

TEARS ARE BUNDLES OF LOVE

I feel the call of the land of Hawai'i nei deep within my body and soul.

Her tradewinds blow through my long, dark brown hair, whispering voices of the ancestors into my ears.

I listen carefully as a child listens to those sacred ones who lived in our native land not so long ago.

I play amongst the waves of Her womb waters with the animals of the sea, tasting Her salty fluids upon my lips as I dive down to the ocean floor, feeling the familiar touch of Her sands between my fingers.

I see Her palm trees sway, and am reminded of the hula I love to dance. My hips mimic the wind, gently blowing through the trees and leaves side to side.

Her mountains, so lush and green, stand proudly against the clouded sky.

Waterfalls flow down Her crevices, creating a mystic spray as waterfall meets mountain pool.

This is the land I know as home, not island paradise. The place where I am one with my brown-skinned sisters and brothers. I am in awe of Her, the Land, the *aina*.

Tears stream down my cheeks, and I taste the salt of my own fluids upon my lips.



I love these islands so much, I feel an ache in my heart whenever it is time for us to part.

Her voice comforts me: **“You take the spirit, the mana, the Aloha of the Aina/Land with you, baby, wherever you go. The mana of this land is part of you, baby, and where you go, it goes. It lives inside of you. You’re welcome to come here whenever you wish. We’re here for you.”**

MEET THE AUTHOR

Leilani Birely is a Native Hawaiian Kahuna and Dianic High Priestess who brings ancient Hawaiian healing and Goddess wisdom to the community.

Kahuna Leilani brings forth teachings of the Aloha Spirit through Hula, Ceremony, Performance, Writing, and Ritual. She is the founder/ritual director of Daughters of the Goddess Women’s Temple in the San Francisco Bay Area, an international community of women dedicated to She of 10,000 names and Multicultural Women's Mysteries.



Leilani has co-authored the book, *On Holy Ground: Commitment and Devotion to Sacred Lands*, with Luisah Teish. She is included in anthologies *Shades of Faith: Minority Voices in Paganism*, *Stepping into Ourselves: An Anthology of Writings on Priestesses*, and *Prophetic Voices: of the Sisters of Honua*.

Leilani gives thanks and honor to her teachers: Yeye Luisah Teish, Iyanifa Yoruban Chiefess and author of *Jambalaya*; Kahuna Auntie Pahia; Vicki Noble, author and co-creator of the Motherpeace Tarot; and Kumu Hula Patrick Makuakane and Mahea Uchiyama, and Uncle Butch of Ka'ala Farms, O'ahu.
