

land to the east. To get there someday was the aspiration of some of the leading warriors but it was never really their ambition because they had never had the time to do so. The inland Heaeamola could not opt for peace for any considerable length of time which would enable them to embark on such adventures. Any news that had filtered through from the area was always frightening; there was an impass along the way to the east where penetration was difficult as the inland Tati there was pushing the Miaru so hard that many of them settled on land that sprinkled an area west from the Miaru river. These people were also called Miaru.

This information turned out to be stories containing half truths which were purposely being spread to discourage any exodus from Toaripi by the Toaripi themselves or by the refugees who might have desired to attempt their mettle. Hahari Oaharo of the Kairi clan would not scoff at those reports. He was convinced beyond doubt that he, of the Kairi clan, would set foot there should an opportunity arise. When that would be he did not know at the time. All in all the Toaripi now had a clear impression of the two Karama men who had been among them for sometime. Hahari had the stronger character, co-operative, diligent, persevering, conscientious, intelligent and hard working. The community's post mortem of the two brothers was confirmed by an incident that further revealed a feud between the two brothers and exposed Oaharo's true nature and his general attitude to life.

Although the two brothers had reached their respective marriageable ages, neither of them had indicated his desire as yet of seeking such a contract. One morning their foster-mother had served them a meal of crabs. There were two according to the sizes of the brothers and were served in one single clay bowl. Hahari had not been at home when the meal was delivered. When he had come back, he found that the biggest claw of the biggest crab had been removed. He inquired about the matter and was told that Oaharo had been there when the food was presented but he was no longer there. Hahari waited patiently

without eating any of the meal. Later he saw Oaharo talking with friends three houses away.

"Oaharo come here," Hahari called over to him.

"Can't you be patient just a while," came the reply like a challenge.

"Oaharo," Hahari called again but when Oaharo turned to answer, he saw his brother had armed himself.

Enraged at Hahari's temperament, Oaharo rushed into the house near where his brother stood talking with friends and emerged with a borrowed bow and arrow and issued a counter challenge. At this Hahari responded with a weapon. The exchange of arrows continued that day with neither side inflicting serious wounds on the other. Neither considered abandoning the fight as this would not be manly and would be extremely anti-Kairi. The stronger and the more skilful must survive. Their close friends realized that Hahari would not stop until he had killed his brother or vice versa. Oaharo knew the firing would not stop until Hahari had used up all his arrows. By mid afternoon the duel of the Karama brothers seemed to have dropped in pace. The curious crowds that had gathered noticed the change. Oaharo in the meantime had fled the scene and Hahari too had no more arrows to fire. He jumped out from the back of the house armed with the Hura, and made his way in a round about way to the other house where he was told the other had fled. Hahari threatened his informant for not telling him of his brother's movements. He did not pursue this brother enemy.

The cause of the duel was another of Oaharo's practical jokes. In the Kairi clan, if there was a fight between two people it must continue without interruption from anyone until one of the two was killed. Oaharo was fully aware of this rule. For days on end Oaharo was nowhere to be found. He had apparently beaten along the nipa palm swamp which was a large jungle at the back of the village and was perhaps hiding there because Hahari had already checked the route to Karama. There were no human tracks.

One afternoon, Hahari had just returned

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from the seashore after studying again the blue hills to the east when a message reached him that his brother Oaharo had arrived. At once, he darted to the house, collected his quiver and bow and proceeded to the canoe anchorage at the back of the village. On seeing Oaharo he started firing. But Oaharo was shielding himself behind an unarmed stranger and the fury of his brother and its impact were being received by the stranger. Oaharo did not fire back. As Hahari drew nearer he found Oaharo carrying the man displayed like a shield-Hahari pulled the Hura into striking position and crashed it onto the skull of the man. He was no longer angry with Oaharo. Oaharo then explained that he had found this man, named Oaupe, stealing sago from their area and had brought him instead to be punished by Hahari. Much later, however, it was learnt that Oaupe was kidnapped by Oaharo from among a hunting party near the disputed boundary. After having won a fight against him, Oaharo tied him up, hands and feet, and had brought him down in a stolen canoe. On arriving at the anchorage he explained that he would take him to Karama. Oaupe had not heard of their fight to the death. Like any Kairi warrior, Oaharo was intelligent and had convinced his prisoner in such a way, the prisoner had in fact become the peace sacrifice for the two brothers.

Having restored peace between them, Hahari and Oaharo walked back to the village together to collect tools for digging the grave of a man who had no part in their quarrel.

CHAPTER THREE

In the Toaripi tradition, which was also true for Karama, women were active in several traditional roles as child bearers, mothers, housewives, gardeners, beast of burden and life companions who must be trusted at all times. Above all, the wife must not refuse the desires of her husband. However, if that desire was expressed at times of traditional and natural taboo like breast feeding an infant, menstruation, illness or

physical disability through injury, then the wife had a legitimate right to argue her husband out of it. Alternatively, physical exhaustion which created conditions that did not make sexual contact desirable was not reason enough for her to protest. If she did so she would be accused of unreasonableness. The penalty at times for such an attitude was death.

Hahari Oaharo was now old enough to familiarise himself with these cultural and traditional facts of life. Without the personal and intimate advice of his parents, he had had to make a decision sooner or later on whom he should marry. The issue that bothered him much, however, seemed to be that he had the family and clan spirit for fighting and the love of adventure. If he was concerned about the Hura returning to claim its legitimacy, he could not please himself. He knew it was the same spirit that had inspired Maisea to accept, with humility, her marriage to the Kukukuku chief. Again he and Oaharo's escape from Karama had been drawn from this family heritage. Now, this small voice was continually urging him on to go east and apply his skills and great physical strength. But he was reluctant now. If he was killed while fulfilling what he felt he should do, who would inherit the Hura? Oaharo did not have qualifications to be its future guardian. The sooner he received it the sooner it would be in someone else's possession. Suddenly he had the answer. He, Hahari Oaharo must marry.

Since his arrival at Toaripi, he had an affair, like any teenager, with a girl of about his age. Her family was not wealthy by traditional standards but they seemed to manage their affairs well. The girl was strong and tough looking and so were her kid sisters and brothers. Although they had been unable to have contact physically, Hahari knew he loved her and wanted her very much. Like any event in the village whether kept in strict secrecy or publicly declared, every knowledgeable person knew about the affair. Hahari had mounted a facade of reservation and pretended not to be watching when she had accidentally come his way. She too played a similar role. Her parents were

already aware of the affair, and had merely voiced their concern against such a union. They were kindly parents who did not resort to brutality because of the rumour. But they were adamant that if there was any element of truth in the rumour, she must not consider the relationship eventuating, as they pointed out the very behaviour of Hahari indicated that his wife could not be expected to live long. Her parents were afraid that the first sign of sour taste in the new couple's relationship would undoubtedly mean the death of the wife. At the same time they had an inner fear for the man. Of course, Hahari could not be told these things directly and if he did hear them, the remarks would be considered as a challenge. Such remarks down graded his character and status as the warrior son of Kairi.

Hahari therefore chose a carefully thought out plan of action. One night late in the evening, after planning it for sometime, he decided that he was going to marry that girl that very night. He only asked to report back any development. It was for this visit that Hahari had prepared himself all day. He donned his cassowary feather crown, positioned his armllets, ankle braces, placed the decorative ornaments he had taken from laki the man he had killed at Karama and tightened a newly made tapa-cloth which carried the designs of the Morning Star. Earlier he had spread sweet smelling oil made from a mixture of coconut evenly on his body. He had also applied a mountain plant brought from Karama and yellow ginger to the surface of his body. When Hahari was satisfied with his dressing, he jumped to the ground to test its firmness and walked straight on to the girl's house.

By coincidence the proposed bride was sitting together with her parents discussing her future. As she was the first born daughter, the parents were uncertain about whom she should marry. They looked at the possibility of giving her to the eldest son of a family which had the equal number of both male and female children so that subsequent marriages between the two family members would not be interrupted. The girl had two

kid sisters and two kid brothers. The eldest son of a similar family should be found. The parents in this case, offered their choice of eligible males to their daughter who in turn had refused all of them. She explained that out of her parent's choices none of the families had the corresponding numbers to enable their tradition to continue between the families. The parents also saw the truth in her answer.

It seemed the discussions might have to be postponed until later when a shadow like the blackness of the night stood towering over them in the light of their burning flame right behind the father. The family were shocked and were on the alert immediately. The father jumped to his feet to meet what he considered to be an intrusion on his peace. A firm grip on his two hands weakened him and he stood shivering, dumb-founded. The man was half the size of Hahari. He made an attempt to call his clansmen but Hahari still tightening his grip on the weaker man explained briefly the reason he was there.

"I am not here to fight anyone," Hahari concluded.

At this the mother shouted abuse at Hahari and the clansmen responded to her call.

"You're a murderer from Karama. You killed Oaupe for no reason. You love fighting and killing people, yet you want to marry my daughter. I will not agree. I cannot agree!"

The mother kept up her abuses. For a moment Hahari would have crushed the mouth that was spilling poison had it not been for a clear vocal challenge called out against Hahari.

"So you are that brave eh?" came the voice behind him.

Hahari turned and introduced himself as if he had just arrived.

"I am Hahari son of Malara, brother of Kave. I am the blood of Kairi. Who challenges me?"

With that he swung the Hura in the direction of the voice. A figure lay sprawled at his feet clutching at his head. The Hura had grazed the left eyebrow of the man and he bled badly from this injury. The spear he had

thrown had scratched Hahari. Even a minute drop of blood that was needed to declare a family, clan or tribe. In the light of the clansmen surged forward. Kairi were experts at immobilising a grip still on the girl's hand. Hahari manoeuvred the man a distance from the child and used him as a shield. Hahari and the man were surrounded by a circle of warriors. He threw his feet and in their confusion he stood up and spun his mace. A line of men. Once, twice, thrice. Before long, clansmen nudged him with fingers and two lay on their backs. Spears and lances and spears with which Hahari had hoped to kill Hahari were broken, while their pots and groaned over missing limbs. Bruised ankles, elbows and

In the ensuing silence Hahari's voice challenged the fleeing warriors. Hahari soothed him.

"If you kill them now you will leave them as they are. Leave them as they are. Go back and prepare for the future," Hahari advised his younger brother.

With that he walked to the built house and emerged away. Inside the father lay bruised ribs, ankles and back. His wife cowered among the children in a corner of the house. Hahari only sustained a bruise on his left ear lobe. The girl's name was Oaharo.

The sun rose the next day and if it dazzled away the eyes of the members of one clan they could not see who they were and allowed it to travel on its path of blood shed and injuries. Hahari, without a blotch in its path, with the sun was Oaharo, the most feared warrior of the time. He went straight to the house to consult Hahari on the day. He had had to leave the house he had shared with his parents, informed by the latter

thrown had scratched Hahari's right ear lobe. Even a minute drop of Kairi blood was all that was needed to declare a war on an entire family, clan or tribe. In the meantime the rest of the clansmen surged on Hahari but the Kairi were experts at improvising. With his grip still on the girl's father, Hahari manoeuvred the man as if he was a mere child and used him as a shield. In a moment Hahari and the man were in the midst of the circle of warriors. He threw the man at their feet and in their confusion the lone warrior stood up and spun his magic weapon at the line of men. Once, twice, thrice up and down. Before long, clansmen numbering one set of fingers and two lay or sat weaponless. The lances and spears with which each of them had hoped to kill Hahari lay scattered and broken, while their potential users moaned and groaned over missing fingers, ears, badly bruised ankles, elbows and split lips.

