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"The Milo Man"

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“The Milo Man” Contemporary Legend

Informant: My name is Susan Mary Swan. I was born here in Logan, Utah in June of 1996, to Jamie and Jason Swan. I am the 2nd oldest of 5 siblings, 4 girls and 1 boy (the baby of the family). But my older sister passed away as a baby, so I was raised as the oldest. We lived here in Cache Valley until June 2007, when we moved to North Carolina. We lived there for nearly 5 years and then moved to Arlington, TX in January 2012. I came back to Logan in August 2014 to attend Utah State University. In August 2015, I left on a mission for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints. After living in Australia for a year and a half, I returned home in February 2017 and worked for a few months in both Texas and Idaho, and then re-enrolled at USU in August 2017. I am currently enrolled in USU as an Art major, with a minor in Folklore.

Context: While I was serving an LDS mission in Australia I was introduced to the many, many, different stories that float around between missionaries. Many of them were told as rumors to warn the missionaries about misbehaving. There were stories that threatened to send missionaries home, or stories that involved relationships between missionaries or the people they served. You see, as missionaries for the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints, we were required to be “exactly obedient”. That meant, that while we dedicated 18 months or 2 years to the Lord, we were to do exactly that: dedicate our time. Everything we did was for the sake of the Church and for Christ. We took a break from “normal” life and were expected to live 24/7 with another missionary “companion”. We were to have no romantic relationships or anything, and one of the things we all dreaded was being sent home early for disobedience. In the case of this story, it was told as a crazy phenomenon that could happen to anyone on a mission. It was told to me by one of my first companions as a warning of the crazy things that has happened to missionaries and to also make me very aware of the dangers of disobedience. As a side note to the background of the story, “milo” is a hot chocolate beverage that Australians LOVE to drink, morning and night. It a chocolate powder just like what we know as “hot chocolate” and it is mixed with warm milk. It’s less sweet though, so they often will also stir in a teaspoon of sugar.

Text: The “Milo Man” incident took place many years before I was lived in Australia and was told this story. It describes a companionship of elders (young men around age 20). These two elders were great friends and every night the first elder would make a couple mugs of milo for the two of them before bed. They would drink it and talk about their day before heading to sleep. As time went on, the second elder started noticing that each morning he would wake up

super sore for some reason. He wrote it off as a bad mattress and went about his day's work. After a few weeks of this, the elders went on an "exchange" one day (where they would switch companions with other elders in the area for a day, spend the night, and then return to their original companion the next day). This temporary companion, of course, didn't know about their nightly milo ritual so the second elder went to bed without having his milo. The next morning the elder woke up and noticed that he wasn't sore! He thought it was a little weird, but again thought back to how it must be his old mattress at his apartment. The next night he felt a bit sick, so when his companion made him his nightly milo, he didn't drink it but poured it down the drain secretly so his companion wouldn't feel bad that he wasn't drinking it. Later that night, the second elder woke up to his companion climbing into his bed, straddling him, and trying to take his clothes off. Suddenly it made sense why his body was sore in the mornings after drinking the milo... His companion had been drugging him this whole time with milo and then raping him at night while he slept! Moral of the story: Don't trust your companion who gives you milo at night.

Texture: This story was told as a true occurrence and even took place in local areas. My companion told me this as if to show me that against popular belief, missionaries are not perfect and that crazy things can happen even if you are a servant of the Lord. When my companion told me the story, I remember wondering if she herself believed it because up to the last "punchline" I had no reason to doubt the validity of the story. But after hearing the ending and the "moral of the story" then, and even now I remember thinking it is probably one of those stories that started little and escalated with every retelling. When she told me, I had only been a missionary in Australia for maybe a month, and still wasn't even that familiar with milo. I remember being very invested in the story as she told it, and towards the end I started to doubt it a bit. At the same time though, as a new missionary I didn't know what to expect. That is the life you lead as a missionary I suppose.

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