you need.

Among the 'ōhi'a trees and the hāpu'u fern, I learned to become still, to let a quiet heart hear what a loud one cannot. Our ancestors, our 'aumākua, are always with us. We do not walk alone.

E hō mai, e hō mai—

Before entering the ocean, I offer another prayer. Then the ocean rises to receive me. The waves cross the sand like a long remembering, washing from my body what my spirit is ready to release. Again and again, water meets the shore. Again and again, I am cleansed.

The 'āina also speaks through taste— taro, coconut, salt, papaya opening like sunrise. The land becomes food. The food becomes body. The body becomes sacred.

And when I stand before Mauna Kea, tears rise from a connection I cannot explain. The mountain does not ask to be understood— only approached with humility, only honored, only loved.

E hō mai, e hō mai—

Some measure wealth by what can be counted. Hawai'i taught me something deeper: to feel the wind and know I am breathing, to taste the earth and know I am nourished, to enter the ocean and know I can begin again, to stand before the mountain, weeping, and not turn away from what I feel.

This is my kuleana— to honor what has held me, to protect what has nourished me, to remember, and help others remember.

Wherever I journey, Hawai'i journeys within me, in every breath I receive, in every breath I release. Hā— I do not merely come from this place. This place breathes within me.

And when my tears come, I let them come. They are not sorrow. They are the waters of remembering, love too deep for words, returning to the ocean.

Aloha wau iā 'oe, e Hawai'i. I love you, Hawai'i.

Mahalo— for holding me, for shaping me, for reminding me what true abundance feels like.

E hō mai, e hō mai, e hō mai ē.

'O ka maluhia nō me 'oe. Peace be with you.



Olelo pa'a Ogawa

May Hawai'i journey within you, wherever your path leads.