In the ensuing silence of victory a lone voice challenged the fleeing warriors. Hahari soothed him.

"If you kill them now I will lose my wife. Leave them as they are." It was Oaharo "Go back and prepare for tomorrow!" Hahari advised his younger brother.

With that he walked briskly into the low built house and emerged leading the girl away. Inside the father groaned over his bruised ribs, ankles and badly wrung fingers. His wife cowered among the rest of his children in a corner of the one roomed house. Hahari only sustained a minor injury on his left ear lobe. The girl's name was Kevaro.

The sun rose the next day in all its glory as if to dazzle away the eyes of enmity among the members of one clan at Toaripi so that they could not see who they would battle with and allowed it to travel on without witnessing blood shed and injuries. The sun pushed on without a blotch in its path. Rising together with the sun was Oaharo junior, the brother of the most feared warrior at Toaripi at the time. He went straight to the new couple's house to consult Hahari over preparations for the day. He had had to move out from the house he had shared with Hahari after being informed by the latter of his pending

marriage.

"I am taking Kevaro to the west to complete planting out the coconut and banana gardens. I will be taking only the Hura." Hahari explained to the younger brother. "You take all our weapons together with our paddles and pretend that you are going to the anchorage. But make a diversion and meet us near the beach head. Do not involve the rest of the clan in this." Hahari restricted the openness of his brother.

Hahari and Kevaro slipped out of the house to the wide beach and walked a little faster but checked back to see if they were being followed. No one followed them. Just past the beach head they met Oaharo. Oaharo went into concealment after the meeting.

Hahari and Kevaro were so busy with the gardening that they were unaware of how low the sun had travelled westward and how long the figure of a woman had stood watching them hard at work. Oaharo approached them rather timidly. At a distance Oaharo alerted their attention to the figure. It was Kevaro's mother.

"My daughter, your father has sent me to tell you of our decision — you will marry Hahari Oaharo and that bride price will be due at the birth of your first child," she said.

Tears of happiness dripped onto the chest of the young woman. She ran forward and embraced her mother affectionately, while the brave husband looked on at the two lovingly. On hearing the woman speak, Oaharo emptied the two quivers and the unstrung bows and began breaking them on his knees. Oaharo was happy because it was he who had manned a single guard all day checking every flight of birds, investigating every rustle of leaves, and every bird call in anticipation of any retaliatory action which may have come from the clan whose men were injured the previous night. Kevaro's mother had been sent after a meeting that her husband had held with other members of the clan. He explained how the discussions had ended in a dilemma and now Hahari had appeared at the scene just at that point in the discussions. He had further explained that he was about to sit with Hahari and resolve the question

mutually when Hahari was challenged because of Kevaro's mother. It was therefore the consensus that the mother must communicate the message so that Hahari may forgive her for showering abuse on him the night before. Hahari cast a slight smile at Kevaro's mother and she departed.

The victorious threesome retraced the woman's footsteps back to the village. Several days later a simple wedding ceremony was held in which clan leaders of both sides, including the bridegroom's, sucked from a common clay bowl of pig grease and consumed long strips of pig fat that drowned their differences.

CHAPTER FOUR

Kevaro was a hard working, untiring woman. Together with her husband they had changed every plot of land available to them into thriving gardens of vegetables, traditional food and rows and rows of young coconut palms. They had also changed large areas of swamp land into a plantation of the all important staple — sago. Indeed their names appeared constantly in individual praises in conversations that compared them to other couples who married at about the same time as they were married. In the Toaripi community it was the favourite past time of the older women to entertain themselves endlessly with talk about the type of people their in-laws were. Often mothers or in-laws would bombard their newly married couples with instructions to observe the controversial couple.

"Look at Hahari and Kevaro. Look at the work they are doing. Why do you sleep all day?"

The son would reply by giving the mother a black eye or swollen lips. So many had suffered in this way. The proudest parents of all were Kevaro's parents. The mother would say regretfully, "I should not have said so much in the first place. But things work the other way around at times."

Her husband would only nod in agreement or disagreement. While Kevaro's parents had undergone a change of attitude and they were

openly claiming Hahari as their first and best son-in-law, Hahari's mind had been somewhat preoccupied. When his wife broke the news to him that she was pregnant, he accepted the news in a state of mental aberration. What he had been sleeping with since marriage was the dubious question of what sex their first child would be. The pregnancy news, therefore, had hit the very core of his thoughts. He became sickly looking, moody, given to tempers and above all what he did not mean to be — lazy. Kevaro saw the changes in her husband and tried to help him as much as she could. The desire for his first child to be a son came to him like the seasonal rain. When his spirit rose he fulfilled his duties with vigour and zest. Occasionally he would watch and stare at the blue hills to the east and inspiration would come to him. But the thought of seeing a daughter made him withdraw like the beach creeper which withered and wilted after its root base had been removed and was subjected to the merciless and relentless heat of the mightiest ball of fire and glory.

Under these changing moods he lived on in his own little world entertaining himself with the thought that if the baby was a girl, he would wander into the blue hills alone. Whatever the consequence he was certain the generations of his daughter would at some future time reuse his name in her family. If that thought had boosted his morale, there was one other which destroyed it like the high tide which swept the footsteps that had been left on the seashore into oblivion. The vision he had of the future of the Hura was negative. Who would be the guardian of the Hura if he were to adopt the alternative actions he was proposing? There was nothing he could do; nothing to think about.

For many days and many nights during moons numbering one set of fingers and three, Hahari Oaharo lived in a mental village created by himself where defeat was mourned and victory celebrated. As the time drew nearer for Kevaro to deliver, Hevaro realizing this, encouraged and assured her husband without condition.

"Hahari my husband, do not worry. It will

be a boy."

"What? How do you know?"
"I know it will be very another four days."

Indeed in the early hours of the fourth day of moons nur of fingers less one, the delivered for the Karama fa larger than other infants at only one person at Toaripi was overwhelmed with the t all his problems, his doubts, l of mind had been resolve Oaharo and a short time brothers in full Kairi traditio dress danced a slow rhythm the house and backwards a short distances. This was a di of an emotional excitement; victory; of an assured succes to be undertaken.

For Hahari the vision he interrupted only by the app girl, would now be realized. the vision under whose guid Karama was not of his twist deliberate plan, part of v executed by Maisea, and the might be extremely danger him to fulfill. His first bc greatest asset in assisting hi acquisition programme. Th the blue hills were the next t

The two men continued the night and many who dancing from time to tim daybreak. That day Haha emotional wound had b organised a party to bring feast that afternoon. Anoth made when the umbilical c was severed. Then the t follow. Hahari Oaharo had j these occasions. There wa whatever was required for price which was also pa several moons ago was expectations of the re grandparents. The amou excessive to reflect the exci

be a boy."

"What? How do you know? When?"

"I know it will be very soon. Give me another four days."

Indeed in the early hours of the evening on the fourth day of moons numbering two sets of fingers less one, the Toaripi mother delivered for the Karama father a baby son larger than other infants at birth. There was only one person at Toaripi that night who was overwhelmed with the birth. To Hahari all his problems, his doubts, his confused state of mind had been resolved. He sent for Oaharo and a short time later the two brothers in full Kairi traditional headgear and dress danced a slow rhythmic dance around the house and backwards and forwards for short distances. This was a dance of welcome; of an emotional excitement; of unconditional victory; of an assured success in a venture yet to be undertaken.

For Hahari the vision he had in his mind, interrupted only by the appearance of a little girl, would now be realized. He recalled that the vision under whose guidance he had fled Karama was not of his twisted mentality but a deliberate plan, part of which had been executed by Maisea, and the other part which might be extremely dangerous remained for him to fulfill. His first born son was the greatest asset in assisting him implement the acquisition programme. That was the vision. The blue hills were the next target.

The two men continued dancing through the night and many who had joined the dancing from time to time kept on until daybreak. That day Hahari's mental and emotional wound had been healed. He organised a party to bring the food in for a feast that afternoon. Another feast would be made when the umbilical chord on the child was severed. Then the brideprice would follow. Hahari Oaharo had planned ahead for these occasions. There was no shortage in whatever was required for the feasts. Bride price which was also paid as demanded several moons ago was well beyond the expectations of the recently branded grandparents. The amount had to be excessive to reflect the excited conscience of

the man who had paid it, because out of the initial near fatal refusal of the parents, had emerged the ancestor of a new general of guardians of the Hura. Indeed among the treasure presented to the parents were two of the most prized ornaments — a crescent shaped string of python fang beads and a brilliantly coloured plume of a very rare bird, locally called O (Bird of Paradise). The Toaripi had heard about it but had never seen one as access to the land of the O was impossible. These two ornaments drew admiration and curiosity of the community at large. The crowds milled around about them until the precious ornaments had been hung from a bamboo pole for all to see. The excitement and the joy of thinking and feeling that those ornaments actually belonged to them, caused Kevaro's parents to weep in extreme happiness. Hahari explained that those ornaments did not originate from the Kairi at Karama but they had come from the land of Iraiva (Kukukuku). He could not disclose that what he had treasured most had also come from the land of Iraiva.

The dancing continued into the night and the rhythmic booming of the drum, or Opa, which while representing the price of a marriage and the birth of a firstborn child, symbolised a departure from Toaripi of a generation of the recent wedlock to the savage land of the blue hills. The ancestor of that generation would be none other than the baby boy born into the new family. His parents named him Kea Hahari after an ancestral relative of the same name in the Kairi at Karama.

CHAPTER FIVE

Since Hahari and Oaharo had arrived at Toaripi there had been quite a lot of lively discussions about a strange people called Lalae who had visited the village a number of times in the past. The brothers heard that the villages of the Lalae were located very near the source of the east wind — Mauta. They had heard how the Lalae had sailed fearlessly across the open sea in huge canoes to either Orokolo or Toaripi. The Lalae called the two

villages Elema. But they called Toaripi itself, Motumotu. Furthermore the two brothers learned that this word meant island.

Already Hahari and Oaharo had confirmed the stories of the visits by the household utensils they had seen used at Toaripi homes. There were vases, bowls, cooking pots, water pots and many other smaller units. They had heard too that the utensils were made from a very sticky kind of mud which when framed into required shapes and baked in earthen ovens, solidified and was resistant to fire and boiling water. But there was a warning; the vessels and utensils must be handled with care because they were fragile.

"These Toaripi sound as if they are making those things themselves." Oaharo turned to Hahari with sarcasm in his voice as was his nature.

When the air became full once more with tales of the coming of the Lalae, Hahari and Oaharo were not surprised. The older brother's house was now full of the Lalae utensils given as the parents' appreciation of the major price. However, Hahari and Oaharo were unsure of why the Lalae had to make long trips which were open to the risks of capsizing and danger from sea monsters. They sent for a man named Evoa who had accompanied the Lalae some trips ago to their land as a member of the crew. Evoa was one of a few who had learned the Lalae language. He was not actually fluent but could communicate a little and understanding long conversations in the language. Without hesitation, Evoa seated himself comfortably between the brothers and began his story.

