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PAPUA NEW GUINEA
AFFAIRS, IDEAS
AND ARTS

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BIKMAUS

A SEQUEL TO THE BRIDEPRICE OF THE HURA
Mark Auhova
IMAGES
Elizabeth Brouwer
REVIEWS
Joseph Sukwianomb, Andrew Strathern
RUATOKA
Adam Delaney
SONG LYRICS
Madaha, Efi, Jimben, Waiko, Paulus and Taler

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Vol. V, No. 3, Septem

BIKMAUNTEN, a very high mountain, a
peak, a mountain chain.

BIKMAUS, (E. big mouth)

1. A twelve gauge shotgun.
tumaus-a double barrelled shotgun.
2. The groper, a large salt water fish; also the
cod.
3. To shout, to bark, to yell, to talk loudly.
Dok i bikmaus long mipela-The dog
barked at us.
4. Shouting, yelling.
Yu harim bikmaus bilong ol?-Do you hear
them yelling?
5. To be impudent, saucy.
Yu no bikmaus long mi!-Don't be saucy.
6. A loud speaker.

BIKMAUSIM, to shout at someone, to yell
at someone or something.

BIKMONING, in the early morning, very
early in the morning.

...Mihalic

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SEQUEL TO THE BRIDEPRICE OF THE HURA

by Mark Auhova

CHAPTER ONE

The mist that had hung over the wide bay like dubious storm clouds, disappeared across the eastern horizon. In its place was a strange morning, clear and calm, that extended along the length and breadth of the bay towards the east. Nothing unusual that caught the eye moved except the everyday river debris that was always afloat seaward, steering along the ever muddy water towards new depths of the wide sea. The line of battle between the saline bitterness and the sweet fresh water remained inconspicuous on the distant surface.

Suddenly far, strange spectres dotted the mountain-stream-clear horizon against the smokey, blue background of rolling hillock country of a tribe of hillmen. There were three huge shadows moving at a snail's speed.

Watching the slow appearance of the shadows from the tip of a long peninsula far west were a group of fearless, battle-worn warriors who were engaged in their second best pastime — fishing. They were tall, well-built men of extraordinary character and courage who had broken the traditional taboo against living away from the main community. Their spirit for adventure, and the trust they held in their own strength to overcome the toughest of enemies, enabled them to found an infant village on the eastern side of the peninsula sheltering the ancient

home, Toaripi, some distance away. The taboo they had broken had been in existence since settlement had begun. This had been enforced to prevent the enemy taking advantage by waging a full scale war on the main village.

Toaripi, the mightiest village which literally meant the home of the elder brother, was situated strategically between the peninsula and the equally mighty and abundant Lakekamu river. Wars were a traditional heritage passed from generation to generation as a game of blood for blood and death for death regardless of tribe, clan or village. The survival of the strongest was the rule of the day. The location of Toaripi was vital for its defence in that it used this advantage to mount merciless and brutal killings of the Heaemora against whom it had ceaseless feuds over land in the Lakehamu hinterland, since time began. Its might and success depended on a carefully planned production of warrior manpower generation after generation. Warriors were everywhere, supported by an equal number of women and children.

Toaripi, during time immemorial had assisted the Karama in the provision of troop contingents to fight the inland Kukukuku hillmen. Indeed this was, for all practical purposes, why Toaripi had become so huge, mighty and powerful. Its name and reputation spread westward enticing such people as the Orokolo (Lavau) to join its ranks as welcomed migrants who became prospective husbands for Toaripi women. Some of these migrants, with the moral support of some Toaripi proper, were responsible for starting the fishing village. But for their rebellious singleness of mind, the settlement was at first banned from the protection and security of the system that transformed generations of young timid and weak men into muscular adults and fearless warriors.

The settlers themselves could fulfill those roles if they wished but these added responsibilities could drastically inconvenience them in as much as they strained the love relationship between

themselves and their wives. Moreover, tradition had taught them that those roles and duties were more suited to the younger generation who had yet to experience, practically, the hardships and pleasures of growing up in such a society as theirs. Initially, therefore, some of the settlers took turns in guarding the infant village, but as nothing had happened, their measure of protection had to be abandoned. Each then became responsible for the protection of his own immediate family and relatives.

