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Mr. George Balazs

Dear George,

Mahalo for your letter. There is something happening. Something about that place. No question about it and no explanation for it. The painting of Kauila (do you know the story of the turtle mermaid of the pond behind the black sand beach?) has affected others. The local folks who have worked in the restaurant have all developed a strong aloha for the painting, even though it has "spooked" them. Over the years several different waitresses have stated that the eyes of the little girl followed them.

Then there is the experience I had while doing the mural. I hallucinated on the last night I worked on it. Had been working very hard, no breaks, no food; then after midnight was painting alone, the building dark except for my work lights. Wind rattling the shutters.

Then I heard voices speaking in Hawaiian. Looked up and saw two of the figure on the beach in the mural speaking to each other. Then caught a movement from the left (the mural is on a concave wall) and turned to see one of the women working in the halau turn her head away from me back to the profile pose I had painted. I put down my brush and went home.

Next day I got out my paints , everything ready, picked up my brush, and could find nothing more to do to the painting.

Then in the 1975 quake a flood wave washed in over the beach and pond and destroyed all furniture & fixtures in the restaurant and history center. Passed just beneath the frame of the painting. In the room where the mural is there was a mud mark up to four feet on the opposite wall but the painting was dry and clean. I was working in Kona on a job and went down the next day after calling to find out what happened so I saw it for myself. No explanation.

The imagery of Kauila keeps bothering me, and I expect that I'll be doing more about her to get it out of my system.

Aloha,