"All the canoes that were at Toaripi, there were four, left the Lakekamu in the morning. They called the canoes Lakatoi. All the canoes were loaded to the decks with many bags of sago, bananas, coconuts and other types of food the Toaripi brought from their gardens. We sailed smoothly across the bay. Oh!" Evoa laughed. "I felt stupid not knowing their language and doing what they did not want done." He stopped and continued. "A sudden headwind met us just off the Sepoe hunting grounds."

At this Hahari became mentally alert and deep down in his conscience, a small calm voice sent a reminder. "That is the blue hills." Hahari swallowed the thought with slight difficulty and decided not to ask any questions. Evoa was still talking.

"Our lakatoi headed into a small inlet but no sooner had we got away from the windburst when a small arrow wriggled its way onto the deck of our canoe."

Hahari almost said "Um" loudly in anger. Oaharo and Evoa did not take any notice. The speaker went on.

"The Sepoe are pretty savage. They guard their hunting grounds like a breast-feeding mother over her sucklings."

There was no reaction from Hahari.

"We had to go back the way we had come. Fortunately the wind direction had changed in our favour. With that favourable breath we sailed on until we reached Lavao, (Kairuku) sometime in the night. We rested. In the morning we sailed across a very long and wide bay. Standing offshore out to sea were two rocks which rose high above the water. On sighting the rocks, the captain signalled everyone to remain silent. In the meantime a number of the crew untied two large bags of sago and a large banana with many hands and held them steady. As soon as we passed between the two rocks, the food was dumped into the sea. I could not understand but I was afraid.

Much later I learned that the rocks were twin sisters who had been rejected because of their ugliness, and changed into rock pinnacles. They were dangerous and fatal to those who had no respect or honour for them because they were still remorseful at their fate. They stood there in the open sea; one tall and the other short. Every traveller had had to pay homage, donate food as they guarded the bay against evil monsters which would otherwise be the fate of the seafarers. On the other hand if kindness and respect were lacking, the entire bay would become shallow and vessels would be subjected to visits by ugly and horrible sea monsters which would spare no lives. The sea would also rise. In making food donations, the travellers were assured of a safe journey

home. The other three offerings. The passage. All four vessels sail nearby river called Mi

"Beyond the eastern mouth was a rocky point. As evening was drawing all vessels should pull up. Early next morning the vessels set sail again long journey past the rocky point. Then another. When we looked back long spinning clouds night. It was in the night. Several oars went down the four Lakatoi schooled crews, the river on either side of these Lalae villages.

Women and children canoes. Then I found were from this village welcome feast for. Meanwhile the food there was unloaded by westerly began its dawn morning during the storm, we stopped at Poera (Boera) and F each stop some crew brought the food they had brought.

"At twilight of the one of the most beautiful seen. Hills rose in islands lay here and there peaceful and we could shout ashore. Care manoeuvred between last we were cruising looked like a huge land before me saw the same Lore in their songs."

"Sometime in the Elevala — the biggest that area. Again the and big ceremonies for men, including myself several moons. During to learn by hearing a

home. The other three Lakatoi made similar offerings. The passage to home was now safe. All four vessels sailed smoothly past the nearby river called Marumaru (Manumanu)."

"Beyond the eastern stretches of the river mouth was a rocky point jutting out to sea. As evening was drawing near, it was decided all vessels should put ashore for the night. Early next morning before the land breeze, the vessels set sail again for the last leg of their long journey past the farthest pinnacle of the rocky point. Then an unusual calm prevailed. When we looked back at the western horizon, long spinning clouds shaded the horizon into night. It was in the middle of the afternoon. Several oars went down either side of each of the four Lakatoi and manned by well schooled crews, the vessels entered a small river on either side of which stood the first of these Lalae villages. It was called Laealaea. Women and children crowded onto the canoes. Then I found that some of the sailors were from this village. The villagers put on a welcome feast followed by dancing. Meanwhile the food belonging to the men there was unloaded but not before the mighty westerly began its disastrous blow. In the morning during the waning breath of the storm, we stopped at other villages; Papa, Poera (Boera) and Porepote (Parebada). At each stop some crewmen got off together with the food they had brought."

"At twilight of the fourth day we entered one of the most beautiful places I had ever seen. Hills rose in the water everywhere; islands lay here and there. It was so quiet and peaceful and we could hear the welcome shouts ashore. Carefully the Lakatoi were manoeuvred between these island hills and at last we were cruising inside a big bay that looked like a huge lake. Those who had sailed before me saw the same entrance and called it Lore in their songs."

"Sometime in the night we were berthed at Elevala — the biggest village like Toaripi in that area. Again there was singing, dancing and big ceremonies held. The several Toaripi men, including myself, stayed at Elevala for several moons. During our stay, we were able to learn by hearing and visiting their garden

land, why they made the long journeys to Elema. Elevala was a waterfront village behind which were areas of rolling hill lands. When it was dry nothing could be grown there. When it rained, the soil was filled with mud and nothing could be grown. However, on the slopes of these hills they were able to grow yams and other species as well as tapioca and bananas. We saw that it would take the Lalae people a long time before they harvested the garden food. While waiting for harvest time they had to look for other means of getting food.

"We were told that at least two rivers flowed not far inland but the fertile land belonged to the Koiari and the Goitabu people against whom the Lalae tribes had been at war since time begun. The Koiari in particular were the great magicians and sorcerers at all times and it was not safe to even hunt or make a small garden on their land. We saw too that the Lalae built their houses over the water on stilts to avoid being killed by the Koiari magicians and puripurimen. But the Lalae including the Elevala people were luckier than their ancient enemies. They had access to the great source of food — the sea. Lying off shore to the villages were lengths and lengths of reefs or what the Toaripi songsters called Lore."

"The Lalae always had fish and other food from the sea where the reefs had attracted them in abundance all the time. These were supplemented by whatever they could take from the land. It was decided therefore, that perhaps during Mauta or Lourapota (Laurabada) they should sail to Elema to trade pots for long lasting food like sago. They had heard this food was plentiful in that part of the world. They called this food hunting Hiri."

That is the story of my travel to the land of the Lalae. Oh, the Lalae women and girls are very beautiful," concluded Evoa.

Evoa's tale had interested Oaharo intensely.

"Perhaps I should go as a crew on this forthcoming trip when it returns," Oaharo voiced his interest.

Hahari said nothing. His mind was

swamped with the kind of country that Evao had described as the land of the savage Sepoi. Sleep was difficult as the two brothers conjured up visions of the respective land and people they had just heard about and each plotted his own course until sleep eventually conquered them.

CHAPTER SIX

The tale of the Lalae people told by Evoa was ancient history now. There had been several more Hiri trading since and the traders had come to be known as Motu people after the language they were speaking. Evoa was a wise old man now and had achieved a reputation of an expert in the Motu language. Although he was unable to pronounce words in the way the Motu did, he could be engaged in conversations for as long as the traders wanted him to. Oaharo had married without setting foot on Lalae land as he had wished during his teenage years. He had children numbering one set of fingers and one. Hahari, however, had one less in his family. Both families had stopped producing some time ago. Hahari was getting on in age, and so was Oaharo.

Hahari's five children were comprised of three boys and two girls, headed by the eldest, Kea Hahari. The family nicknamed the second of the two girls, Ua Suru, a term lovingly used on someone who was physically handicapped. In her case, she had not been born handicapped. Ua Suru literally meant wasting; rotting without the inference of stench; unfit; useless and ineligible for marriage. Indeed she was rotting and wasting. Ua Suru had suffered for a considerable length of time with an ulcer that did not seem to heal as she grew up. The sores had developed into a series of boils between the knee and toes of her left foot. The foot looked deformed and Ua Suru therefore appropriately described this condition. The ulcer had caused her foot to resemble one end of a log which had been chipped on its side; adzed and shaped into either the front or back of a new uncompleted outrigger.

It was coincidence that Ua Suru's ulcer

seemed to return and break new flesh on her foot at the time when the Louta tree buds (similar to African Tulip tree) split open revealing brilliant blood red flowers among its dark greenery. It was indeed the belief among the coastal communities that this tree, which was the biggest of all beachwoods and dominated the coastline, was the cause of the ulcer. Its sweet, soft fragrance contributed directly to weeping sores and unhealed injuries during its flowering season. It had flowered just at the onset of the Mauta when there would be no rain for a long time. Despite the objection of her father, her brothers had armed themselves with their cutting tools and made sure that no Louta tree was allowed to flower again. They were cutting them east, west, north and around the village. The community had endorsed their action. Still their fury at having to put down those trees had no effect.

Her father, Hahari, had no belief in sorcery. He believed that unless he was poisoned or killed by a warrior stronger than himself only then would he accept death. As such he would not allow consultations with sorcerers although he would speak to medicine men himself. Relatives went as far as Karama to the family of the man, Iaki, who Hahari had killed. Every sorcerer, puripuriman and magician denied having punished Ua Suru. The parents had lost hope in both saving her and in preparing her for marriage. Hahari would only discuss this view with his wife. But he himself had a plan. He was a tactful warrior, a strategist, and a man who had a vision — the vision of blue hills. So when the next Hiri visit had come around again he persuaded Kevaro to allow Ua Suru to return with the Lalae to their village. Kevaro at first protested.

"It is not our tradition to make others responsible for our children. She is grown up now and this disease should leave her when she is older."

"You talk sensibly. She is going to waste a lot of our time but what I am proposing is this. She might recover sooner if she washes herself in the Lore waters. Look at the river we have. It is never clean and there is no clean

water anywhere. You enemy there. You go might be there. So you foot falls off and she h sure she will survive at she will marry there. W a lot of food as payme responsibility," Haha argument.

Kea Hahari who had during the emotive disc father's views being una entailed for him now Like father like son. continue any further be relied on for support ha was also aware tha culturally she must giv views of the male. Ther However, Kevaro p arbitrary decision deep small maternal wound emotions had opened blood; born like her; le her husband was pr painful parting between like weaning a child w still visible. Ua Suru ha No brothers and no strange fish eating peo Toaripi to get the food

"Oh my poor daugh Toaripi and should die

Maternal tears c Kevaro's eyes as she who sat close by. The d tears. In the Toaripi relationships were p when the child suffered growth in life. In this responsible for wash daughter's sores, aidir meet the calls of natur

Similarly, a daught could do the same fo mother. Ua Suru understand the situati much her mother w absence. So she spoke her mother.

water anywhere. You go west, there is an enemy there. You go east, the Heaeamola might be there. So you let her sit here until the foot falls off and she hops on one leg. I am sure she will survive at Lalae. When she does she will marry there. We will have to provide a lot of food as payment for the transfer of responsibility," Hahri concluded his argument.

Kea Hahari who had been with his father during the emotive discussions, endorsed his father's views being unaware of what the deal entailed for him now as a grown up man. Like father like son. Kevaro could not continue any further because the one she had relied on for support had already given it. She was also aware that traditionally and culturally she must give way to the superior views of the male. There were two against her. However, Kevaro pursued the almost arbitrary decision deep in her heart where a small maternal wound flowing with strained emotions had opened. Ua Suru was her blood; born like her; looked like her and yet her husband was prepared to force this painful parting between herself and her child like weaning a child whose birthmarks were still visible. Ua Suru had no friends at Lalae. No brothers and no sisters. These were strange fish eating people who had come to Toaripi to get the food to eat with their fish.

"Oh my poor daughter. You were born a Toaripi and should die a Toaripi."