However, as time went by more men of warrior reputation gradually left the main village to join the others on the settlement. Eventually, as the increase became obvious, a debate started at Toaripi as to whether the village security should be extended there as well. Those who opposed, argued that security was not required as the settlement was on a lonely beach which no enemy would even bother to trespass on or invade. This group believed that none of the young warriors would gain any practical experience. The proponents, however, argued that the locality had a strategic purpose in that if the enemy tried to invade the main village, it had access to a streamlet that enclosed the village in a semi-circle some distance to the east. In addition, they argued that the Sepoe may, by a remote chance, attempt to infiltrate the area. The latter argument was very remote indeed. Anything could happen and it was decided that warriors should be posted at the beach settlement.

Indeed nothing had happened since the settlement began. The warriors therefore in comparison to their contemporaries in the inland village, had little else to occupy their minds other than to guard the settlement day and night until they graduated at the main village. As a result they became bored and consciously felt useless. But they could not escape these duties and assignments, for to escape from the monotony would mean total existence in loneliness as traditional outcasts. This meant anyone who did just that was banned from marrying within the community because the first rule of the community had been broken: total obedience to the present. It

was compulsory therefore for any parent to make it his moral duty to ensure that his son served the full term without complaint in order to qualify as a presentable and marriageable man. These rules were universal and acceptable at every village on the coast.

It was therefore a breaking of the monotony and a shattering of dull conscience when the warriors sighted the objects on the distant horizon. They became tensely excited at the prospect of displaying their manliness and skill. Up to this time, the youths had entertained themselves with the mighty tales of conquests; of misdeeds and the ensuring shame; of courage and cowardice of their predecessors at Toaripi. Each had taken the pledge by the glory of the Morning Star (Oa Malara) that these misdeeds and cowardice would never occur among them if they ever had the opportunity to fight the enemy. Another oath taken under the same star prevented each of them gossiping about the physical weaknesses of their colleagues so that no one would be demoralized during actual battle.

Below the foothills of the mountain range far to the east lived the Tati. They were kin relatives of the Mekeo. They had settled near the headwaters of the Miaru river. While the slopes of the range extended eastward into the peninsula of hillocks where the Sepoe dwelt. The Toaripi had no information about the kind of people the Tati and Sepoe were; their habits, tastes, character and above all their origin. As a result of human nature, the Toaripi had composed their own stories about the possible origin of the Sepoe. The most common tale told was that the Sepoe had descended from a semi-spirit tribe, the tree-loving close kin of the dwarf, the Saukuru. The Saukuru in times past, had chosen mountain peaks as the place where they made their dwellings in giant sized Kapok trees. The Toaripi believed that the Saukuru were small in stature like the Kukukuku in the Karama hinterland, except that the Saukuru were a lighter coloured people who had long, black wavy hair that hung right down to their ankles. They hunted and fished but cultivated no land. They were

peace loving and harmless in fishing expeditions or homesite. Then they extraordinary powers w epileptic conditions in committed the crime.

On the other hand, it that the Sepoe, also small most ferocious people — of the character and nature. They reasoned that because remained invisible and we and fish at night, they ret The Sepoe were exposed routine and life style an found at neighbouring v Toaripi themselves. Th reasoned that the higher p mountains the lighter thei be due to changing weathe during the day, and ext Indeed the Toaripi were a in their day to day activi that if a banana bunch certain stage, it would tur a sweet smelling bunch harvest. They believed concealment period kept the sun and at the same t eyes and stares. In the learnt from their own that a young warrior 'Elavo' always emerged a lighter skin pigment as if skin for a new one like a

This phenomenon co resolved. Generation afte to accept it as part of the seeking answers. It understanding. The mo they had, which was most the lighter, paler skin of was almost the dazzling stripped banana stem. In up and transformed itself its parents. With these p realities surrounding therefore consciously bel he had never seen nor h must, by that general p

peace loving and harmless, unless obstructed in fishing expeditions or disturbed at their homesite. Then they would exercise extraordinary powers which could cause epileptic conditions in people who had committed the crime.

On the other hand, the Toaripi believed that the Sepoe, also smaller in stature, were a most ferocious people — a complete reversal of the character and nature of their ancestors. They reasoned that because the Saukuru had remained invisible and were able only to hunt and fish at night, they retained their fair skin. The Sepoe were exposed to a more human routine and life style and resembled those found at neighbouring villages or like the Toaripi themselves. The Toaripi further reasoned that the higher people lived up in the mountains the lighter their skin colour would be due to changing weather conditions of cold during the day, and extreme cold at night. Indeed the Toaripi were aware of this process in their day to day activities. They had learnt that if a banana bunch was wrapped at a certain stage, it would turn from dull green to a sweet smelling bunch of yellow fruit at harvest. They believed that the long concealment period kept out the heat from the sun and at the same time stopped prying eyes and stares. In the same way they had learnt from their own practical experience that a young warrior kept hidden in the 'Elavo' always emerged after sometime with a lighter skin pigment as if he had shed his old skin for a new one like a snake.

