

# The Story Behind the White Lady in Balete Drive

Jul 05, 2013 [Shaina Sanchez](#)

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Urban legends and mythical creatures have long been a part of Philippine folklore. Stories about aswang, tikbalang, duwende, and other terrifying creatures have scared the wit out of a lot of Pinoys in their childhood. Ghosts, especially white ladies, were never out of the picture. The most famous among these ladies is the one who allegedly resides in the vicinities of a place called Balete Drive.

Balete Drive is a street located between Aurora Boulevard and Rodriguez Avenue in Metro Manila, Philippines. It is a simple street lined with ancestral mansions and commercial establishments. At present, you wouldn't think that this place can make any person shudder in fear, since the area is well-lit with bright street lights. But in the earlier days, the street was lined with massive balete trees that darken the place and make it ghastly.

In Pinoy culture, balete trees (*Ficus benjamina*) are regarded as home for spirits and mysterious creatures. This notion makes Balete Drive all the more frightening. Elders used to warn children against playing near a balete tree due to certain beliefs such as:

- Fairies and engkantadas live inside the balete tree. They invite children inside their kingdom, and if a child eats something from there, she will remain trapped inside the tree for the rest of her life.
- If you point your finger or laugh at a balete tree, the fairies will get insulted and will curse you.
- If you cut a balete tree, the engkantos living in the tree will punish you with death.

The country started to dread and avoid Balete Drive since the 1950s when stories about a white lady floating along its streets started to spread. It is said that cab drivers are its favorite victims for she has been a victim by one of them. The driver would drive along the place not knowing that the white lady is silently sitting inside his cab's back seat. He will only know it upon giving a glimpse in the rear view mirror and will then see that the white lady is intensely staring at him.

Various versions of stories about the identity of this notorious white lady have arisen in the past. One famous story is that the white lady is a student of the University of the Philippines. According to a certain barangay security officer who resides in Balete Drive, the victim was allegedly molested by a taxi driver on her way home from school. The abuser then threw her in a dark pit beside a balete tree in Balete Drive after raping and killing her. Since then, the spirit of this young girl have been haunting the streets of the drive, looking for her murderer. This story was passed on to the present generation by the older residents of Balete.



**Image Source: [slayernest.subject-line.com](http://slayernest.subject-line.com)**

Another story is that this white lady lives in a deserted ancestral mansion located in Balete Drive. The ghost is said to be a victim of her own family's cruelty. At 3am, the white lady appears to lone drivers passing her house in order to seek their help or to run away from home. Some taxi drivers claim that they have experienced to drive for hours along the same street where the mansion was located. They can only get out of the loop after saying several prayers and wearing their shirt inside out. Because of this mystery, taxi drivers evade this route during midnight to dawn. If ever they need to pass the said area, they will blow their horns as a pasintabi (plea to pass) to the white lady.

Rumors had it that the white lady in Balete Drive was only fabricated by a reporter in the 1953 in order to come up with an interesting story. Since then, other newspapers followed and allotted columns for the controversial white lady in Balete Drive. Pranksters also sprouted since the controversial stir began. One of such is a 15 year-old boy named Conrado de la Cruz who was a resident of Balete Drive at that time. It happened one night in 1953, at the height of

**Balete Drive scare, that the young boy pulled a trick on his neighbor, Lope Bautista (22 yrs. Old). He put on a white robe, wore a skull mask and crept into the balcony of Bautista. Terrified to death, Bautista jumped from his porch and got a sprain. The young rascal was reprimanded by the local police.**

**Whether she is true or not, one thing is for sure: The white lady in Balete Drive remains as the most popular Filipino urban legend. She will always haunt our curiosity for the identity of the white lady in Balete Drive will forever be a mystery.**



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