Maternal tears dripped down from Kevaro's eyes as she caressed her daughter who sat close by. The daughter too broke into tears. In the Toaripi community, maternal relationships were particularly noticeable when the child suffered a physical blow to its growth in life. In this case, the mother was responsible for washing and cleaning her daughter's sores, aiding and assisting her to meet the calls of nature.

Similarly, a daughter old enough to do so could do the same for her aging or disabled mother. Ua Suru was old enough to understand the situation and she knew how much her mother would be hurt by her absence. So she spoke to soothe and comfort her mother.

"Mother don't cry. Don't think about me too much. You know if you do it will make me sick and I will die. Mother take courage and when I'm gone, always think that my sores are healing. Remember that I will be doing those things we did together in the gardens.

I will remember them. When I'm well and married I'll send for you. I know mother I will be well if only you try not to think too much about me. Please mother, just think I'm well and happy at Lalae."

Ua Suru had appealed to the deep wound in her mother's heart and assured her that all would be well. The comforting words had indeed prevailed on the mother. Kevaro replied reassuringly.

"I will try my daughter . . . try not to . . . worry you . . . not to think . . . of you. I will remember you with good thoughts," Kevaro sobbed herself into sense.

The Hiri had arrived and Toaripi once more became a beehive full of activity. Extensive areas of sago swamps were cleared, resulting in bag after bag of the starch being brought into the village. Platform after platform had been raised in the centre of the village upon which sago, bananas and coconuts were stacked. On the arrival of the Hiri, Hahari had met and taken home a Lalae man named Igo Morea. This was not the first time Hahari had offered hospitality. On previous Hiri visits, the Karama come Toaripi man had always taken the Lalae man to the house. On previous departures, Hahari had been extremely generous, providing more for Igo than the number of vessels traded. In this way a firm and lasting friendship had developed between the two men. Igo too had discovered that there was little need to count the number of pieces he had brought to Motumotu and to Hahari.

Once again old man Evoa had to be asked with some urgency. Hahari explained what he had wanted and Evoa commenced negotiations. It was not long before Igo agreed. He turned to Hahari with a smile and made his response.

"My friend Hahari, it was unnecessary for you to organise a formal talk like this. I have

know about your sick daughter since I set foot on your premises. Ever since I have seen her condition and suffering, I have always thought that maybe one day I would ask my friend if he could allow me to take the sick girl to my village where our people do not have sores like hers. I had felt that if I did not, you my friend might ask me. I knew that when Evoa came the request would be made. I must not say anymore. The girl can come with me. I have an aunt on one of the canoes who can look after her on the journey."

Evoa of course had had to explain this to the family. Mother Kevaro wept loudly. The younger sister cried loudly too, while Ua Suru's three brothers pondered over the future of their sister. Their father was overjoyed and the low, silent voice in his conscience breathed out with complete satisfaction. It told Hahari that the scene was set for him to realize his ambition. Hahari's spirit rose as he recalled how his thoughts had centred on Igo who was making it possible for him and his son to take a look at blue hills. He had been convinced of this also by the fact that Igo had related stories how badly injured people had been put to sea, accommodated and how they had returned home healed. It was this conviction alone and the vision he had for adventure that had enabled Hahari Oaharo to speak persuasively to his wife about Ua Suru's travel to the land of Lore.

Hahari slept that night comfortably, mentally relieved that another day of great significance and importance in promoting the Kairi clan of Kama would dawn soon.

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"This Hiri visit is taking a considerably longer time than usual," Hahari Oaharo mused to himself with impatience. Unknown to him, the stay was of the same duration as others previously, except that unlike those previous times, Hahari was impatient to see the implementation of the arrangement regarding the departure of his daughter.

Any village news or gossip was like the overflowing rivers and streams in times of flood and high tides. The news of Ua Suru's pending departure had swept the entire village

and aunties, cousins, relatives and even her countemporaries flocked and crowded the Hahari household daily and nightly encouraging and discouraging her. There were pleasant whispers about the kind of man with whom she would be betrothed. Ua Suru thought neither. Her concern and determination was to get there and get better. Meanwhile, older aunties and relatives sat with the parents and either offered support or scolded them for making such a decision. They claimed, without evidence, that Lalae villages were built on rocky and stony grounds and there was no beaches like at Toaripi where she could stretch her foot. Doubts were cast over the practicality of a marriage between a Toaripi girl who was semi-disabled and a Lalaeman who might become interested in her, and the kind of future the bride could face once the scar had healed. It seemed that her parents were more concerned about her future than the sweet words their children had flowered on Ua Suru in childrens' typical teasing manner. Hahari and Kevaro maintained their peace and calm throughout as there was no way they could, at least Hahari could, withdraw their decision however much the relatives appealed to them in their remarks. Ua Suru herself was a descendant and a blood relative of Kairi. So while possessing the clan's blunt, but good looks, she was a tall well-built young woman who despite her sores and the expressed fear by relatives both young and old, could have married even now. Her relatives knew this. Her parents were aware of this. Her features alone gave her parents the confidence that she would marry any time if and when she was made whole again, even if there was a permanent reminder along her calf of her condition. Those sentiments of sympathy, love, uncertainty and fear had been imparted when the relatives had rested from sago making and harvesting from gardens for the big send off for Ua Suru.

Because Hahari was making a private deal with Igo, he was not required to exhibit the food collected in the middle of the village where everyone else had stacked theirs. He had erected makeshift huts in the vicinity of

his house and these had capacity with lumps of a variety of container material and proven for durability. The bags were made from were the bags which went their way to Lalae cooking huts stored these. The other storage of sago in temporary these were what had been main bags had been remainders were called S referring to the layers of water had been run off collection. Tradition taught the Toaripi to pre required for immediate remaining bags were unw after kneading or straining the fingers or between the out carefully in the sun. dried up, the colour changed to reddish brown almost pottery. In that colour preserved for as long as process could be applied the coir bags.

In the hut where the been stored were layers which the sun dried sago sago) were laid in biri p same hut also were the s daily requirements. These be used to make a farev daughter. The two huts roomy but they were filled while other similar huts somewhat laboriously at pace. In comparison one to the credit of the Ha speed with which they sago in such a short time manpower. Indeed, there saying that said that it gouger driving the use woman swinging it that d This meant that a person strong muscles to make people with muscles Concentration and com

his house and these had been stacked to capacity with lumps of all sizes bagged in a variety of container materials tested in time and proven for durability. A great number of the bags were made from coconut fibre. These were the bags which would eventually sail their way to Lalae cooking pots. One of the huts stored these. The other hut contained the storage of sago in temporary wrappings and these were what had been left over after the main bags had been filled. These sago remainders were called Sarova or fresh flesh referring to the layers of textured sago after water had been run off and was ready for collection. Tradition and experience had taught the Toaripi to preserve what was not required for immediate consumption. The remaining bags were unwrapped carefully and after kneading or straining the sago through the fingers or between the palms, were spread out carefully in the sun. Once the water had dried up, the colour changed from yellowish to reddish brown almost like the clay used in pottery. In that colour the sago could be preserved for as long as was desired. This process could be applied also to the sago in the coir bags.

In the hut where the bags of sarava had been stored were layers of platforms upon which the sun dried sago or sare poi (sunned sago) were laid in biri plaited mats. In the same hut also were the supplies to meet the daily requirements. These supplies would also be used to make a farewell send-off for his daughter. The two huts were spacious and roomy but they were filled in a matter of days while other similar huts were being filled somewhat laboriously and at a much slower pace. In comparison one thing could be said to the credit of the Hahari household; the speed with which they had made so much sago in such a short time. It had muscular manpower. Indeed, there was an ancient Kairi saying that said that it was not the sago-gouger driving the user but the man or woman swinging it that determined the speed. This meant that a person did not need to have strong muscles to make sago because some people with muscles were very lazy. Concentration and commitment to the task

assisted in a speedy success of the task. In other words, when the hands were direding the sago-gouger to the pitch, there should be no conversation because distractions caused delays, and any delay caused a late return home. In addition, the coir bag would not be filled to its maximum capacity.

Some men always avoided sago making because it entailed a lot of detailed work but they were observed to have huge appetites for sago. These men only preferred gouging the bottom part of the trunk because they suffered from great big blisters on both palms while breaking the middle and the top parts. Indeed the community observed with some relish attempts by such couples to feed their families. The wife who often arrived home with a medium sized bag instead of a larger one and sarova carried by the husband, was well known for being selfish and lazy. This type of woman forced their husbands to return home quickly and often it would take two days before they could return to make some more. By this time beetles had already deposited their eggs and soon the whole sago trunk would start decomposing.

In the Oaharo family, however, many of the boys including those of Oaharo's were great gougers. If one or two had accompanied their mothers or sisters to make sago, the entire trunk would be left in a hulk by mid-afternoon. And there would be a lot of sago in the two homes that evening. This was why the two families had been able to stack the two huts in such a short time and had since been waiting for the departure date to be announced.

One evening Igo informed the families that the Hiri would make the return journey in sun rises numbering one man's fingers. As the date spread to the rest of the community, the Hahari family became busy again. They had to bring in the garden food to make the farewell feast. Large banana hands were hung in rows along the verandahs and under the houses pumpkins, root crops and other vegetables were heaped in one corner of the room from where a heavy smell of freshness filled the room, while fish and animals were hunted and killed. By the end of days

numbering fingers minus four, all that had been required were stacked, piled and hung ready for the feasting the evening before the departure. Much of the meat and fish had to be roasted and heated continuously until the day of feasting. It seemed the time was too short because when the preparation had stopped the feasting began.

The feast had two major considerations reflecting age old traditions. One implied farewell and the transfer of family responsibility to a foster parent. The other implication represented a feast to remind them of a long absence of a close kin. This in effect was a feast to remember and forget the memories of the dead. With these objectives thus established clearly in his mind, Hahari Oaharo presented one feast with all its trappings to Igo Morea on behalf of the foster parents for Igo now was only a brother to Ua Suru. Another feast of equal size and proportion was shared among and between relatives, aunts, cousins and the Pukari of Toaripi. Having cleared those responsibilities Hahari Oaharo seemed the happiest man and father at Toaripi. At dawn next day, Ua Suru Hahari, daughter of Hahari Oaharo and Kevaro Havailoro, was relinquished from her mother's breast to become part of the embryo from which would spring the fond kinship between the Elema and Motu. The Toaripi stood cheering and weeping. Among them were Hahari and Kevaro of whom the latter's chest had been dampened with tears and her eyes were clearly bloodshot.

In the wake of its departure the Hiri had left a bereaved woman but a highly exalted man.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Hahari Oaharo and Kea Hahari walked onto the east. It had been many days and nights since the departure of the Hiri. But these days and nights were continuously filled with overcast skies followed by frightening storms that had leveled off some village houses and gardens when giant coconut palms and trees had fallen over them. Mother Kevaro had had sleepless nights, suffered

nightmares and dreams and pessimism was rife in her conscience over the fate of her daughter. Hahari had expected her to voice her concern so he could make a move without alarming other people. But he himself had prepared and planned thoroughly a visit to the place of his dreams. After Kevaro had voiced her concern tearfully, it was decided that Hahari and Kea should check east to endure the Hiri fleet had sheltered at some bay.

The two men had rounded the Lakekamu peninsula and swung east towards the lonely stretches of beaches severed into numerous openings through which the sea joined the inland tributaries of the Lakekamu. On these stretches were staged some of the fiercest battles of retaliation by the Heaeamora on parties of Toaripi. Kea had indicated his reluctance to proceed further when he had told his father he could not see anything on the horizon. But his father had urged and spurred him on. Hahari observed his son's behaviour closely and advised him that they may come to something that he expected.

At spots where blood had been spilled, Kea now on his guard, recalled the stories he had heard. He looked here and there, studying the movements of branches, and listening intently for the sound of any swish of the paddle against the water. His father, however, constantly maintained his gaze on the low hills tinged with white at the back of which arose a rugged blue range that appeared to represent steps cut along the sides with the peak as flat as a sandbar on a river estuary. This range had been described, by those who had seen it on clear days from the peninsula, as Uari Kovio. That name was still unknown.

Along their route, Hahari and Kea had found many stream outlets where low and high tides had threatened to widen the little openings but had been unsuccessful as there were so many of them. The only estuary known to the Toaripi at the time was Kapuri which snaked its way lazily through mangrove and nipa groves and swamps to the Lahehamu in Heaeamora country. At Kapuri, Hahari diverted his attention from the white topped hills to find Kea pleading to

retreat.

"Father, we are walking. We have been the source of quarrel. We will be risking our lives. Our people have walked before."

Hahari corrected his son's persuasiveness.

"Kea, my son it is true but no one owns this land. It can be grown here. The salt is there and is therefore unsuitable for settlement. What you are talking about will not happen today nor for a long time. Live your lives in this vicinity. Do not continue our search to find a better place."

The Kapuri river looked wide as the Lakekamu estuary. The mangroves were windswept and looked habitable but without human presence, either on the banks or posts. Father looked at the son. They would have found a place where it was narrow and an ideal crossing a short distance from the mouth. Both men were on the Hura was lying under the raft back at the village. The raft from driftwood and weapons and pushed in the other side, as they saw the weapons, they saw the depths of the channel. Kea raised his bow and stood ready. His eye caps appeared, following the raft. There was a twang on the raft as it had struck the crocodile. They left the mouth to the estuary, twirling, following the water as it went. Hahari explained his explanation on the raft. It was one of a few outlets which were at low tides. At the time the tide had risen for sometime and had receded further inland.

Between Kapuri and the mouth of the river, a place was a straight beach. Hahari took a casual look further inland and found streams criss-

retreat.

"Father, we are walking on soil that has been the source of quarrels and wars. Further, we will be risking our lives because none of our people have walked these parts alone before."

Hahari corrected his son with his persuasiveness.

"Kea, my son it is true many have died here but no one owns this area because nothing can be grown here. The place itself is deep in salt and is therefore unsuitable for any human settlement. What you are imagining cannot happen today nor for a long time as no one lives in this vicinity. We must therefore continue our search to the next river if there be any."

The Kapuri river looked wide but not as wide as the Lakekamu estuary. The trees and mangroves were windswept. Its western banks looked habitable but there were no signs of human presence, either remnants of fires or posts. Father looked at son. Son looked at father. They would have to swim across at a place where it was narrower. They found the ideal crossing a short distance up from the mouth. Both men were fully armed. The Hura was lying under Hahari's headholder back at the village. They made a makeshift raft from driftwood and twigs, loaded their weapons and pushed into the water. Across the other side, as they bent to collect their weapons, they saw the water swirl from the depths of the channel. Kea fitted an arrow to his bow and stood ready. Suddenly two large eye caps appeared, followed by nose guards. There was a twang on his bow. The arrow had struck the crocodile right in between the eyes. They left the monster struggling its way to the estuary, twirling, churning the murky water as it went. Hahari had been incorrect in his explanation on the Kapuri river. This was one of a few outlets where fresh water flowed at low tides. At the time they crossed, the tide had risen for sometime and the fresh water had receded further inland.

Between Kapuri and the next unknown place was a straight beach of black sand. They took a casual look further up from the shores and found streams criss-crossing each other.

They were in fact walking on an island. They also discovered scattered stands of coconuts that had been deposited there by currents and tides. The coastline took them to a point as long as Lakekamu, but cut off abruptly into a straight stretch at the tip. Hahari stood momentarily annoyed at the sight before him to the east. What he had been seeing from Toaripi was now bare before him. He could now see that there were two high peaks looking darker than blue with the brown of the dead grass interspersed along the sides like long wide roads sloping down and upwards to the peaks. His thought were suddenly cut by the voice of his son.

"Father, that is the most beautiful place I have ever seen. Look at how the hills roll like the waves! It is not clear from Toaripi. But look how ideal a place it is for a village!"

"Oh my son!" Hahari Oaharo was in tears weeping sentimentally. "Ever since Oaharo and I arrived at Toaripi long ago, this place has always appealed to me, and I have desired . . . it has been my utmost desire to see it and visit it. It was this desire and the irresistible Kairi spirit that had inspired Aunt Maisea to marry the Kukukuku Chief. Ua Suru was used as a play so we would have an excuse as far as your mother was concerned to travel this far onto this no-man's-land.

I am weeping because the yearning of my heart has been confirmed. The Toaripi information is that all those hills and the land sloping into the sea belong to the Sepoe. However, I have a hunch that there are people who cannot be seen who live here and who won't try their mettle against the Sepoi for those hills." For the first time Hahari Oaharo wept but in no other place than in the presence of his successor — his son.

It was Toaripi and its long peninsula now that was bobbing up and down in the distant western sea. To the east lay a wide bay into which the Miaru sprinkled its muddied debris. The Toaripi knew about the Miaru from fishermen's experiences but not in detail. Father and son stood each other's ground. The son, however, was overjoyed at his father's vision and also at his father's confirmation of his own views on a settlement

there. Again the two men confirmed that the entire place was totally uninhabited.

Youthfulness inspired Kea to wander into the interior. Behind the scattered palms, massive growths of soft beachwood and vines, lay a beautiful stream that meandered its way east and westwards. Kea followed it as far as his eye could see. After joining his father, they proceeded east and found an inlet where the sea and the stream almost met. Here, Hahari and Kea examined its westward flow carefully. It seemed to disappear near Kapuri. Both men thought if that land gap was broken there would be another great river. The two men emerged from their thinking of nature and its beauty to a surprise. There lying before them was the footprints of a full grown man imprinted on the sand at a slow pace. Beside the prints were another set of two pairs. Father and son recognised that the prints belonged to a man and two women.

"We might find company yet, my son," Hahari said matter of factly.

Upon a closer study, the two men learnt more.

"These three people must have taken a leisurely walk perhaps this morning. They were not weighed down with any burdens. Look how the main toe's dug lightly," Kea explained to his father who nodded in agreement and showed all seriousness.

"Oh, the Hiri and Ua Suru!" Hahari exclaimed as if the very thought had pricked him to realization. "Look for any wrecks. Look everywhere. Can you see anything in the bay?" Hahari became anxious of the prospect of meeting survivors.

"No father there is nothing moving. There is no tell-tale evidence of disaster." Kea made an effort to erase his father's anxiety.

The footprints had broken through a sand cliff. Its height concealed much from the two men. At that elevation, Hahari and Kea surveyed the scene. The footprints had disappeared in what appeared to be the shallow part of a small inlet which had branched off from the Miaru to the east. On the far western side of the inlet camouflaged among palms and croton bushes was a lonely hut. It seemed every conceivable plant and

shrub, including a large variety of crotons in their richness of colour, provided a natural defence. Suddenly a giant of a man in full armour stood overshadowing the shrubs.

"Friend or foe?" he shouted across the still, silent water. Then he fired an arrow at the two figures. The missile, well aimed, landed between the father and the son.

"He does not mean to fight," Hahari tutored his son. Hahari bent down and lifted the weapon by its head and said, "It's Tati. Be on your guard my son."

Without giving a vocal reply, Hahari fired a return message. This arrow landed between the feet of the man.

He picked it up and said, "Toaripi. No . . . Karama! Aha . . . Toaripi. A very precise shot."

"Perhaps I could talk with them," he spoke to himself. After saying it, he shot another arrow which fell short of the two men intentionally.

"Proceed. That arrow said come," Hahari explained to his son.

Both Hahari and Kea were slightly taller than their host but all three shared the same physique and build.

"Your brother looks suspicious," the stranger enquired of Hahari.

"He is my son. It is our first journey together in these lonely parts," Hahari cleared the other's suspicion.

"Aha," the stranger acknowledged. "What brings you and your son here?"

The language he spoke was almost Toaripi but not quite. It sounded like a dialect between the slow paced Heaeamora and the fast, steady moving Toaripi, and a tinge of the guttural tones of the Tati. It took Hahari and Kea sometime to understand the meaning of what he was saying. But his understanding of Toaripi was perfect. Hahari explained as briefly as possible the purpose of their journey and the man answered in the negative with his nods. Hahari then asked if they could cross the river that they had looked over on the other side. He agreed and then showed them a canoe which they could bring back on their return. Unknown to them, two pairs of eyes were

studying them through the biri walls of the hut withdrawn while the younger of the

"He looks handsome woman assisted in beholder. The other nervous laugh. Hahari stepped on the land dipped his right hand sand, let it flow back sand. Kea understood land they were seeing spreading north and foothills and spurs via long sandy point, an could but there was the Hiri anchored returned to the canoe the night there be Toaripi the next day. in the lonely hut; a su and the purpose of th

The name of the o at the time was Siano: Sape. They had a Siaoa. The footprint seen on the beach bel

It was already du: returned after finding affected the fate of canoe at its mooring house to leave the p thanks. However, S been sitting on an el had used as a look-out them near the only After Hahari had gi made a move to wal him.

"My brother from son be my guests. To to your village."

Hahari acknowle firing an arrow symbolising a newly that meant offering Siaoa should a raid followed right behind the small gate whic

studying them through holes forced open in the biri walls of the hut. One pair of eyes had withdrawn while the other pair concentrated on the younger of the three men.

"He looks handsome and strong," the older woman assisted in the thoughts of the beholder. The other only giggled out a nervous laugh. Hahari and Kea had already stepped on the land of the Sepoi. Hahari dipped his right hand deep into the white dry sand, let it flow back and then knelt on the sand. Kea understood and walked on. The land they were seeing now was low lying, spreading north and east, with some of the foothills and spurs visible. They walked to a long sandy point, and looked as far as they could but there was nothing that resembled the Hiri anchored there. Father and son returned to the canoe but decided to spend the night there before starting back to Toaripi the next day. a surprise awaited Kea in the lonely hut; a surprise that was the cause and the purpose of this story.

The name of the only man living at Miaru at the time was Sianoa Posa. His wife was Lui Sape. They had a daughter named Keri Siaoa. The footprints Hahari and Kea had seen on the beach belonged to them.

It was already dusk when father and son returned after finding that the storms had not affected the fate of the Hiri. They left the canoe at its mooring and walked to Sianoa's house to leave the paddle and to say their thanks. However, Siaoa himself who had been sitting on an elevated platform that he had used as a look-out, stepped down to meet them near the only entrance to his house. After Hahari had given back the paddle he made a move to walk on but Siaoa checked him.

"My brother from Toaripi. You and your son be my guests. Tomorrow you can return to your village."

Hahari acknowledged the invitation by firing an arrow away into the inlet symbolising a newly made friendship and one that meant offering unreserved support to Siaoa should a raid occur that night. Kea followed right behind his father upon entering the small gate which seemed to be at the

bottom of a very high, well built defence of tall mangrove posts which encircled the lowly built house. Once inside, he was struck by the beauty of what he saw. Sitting beside her mother and adding more flammable material to the fire was Keri Siaoa. Several times between the entrance and the fire place, Kea Hahari stubbed his toes against the stems of the carefully tended rows of crotons that lined the short path. When the flame rose, Kea was able to see this most beautiful human specimen. Keri too had turned her face to the direction of Kea. She had a well formed body; a large pair of bulging breasts; legs and arms proportionately muscled and her face as far as Kea was concerned, was not comparable to any girl he had seen at Toaripi. Hahari did not suspect anything. He had noticed the silent eagerness on the face of his son, which was confirmed by unconscious clumsiness of his son. For the first time Kea Hahari was in love. Siaoa introduced his daughter by name. After all of them had seated themselves around the fire, Siaoa made his request.

"I do not belong to this area. Many of my relatives are living in isolated 'terra' in the swamps out west. Keri is my eldest daughter and we have lived here for some time in the hope of meeting and finding a suitable husband for her. We have other children staying with my uncle, Saura Siaoa, at our 'terra'. I have been persuaded that you and your son have come this way in response to a course planned for us by the star-god who is well known to us and you. I am a Eros Tati. Your physique and design of decoration clearly tell me that you are both Malara Harai and Kave Muka. We are therefore related in our homage to the same star. I'm sure by its glory at dawn this night will be most memorable as a union will spring from which will come fame and wealth to a kinship thus created by and through the union. My wife and I have agreed in principle to such a union. I am therefore at liberty to ask your son to marry my daughter."

Hahari Oaharo was not in the least shocked by the announcement. After seeing Kei Siano for the first time he had not the slightest doubts that this was the perfect

woman for his son. He pondered on Siaoa's reference to fame and wealth as being the future possessions and heritage of a generation yet unborn. A series of questions rained through his mind. Were he and Kea not attacked when they had entered the Sepoi land? Was Siaoa himself at peace with the Sepoi? If so, how? Did the vision that he had nurtured and relished all this time effect and now befall on his eldest son? Why did Siaoa choose Kea to marry his daughter? The issues remained unresolved in Hahari's mind. He must make a reply.

"Siaoa Pasa and Lui Sape," Hahari began, "Kea is my eldest son. He is now a man eligible for marriage. I give my consent to the proposal."

The speeches involved in the request and the response, formalised the marriage between Kea Hahari of Karama — Toaripi and Keri Siaoa of Mairu-Tati. However, traditional obligations and formalities would have to be completed in order to finalise the union.

The next day, Kea Hahari left for Toaripi very early in the morning through the mist that hung across the estuary and lay thick across the bay. Some time later Hahari Oaharo woke up and having shaken hands with his host departed on the heels of his son. Kea had left early because he wanted to tell his mother and his kid brothers and sister that he was marrying the beautiful daughter of a Tati family. Just past Kapuri Hahari rendezvoused with his son.

"My son, my heart. Always remember the Kairi tradition — hit first and kill. It might be too later otherwise for you," Hahari offered moral support.

At the village, the family heard the news with joy. The mother, however, wept for joy and the same time over the fate of her daughter, Ua Suru. That evening, Hahari warned his wife.

"Kea is anxious to go back. Make sure he does not leave until we have taken token gifts to his new in-laws."

But Kea's heart was beating faster than usual. He was sleepless. So sometime before the harbingers of dawn had cackled out their welcome verses, Kea Hahari was already

gaining distance towards the east and Keri. He had in his possession the Hura which he had carefully and cautiously disengaged from under his father's headholder. Kea spent almost all of that day with his wife Keri.

CHAPTER EIGHT

On the lower spurs and foothills of Uari Kivio which undulated into an enclosed plain of alluvial deposits near the headwaters of the Miaru river, was located the mighty village of Surova — home of the Kivio family. It was not known from where they had come originally but judging by their physical appearance and straight locks of hair they resembled the Tati who dominated the mid-Miaru region and the Mekeo who occupied the inland area eastwards. Who settled when and where was not known.

At Surova one cold and misty morning, feuding family members used a domestic argument to wage an intra-tribal fight. The fight raged on for many days and many nights. Some families had already fled to neighbouring Tati while others went elsewhere. Among them were four brothers; Mitai Kivio, Furai Kivio, Hohoru Kivio and Hora Kivio. Mitai and Furai Kivio decided to try their own existence at Sepoe where a small settlement had already existed. Hora Kivio went further east where he settled at Kivori and Hohoru Kivio followed the course of the Miaru river until he reached the estuary. The Hohoru found no village. There was in fact no trace of human habitation. He knew that the land on the eastern banks belonged to the Sepoe. Rallying common sense, the son of Kivio sought to confirm the owners of the western banks. Abandoning his raft, Hohoru ventured west where the environment showed hostility. The sea buffeted the mangrove coastline where nothing edible grew. It was an unbroken coastline of mangrove junel with the only evidence of life being white seagulls. Suddenly the lonely wanderer saw the mouth of a stream. He followed it as far as he could but found the area on either side to be predominantly mangrove swamps. He retraced

his steps back to the way, he could see sandbar jutting out to sea. Its base, however, to him to be a very

Hohoru Kivio river again and this had come. This time observing and checking that were once covered had given way to swamps. Before long and after it lay a tributary of the main river. until his tired eyes alarm all over him instinctively with before him on the was a clearing and dilapidated skeletal constructions. The He decided to wait

It was a long way a track that led to stopped and even facing a row of hills 'terra' and there throughout the knowledge of H concealed themselves to protect themselves from an invading party. This indeed a party. So Hohoru had come and on the run.

"I am Hohoru he called out to the

Convinced that 'terra' people em These were the known from where Miaru were the and the Sepoe. concentration in the end of the M attacked by the the Sepoe from nowhere to move decided that each most suitable 'ter

his steps back to the Miaru estuary. Along the way, he could see the formation of a long sandbar jutting out in a westerly direction to sea. Its base, however, was way off. It seemed to him to be a very recent formation.

Hohoru Kivio put his raft back into the river again and this time went back the way he had come. This time he was more careful, observing and checking the western banks that were once covered in mangroves but now had given way to dark, dense foliage of nipa swamps. Before long he perceived an opening and after it lay a tributary about half the size of the main river. He followed it on and on until his tired eyes beheld a sight that sent an alarm all over his being. Hohoru reached instinctively with his bow at the ready, for before him on the northern side of the bank was a clearing and on it were a number of dilapidated skeleton frames of mangrove constructions. The wood seemed weathered. He decided to wait.

It was a long wait. In due course he found a track that led westward. The swamps had stopped and eventually he found himself facing a row of huts. This was the very first 'terra' and there were some others scattered throughout the region. Without the knowledge of Hohoru, the residents had concealed themselves indoors and were ready to protect themselves in case it was an invading party. They waited to see if it was indeed a party. Some time had elapsed before Hohoru had communicated that he was alone and on the run.

"I am Hohoru Kivio. I am from Surova," he called out to them.

Convinced that he was not a Tati, the 'terra' people emerged and welcomed him. These were the Miaru people. It was not known from where they had come. The Miaru were the ancient enemy of the Tati and the Sepoe. This was why population concentration in one village might have been the end of the Miaru tribe because if it was attacked by the Tati from the north and by the Sepoe from the east, they would have nowhere to move. The tribal leaders of Miaru decided that each family should choose a most suitable 'terra' for itself and settle there.

In this way each family, or group of families, could be warned in good time upon sighting an enemy. While the Miaru had no permanent base for a fight with the Sepoe there were occasional attacks for which retaliatory actions were prompt. But with the Tati, the Miaru had the most difficult time. The Tati seemed to be pushing further south to the sago swamps allegedly owned by the Miaru. In addition, the Miaru and the Tati were always clashing over a rolling hill called Herehere where any type of food could be grown. It was clear in the end that the Miaru while resettling on the 'terra' each time, were in fact pushing ambitiously north and west towards Herehere. Each time they advanced they gained ground and simultaneously in doing so, their population accumulated and eventually without realizing it they were already building in a concerted effort a village at Herehere.

Hohoru Kivio became a vital asset in the Miaru effort to wrench the Herehere land from the Tati. He had relative among the Tati who would communicate the next plan of invasion by the Tati. The relatives had despatched messages in Kivio traditional signs on sticks of floating wood. Hohoru would collect the sticks along the Miaru estuary and warn his adopted tribe of the pending attack. For a long time the hopes of the Tati were dashed and they did not know why.

CHAPTER NINE

From Hohoru Kivio came a descendant named Posa Siao (Miaru name) or Posa Maki (Tati name). The dual name identified Posa as both a descendant from Miaru and Tati so that in the event of mistaken identity he would be safe in either Miaru or Tati camp. Unlike many of the people at Miaru, Posa Maki found that his dual identity allowed him more freedom and a wider choice as to whether to fight or not. He resolved that in order to avoid any confusion he would have to remain neutral. He had to exercise this neutrality by isolating himself from the arenas of war.

Posa Siaoa therefore chose the Miaru river estuary and settled there together with a small group of relatives. In fact he had set his eyes hungrily on the land that extended from the eastern banks of the Miaru to the rest of the Sepoe country. This land was a large grassy flat that rolled gently into the sea and into the Miaru river from the slopes of undulating hills which looked like the shape of giant anthills. Two streams from natural springs ran virtually parallel to each other and emptied into a grassy plain. Giant pandanus palms, scattered at random, stood like ever wary guards fully armed but with overhead disguises among the densely foliated softwood trees that dotted the entire landscape. This was an ideal resting and playing ground for wallabies, cassowaries and pigs after drinking from the streams. Closer to the shore stood a long narrow stand of coconut trees and their haphazard positions showed that they were the efforts of nature's transportation processes rather than man's deliberate planting. To the east stood the highest peak of the hills in the area. The spurs for this peak swelled down to abrupt drops of sheer rock faces below where jagged and water-worn pinnacles awaited their fate in another struggle with wild and mighty surf. This made Sepoe inaccessible along the shore line from the west. Posa Maki studied these landscapes surreptitiously during patrols he had conducted alone.

In the afternoons when he knew that hunting parties were roaming the plain, he would walk straight on the beach and then turn back from the rocky outcrops. Posa Maki was a tall giant of a man. Wide breasted and muscular. On many occasions, the Sepoe hunting parties saw, but took no notice of his presence, or even asked him why he was there. They would not bother him because he walked lonely beaches.

One afternoon when Posa was in one of his determined moods he walked briskly up the beach to a party that was feasting on young coconuts. He was armed only with a hura that had come from Tati. He called out to them saying that he wanted a drink. There was a murmur among the warriors as if in

consultation.

Shortly a man walked towards Posa and presented him with a nut that had already turned brown in parts. In the cultural considerations this was an obvious challenge. Posa held the nut just a few moments and as he threw it back at them, his hura came crashing down at the man who had delivered it. The Sepoe had indeed meant to fight. As soon as they saw their friend fall it did not take them long to fire. They speared him but he courageously walked to their midst and swung his weapon here and there not missing his targets. It was a long handled hura. It was like a fight between a giant wild boar and its hunters. Although spears and arrows rained on him and hung like leeches sucking out his life blood, he chased them and brought them down. In the end, there were no more arrows to fire and no more lances to throw. Posa chased the few remaining Sepoe, about four, and then collapsed. Two of them had their hacking tools. Posa slumped forward onto the heavy hunting lances and countless arrows. He was still breathing. He spoke to them slowly and hesitantly.

"You . . . have always . . . seen me . . . here . . . because I . . . have always . . . wanted this land. Now . . . cut . . . cut off . . . my head. Take . . . take it . . . with you. Cut . . . take . . . ta . . . ke . . . with . . ." His words became incoherent.

One of the Sepoe approached the dying man and gave him a mighty blow which severed his head. The blood of Tati and Miaru lay oozing for the land he had loved. In the aftermath when heads were counted, Sepoe numbering one hand's fingers and one lay wounded, dead or dying for the price of one. The Sepoe took the head home. They could not have executed Posa's wish had he not killed so many of them.

When the Sepoe had returned in force to carry their dead and wounded, a message was despatched to relatives at the Miaru estuary informing them of the death of Posa Siaoa — Posa Maki. From that day the Sepoe stopped hunting in the area from where Posa had been killed extending west to the Miaru river. The Sepoe had surrendered the land

unconditionally as blood for settlement. They appointed Miraura Lakoro until a settlement

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Sisoa Posa was the eldest son of Posa. Though he could choose to be called avoid sharing claim father had won the conquest with an that his uncle, Sisoa could make a claim land was now far generations were was constantly called 'terra' loving unpredictability isolated spots because the Tati wielded blood was determined to settle on the new why he had moved property. He could looking out for war from the Miaru.

The second r daughter to any it be persuaded to hunting grounds allow a marriage any young Miaru parents' reluctant locked 'terra'. Posa but the Miaru pre the land at Here while Siaoa m settlement at the

When Kea Ha pursue his love second house was inner most secrets in-law was also Kea why he was and how Miraura were guarding grandfather Posa

unconditionally as the price had been paid in blood for settlement if Miaru relatives wished. They appointed two overseers named Miraura Lakoro and Oriri Tore for the land until a settlement had been made.

Sisoa Posa was the direct descendant and eldest son of Posa Siao or Posa Maki. Though he could also be called Maki Posa he chose to be called Siao Posa in order to avoid sharing claims of title to the land his father had won through blood and the sheer conquest with any other Maki. Siao knew that his uncle, Saura Siao or Saura Maki, could make a claim if he wished but as the land was now family property, Saura and his generations were eligible for it. Siao Posa was constantly concerned at the plight of the 'terra' loving Miaru people and the unpredictability of their future on these isolated spots because of the violent thrusts the Tati wielded because of their numbers. He was determined to give them the first priority to settle on the new land. This was one reason why he had moved from his landlocked 'terra' property. He could guard the new land while looking out for who might settle there apart from the Miaru.

The second reason was to expose his daughter to any itinerant traveller who might be persuaded to settle first on the previous hunting grounds of the Sepoe. He would not allow a marriage between his daughter and any young Miaru because of the Miaru parents' reluctance to abandon the landlocked 'terra'. Posa had been killed long ago but the Miaru preferred to fight the Tati over the land at Herehere. The Miaru sat tight while Siao maintained his single hut settlement at the Miaru estuary.

When Kea Hahari deserted his parents to pursue his love and arrived at Miaru, a second house was built. Siao revealed his inner most secrets after learning that his son-in-law was also of mixed blood. Siao told Kea why he was on the Miaru estuary alone and how Miraura Lakoro and Oriri Tore were guarding the land - wealth that grandfather Posa Maki had won from the

Sepoe. Kea had learnt from his father-in-law the responsibilities and duties he had accrued as a result of his marriage to Keri. He learnt too that Keri's family was a large one. They numbered one set of fingers plus three. Five boys and three girls including Keri who was the eldest.

Although in the Toaripi and Miaru traditions, patrilineal line was followed there were circumstances under which matrilineal handling of properties and wealth could be exercised. In well-established villages like Karama and Toaripi, the patrilineal tradition was enforced vigorously even though the eldest in the family was a girl. But in Siao's case, a very special case, he had lost four of his sons. They were killed by the Tati. These were: Posa Siao, Kavora Siao, Auru Siao and Soro Siao. He was left with three daughters and one son who was the youngest. They were Keri Siao, Sape Siao, Ivosa Siao and Koroko Siao (son).

By the time Kea had arrived the family had extended. Each of the in-law brothers had left children. Keri's two sisters had also married. And Keri, up to that time, was responsible for her brother's children. Keri's marriage transferred this responsibility onto Kea's shoulders. Siao therefore had retained Keri so that when a good strong husband had been found he would hand over the ropes to the new member of the family. Siao found Kea to be the ideal man for his daughter. Kea had physical strength; the build that Siao had seen of his later father; wisdom and gentleness, despite his protruding muscles; tactfulness and the intelligence that was needed in those uncertain times particularly in relation to sudden attacks by the Tati. Siao Posa occasionally visited the land across the river. At times he would spend the entire afternoon either with Miraura Lakoro or Oriri Tore. He told them how he would move across and start a village when he had enough grandchildren. In fact the two overseers had encouraged him to make gardens. He now had the time to choose better portions of the land for gardening.

One afternoon when Siao was returning to the house, Kea met him along the way and

presented a stick that was imprinted with marks. Kea explained that Keri had retrieved it from the west. Each of the tribe, however, moved timidly so that each could not be detected by the other.

This seemed to be the era of peace and goodwill; a time when the individual warrior now settler desired something more than killing another at first sight as they used to. Inbred tribal hatred had taught them to act at the first sign of provocation, insult or suspicion. At this time, Posa Kea No. 1, knew that he owned the land by right of being married to the descendant of the man who died for it and by right of his being given the name of this man. He had two wives named Fapo Uvisa and Aoare Pou. Fapo Uvisa had four children. Two boys called Mola Posa and Mea Posa and two girls called Haiveta Posa and Heavakao Posa. The second wife, Aoare Pou had no children but she had adopted a Tati orphan named Raipa Kauvu who was also known as Ofae Posa. He was therefore considered as a child of Posa Kea by adoption.

Mola Posa and Mea Posa migrated together with their uncles who belonged to the Savoroipi clan and settled near the site where the great ancestor, Posa Maki had been killed by the Sepoe. These people, however, considered it painful to sever themselves from the easy-going life along the rivers as against walking under heavy burdens of animal carcasses. What they did not realize was that the Sepoe had done similar sorts of things in the past. At times they lived in those settlements for many days and then returned to Moripi or Miaru. Sometimes women were taken to Lavare to carry out trial plantings of the traditional root crops, yams, tapioca and others. They yields were encouraging and moves were made to start a village there. At this time when the rest of the Miaru and Moripi shared their time between their ancient river settlements and their recently acquired hunting grounds, one of Moripi's best known Pukari named Koete Lorou, accompanied by a small group of relatives, moved permanently to Lavare. They settled on a beachhead west of the Savoroipi clan

current.

"Aha," said Siaoa. "The Tati are planning a major attack at the end of the two moons. You and Keri had better go up the river and warn the rest of our people. Also bring the children of the four brothers with you."

The next day the couple paddled up river and after communicating the message through residents on the first 'terra', returned that evening with children numbering one set of fingers and two. They also brought back news that some of the 'terra' had been abandoned and there was already an embryo village at Herehere which was expanding rapidly. This news had disheartened Siaoa very much. Siaoa Posa told Kea Hahari that the decorated floatable sticks were coming from his uncle, brother of Posa Maki named Sivio Maki. The Siaoa Posa household therefore had to make its own preparations. New mangrove posts had to be cut and a stronger and taller fence had to be built to embrace the two houses, and to improve the general defence of the small village in case of stray parties which might have had murder in their eyes. At the same time, Kea the logician, convinced his father-in-law that the invaders must be given the impression that the estuary settlement no longer consisted of a single hut but was a growing village of many houses. Secondly, the Tati were to be made to believe that the Miaru had seemingly abandoned Herehere for a mosquito free and leech free river mouth village. These two manoeuvres were aimed at the Tati as bait to bring out even the last family in the hope of settling in the land of their dream and for the Miaru to make the kill. For just two men that plan was a lot of work.

Within one moon from the time the message had been received and delivered, huts numbering the fingers and toes of three men and been constructed within the enclosure. Instead of being roofed with permanent biriplaited nipa palm fronds, the fronds were cut and placed in some order on every roof. The two houses, however, underwent extensive renovation and reinforcement. The wall linings with several layers of posts of mangrove and other wood of noted

durability. At the same wall of the enclosure layers of wood measured. There was no wood in the first major project of the Miaru river.

When all was completed back and rested. It was to make Kea familiarise history. Siaoa related to his sons.

"They were frontliners. They feared nothing and decided to kill, they killed separate ambushes. I told me as I have now on the land the Sepoe of the consequences of in the future. The Sepoe many sons I had. I made a very special request. The request, of course, how many sons you should have."

"My first request should be named Posa you of grandfather Posa will be in memory of Siaoa killed by the Tati."

"But why?" Kea asked. "So that you will claim for land at Herehere important one at Lavare slightly surprised by the name earlier."

"So the land that called Lavare," Kea told his sons.

In the meantime, mobilisation for war was no panic as had been unrecorded. A committee called including those already at Herehere three main fronts were meeting. These three semi-accessible hilly areas the uninhabited brook by natural waterway swamps with open ground course the main river three fronts should

who had been sent out to sketch strategic points for the attack earlier than had been planned. However, they numbered only the fingers and toes of two men. Their intelligence had apparently reported that the Sepoi had forsaken their hunting grounds long ago and the area therefore was free to allow them to launch an attack from there. The Tati scouts had apparently reported that the Sepoe had speed canoes overland to Lavare from a point north up the Miaru river which was the southernmost part of the area under dispute. The scouts had been out for some time and had watched concealed in the mangrove along a creek on the eastern side of the river.

According to the schedule planned by the Tati they had hoped to attack from the mouth and make their way up north to join the main invading parties. But they had erred because the main party had not yet dispersed as planned. This had given the Miaru an edge over the tati as at about the time the Tati scouts had attacked the Siaoa Posa village where the Miaru had already been deployed at the three main fronts. As a result of their error in judgement, the Tati had attacked the village ignorant of who might be within and what fate would befall them. In the darkness, Kea crept out after the first shower of arrows had been discharged from the crafts berthed some distance north and lit several rafts already loaded with dry coconut leaves and pushed them down into the water. In the light of the burning, moving and roaring flames, the Tati who had no hope of escaping, stood firing at where the flames had come from, while from the shadows of palms outside the northern section of the wall, five men stood firing back at the Tati. Kea himself had been able to score five.

Many of the Tati were wounded. About five had died. Kea jumped on the canoes, collected all the weapons and ordered those who could use their upper limbs to paddle home. Their fate was never heard of again but it was believed all of them fell under the hacking weapons of the Miaru warriors guarding the river front up north. The Tati carried out the invasion as planned and though no reports were made available, the

Miaru counter attack staged as an ambush at all fronts was the most successful in terms of its effects on the male Tati population compared to previous efforts. The Tati were still ignorant of the reasons behind their enemies' success.

After this war, the Tati seem reluctant to wage further attacks, partly because their male population had been severely depleted and partly because they believed that the Miaru had now become stronger than them. Even though there were occasional and sparse clashes away from the main settlements on either side mounted by revengeful hard-core warriors, these efforts did not hinder the Miaru influx into Herehere.

CHAPTER TEN

Kea Hahari was now firmly established as the successor to Siaoa Posa by right of his marriage to the family. He had proven himself to be, beyond Siaoa's expectation, a good husband to his firstborn daughter. Siaoa called him son openly even in the presence of Hahari Oaharo during the latter's occasional visits to Miaru. For Hahari, now an old man, his boyhood dream of the blue hills was no longer a passing vision — it was as he had wished — a family property acquired through Kea's marriage.

Hahari too had shown great respect for his son after the initial confusion over Kea's elopement with the Hura from Toareipi. What had pre-occupied Hahari's mind, however, was the question of how long it would take Kea to move across onto the new land.

"Son," Hahari would confide in Kea, "Ensure you have enough children so that the beginnings of generations thus created will continue to be identified with the land forever."

Kea Hahari was a good listener with an open mind, and he would sit between or beside the two men and listen for evenings on end while both men related their family histories. Kea also had an analytical mind and he assessed and analysed every situation, correcting what he heard mentally where

possible and vowe would not be repeat

"I shall make my the number big eno settlement of my determinedly to his

Siaoa Posa whc Hahari Oaharo w looked frail and spe — a life of success human endeavours, though isolated a identity and kinsh physical connectio which was somethir restlessness they h desiring the land a had ceased when th united in marriage.

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Mero and Elaifoee the northern interio its water out near source was the Miar branched off near tributary leading

Although the mou hidden from Haha opposite the spot t mouth might be. In which had occurre father and son ha

possible and vowed that those situations would not be repeated in his time and life.

"I shall make my first move when I have the number big enough to warrant a healthy settlement of my own," Kea replied determinedly to his father.

Siaoa Posa who was a little older than Hahari Oaharo was becoming senile and looked frail and spent. He had lived a long life — a life of successes and failures in normal human endeavours. He and Hahari Oaharo, though isolated and separated in tribal identity and kinship shared without any physical connection the same aspiration which was something short of a miracle. The restlessness they had both experienced in desiring the land across the Miaru estuary, had ceased when their two children had been united in marriage. The marriage had brought triumph to the respective fathers. Kea had assumed the practical responsibilities of the family as head of the household.

One morning an adopted daughter in the Kea family died after being bitten by a snake. Grandfather Siaoa and his son Kea had loaded the body on a canoe and headed for the common burial ground on the family 'terra'. As this was the first death in the family since the family had settled along the river mouth, grandfather Siaoa was uncertain whether to bury the body at the 'terra' or at some new place that must be found.

Siaoa began calling the names of two men who lived on a 'terra' in the area where Hohoru Kivio had first examined west of the Miaru estuary, and much later drew the admiration of Hahari and Kea on their first errand to the east coast. The two men, named Mero and Elaifoea, inhabited two 'terra' in the northern interior of a stream that emptied its water out near Kapuri. Its fresh water source was the Miaru river from which it had branched off near the mouth of another tributary leading to the Miaru 'terra'. Although the mouth of another stream was hidden from Hahari and Kea, it was directly opposite the spot they thought a new river mouth might be. Indeed, there was an outlet which had occurred at the very place that father and son had previously stood when

they had arrived — the place where they had pondered on the beauty of the scene and also had discovered the footprints in the sand.

This new river had swept past a peninsula which had risen as a long stretch of sandbank which drifted out to the sea. There was no longer a sandbank there but a jutting piece of land where vines, shrubs and young coconut palms had grown, starting from the land base on the eastern bank of the new river. Seagulls inhabited the lonely peninsula. All the way from the Miaru source of the stream, Siaoa Posa was calling, "Mero! Elaifoea! Where can I bury my daughter?"

After repeated calls the men appeared and expressed doubt as to how they could help him. Then it was agreed that perhaps the peninsula land which looked to Mero and Elaifoea to be an island, should be used as the new burial ground. After an agreement had been reached, Siaoa and Kea together with the two 'terra' men buried the girl there. After having made a mark on the land, it became known as Siaoa Posa. Later it was abbreviated to Siou Posa, meaning land inhabited by the seagull. Siaoa Posa was in fact an island. Its western periphery being the new river outlet and its eastern boundary was the Miaru river. Much later when a village was built there, it was called Moripi as many of the settlers were migrants from the main village at Toaripi; from the 'terra' dwellers plus others from other tribes. Toaripi meant the home of the father or elder brother and Moripi meant the home of the son or younger brother. Now they are Toaripi and Moripi or Lese Avihara and others which use the prefix 'Lese' belong to the Moripi tribe.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Keri Siaoa and Kea Hahari produced a family of nearly all male children. They had five boys and one girl; Posa Kea No. 1, Lauhari Kea (only girl), Haiveta Kea, Posa Kea No. 2, Karahure Kea and Forova Kea. After they had all grown up, Kea Hahari sat back puzzled. He had been able to fulfil indirectly the vision of his own father, although the advice for him to do so had

come from his father-in-law. He had in complete obedience given the same name to his other child as advised also by his father-in-law. He pondered over what he had considered to be the first such name given to members of the same family in the Karama, Toaripi and Moripi communities of his time. He, Kea Hahari, an intelligent and knowledgeable man in the culture and tradition of his people, sought for the meaning of this restlessness deep in his conscience; this mysterious movement which began with the flight of the Hura from the land of the Kukukuku and culminated in his marriage to a girl, possibly from a family of introverts who had shunned communal living and chose to lead an existence in isolation. He considered the kind of person his father had been. What was it that made Hahari flee Karama when he knew that all that was required of him was to produce the Hura? After a certain time-lapse an entire world would have opened to him. Why was he so persuasive in sending Ua Suru away and why did he pour out his heart with the truth later? Why was it that this state of affairs had been further complicated or simplified in his marriage to Keri Siaoa? Kea Hahari arrived out one conclusion; his destiny had been planned by fate and by coincidences and had been guided by the star, Oa Malara. He and his family and their generations would be wealthy in terms of the major traditional wealth — land.

Kea Hahari examined the ways and means by which this land could be his and his descendants' inheritance. He drew his conclusions; The Hura was the only evidence which could be presented to enhance the transference of tenure from the Kukukuku. Posa Kea No. 1, named after Posa Siaoa or Posa Maki was concrete evidence under the existing system and law governing the transfer of title from one to one's name sake. Posa Kea No. 2, was considered similarly for distribution of land at Herehere. The burial of the snake-bite victim at Moripi which was witnessed by the two 'terra' men, Mero and Elaifofoa, was also sufficient to stake claims there if desired. Kea had taken time to

consider these issues because of the events taking place around him. For some time there had been an outward movement of population from the 'terra' to the shores of both Moripi and Miare as a result of new contacts being made. First through the presence of Kea Hahari at the Miaru 'terra' and then through the meeting with Mero and Elaifofoa at Moripi. On both occasions, despite the purpose at hand, the Karama-come Toaripi come Miaru husband of Keri Siaoa explained how and why trade was expanding between the Toaripi and the pot making tribesmen called Lalae.

Soon after the last Tati attack the Miaru moved, even some from Herehere, and settled at spots of their own choosing along the Miaru estuary. The Moripi too had emerged from their 'terra' to found a large village at the base of the peninsula in the vicinity of where Siaoa Posa had buried his granddaughter. Through marriage exchanges and through individual personal decisions, both villages grew strong and mighty. At a 'terra' called Oapo and Lasescape in the Lavare area, experimental villages sprang up. Kea's sons, Posa No. 1, and Posa No. 2, and others were among the first to move to Lavare. At the same time in the northern and eastern periphery of the new land, the Tati and the Sepoe were moving gradually but surely into the south hunting village but some distance east from the Miaru estuary. Koete Lorou was a goitre patient who depended on his relative for his daily needs and welfare. People who settled around him came from the Laikipi clan. To the average Toaripi, Moripi and Miaru migrant settler, the presence of a well-known Pukari transcended traditional barriers and ill-feelings and this caused the founding of one of the biggest villages in the Moripi tribal region. The Sepoe had moved in too as settlers but not as landowners. The Tati were edging in too towards the coast to Lavare and they were very suspicious and this state of mind had caused several clashes along the northern perimeter.

Like any human settlement, water must be available in great abundance. A more than adequate supply was available. The two

mountain streams of Posa Maki had discovered the village satisfactorily dug from where supplies offset shortages in the creeks which flowed g

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mountain streams of clear fresh water that Posa Maki had discovered met the needs of the village satisfactorily. In addition, pits were dug from where supplies had been obtained to offset shortages in the streams. The two creeks which flowed gently and steadily into

the respective valley openings below were called Yoke and Pore. In time the village that was springing up on the small plain under the perpetual flow of the streams came to bear the name of one of them — Iokea.

CONCLUSION

The family tree which appears below serves to authenticate and identify the people who had existed. Their eventual lives and existence have been passed on orally from one generation to another and have been preserved as the major part of the family heritage.

The family tree begins with the children of Mola Posa at Iokea;

Hahari Mola
Posa Mola
Ses Mola (girl)
Karukuru Mola

Children of Hahari Mola were:

Fafapo Hahari
Maturu Hahari

Children of Posa Mola:

Hahari Posa (died)
Torupa Posa (girl)
Moha Posa
Sese Posa
Makeu Posa

Children of Hahari Posa:

Posa Hahari
Sevese Hahari (girl)
Iru Hahari
Makeu Hahari (alias Mark Auhova)
Hahari Moha
Aoare Moha (girl)
Sese Moha (girl)
Posa Moha
Keriapo Moha
Moha Moha or Kave.

Children of Moha Posa:

Torupa Moha (girl)
Liriopo Moha

LAND AT IOKEA

In recent years the Department of Primary Industry has attempted to introduce family cattle holdings through individuals or groups from a particular family or sub-families. The first such a project was established in 1977 and headed by Sir Tore Lokoloko, fourth generation descent from Koete Lorou, the Pukari with goitre at Lavare.

Due possibly to family disagreements over demarcation lines and boundaries coupled with the attitudes of the people, the project was short lived. This family and another presently headed by Moha Posa have had differences over title to the land at Iokea. Another claim currently voiced is from the descendants of a Sepoi woman named Kaisi Hapea, who married a migrant warrior leader named Tore Makeu, a contemporary of both Loete Lorou and Mola Posa. Perhaps the two former men might have been older. There are other minor claimants.

Therefore, I have written, despite some imaginative details of events and incidents, the names starting with Kea Hahari at Miaru to Moha Posa at Iokea. These names are factual. The main events recorded as oral facts are about the first and only settlement at Miaru estuary; the killing of Posa Maki and his expressed wish to take the land; the burial of Siaoa Posa's granddaughter at Siou Posa; the death of Siaoa's son by the hand of the Tati and the name of the first permanent Pukari settler.

In the first section of this story, the killing with the Hura and the subsequent flight from Karama to Toaripi is also factual. The Karama are fully aware of this and have allowed the family, headed by Moha Posa, to farm the Karama hinterland. Already six hundred acres of land is under cocoa. The Karama know that the Hura represents little to the land.

And for Ua Suru, for whom the journey was made east to the founding of Iokea, she had recovered fully and was able to marry and settle down among the Motu. Her descendants can be found at Boera and Porebada.