This phenomenon could not easily be resolved. Generation after generation grew up to accept it as part of their existence without seeking answers. It was beyond their understanding. The most original evidence they had, which was most significant, was that the lighter, paler skin of a newly born infant was almost the dazzling white of an over-stripped banana stem. In time, the baby grew up and transformed itself to the skin colour of its parents. With these physical and practical realities surrounding him, the Toaripi therefore consciously believed that the people he had never seen nor had any dealings with must, by that general principal possess the

skin colour of the young initiates; the covered banana or the newly born infant. Thus it was concluded from generation to generation that the Saukuru, the Tati and the Sepoe were lighter coloured tribes, but the Toaripi had serious reservations about the latter. The settlers therefore at the new village, being part of Toaripi, shared those beliefs. These visions and concepts of the neighbouring tribes had become part of the everyday thought and topic of discussions among both young and old alike at Toaripi.

The young initiates, or Hehova, crowded on the look-out platform and strained their eyes in their efforts to identify the objects moving at a snail's speed. Every moment as the distant gap was closed, it became clear that they were afloat, and were sailing but not floating. Once this identification was made, the warriors were struck by fear and apprehension that there might be a double attack; a strike by the people on board, if there were people, and another from the Sepoe who might be following the vessels on land. In a moment, this fear turned into excitement over their anticipation of a possible war and confusion as to whom would be the winner in the outcome. Under such premonition, each began expressing his own imagination of the terror and pending trouble, and just whom the enemy might be. The silence that followed, allowed each to pursue possible answers from deep down in his heart. This concentration of the conscience was shattered by the uncertain tones of one of their numbers.

"Look! It's a Ma Sevese," he said pointing to the monstrous looking sailing objects.

Ma Sevese was, according to the Toaripi, an unidentified sea monster which was believed to have emitted a glaring light in the form of an upside down waterfall. It made great sighs at the same time. However, another warrior disagreed.

"No! It's a Saukuru canoe," he argued.

"No! It's Sevese. Look!" the first warrior retorted. "See the light?"

"No . . .," the second warrior could not complete his thought as he was interrupted by the warrior leader.

"If it was a Ma Sevese it should have been diving and surfacing every now and then, or it should have disappeared a long time ago," the leader explained wisely. "On the other hand, the Saukuru are spirits of the forests and therefore cannot afford to be seen by human beings. We should all wait until they are a little closer. If they are coming our way at all," the warrior leader concluded.

His charges as a result remained quiet and encouraged. No leader was allowed to take sides. Rather he should, where possible, try to bring about reconciliation and maintain morale. He could not be accused openly and be disciplined as a result by the elders.

The objects of their concern drew nearer and were soon visible. They were sailing vessels all right because their prows were slashing through the water despite their speed. The warriors watched with the eyes of a preying eagle. At one stage they all seemed to agree that these were in every appearance floating 'Elavo'. Each vessel had a double roofing which ran parallel above the entire length of the vessel. The roofs sloped into a semi-circle in the middle and one of the rooftops was higher than the other. To the warriors of Toaripi, the roofs viewed from that distance, resembled the claws of a large mud crab. At a closer range, however, they were visible disproved. One warrior ventured bravely to correct the earlier impression. He poked at the side of the leader and whispered, "That is not Elavo but sails. Look carefully."

"Quite true," they all sighed.

Instantly they were awestruck by the size, height and the decorative colours of each vessel with their prows pointing threateningly to the shore. Suddenly the leader shouted above the hesitant clatter of the warriors.

"There are people on board. Look! They are indeed big canoes. Two dugouts each. No, three dugouts," he clamoured.

"Aye yes, they are very big canoes," another warrior confirmed as did all of them.

Immediately the conch shell breathed into life. Controlled and blown in short bursts to signal an invasion. In response, the rest of the warriors rushed to the security area just below the lookout platform constructed of bamboo

and mangrove stilts. Shortly the narrow entrance was opened and the men surged onto the beach where they stood in battle formation along the tide mark. The warrior leader, Ito, waded into the water and positioned himself right in front of the troops. He was deep in thought. He decided that there might be an attack and ordered that the troops return to the safety of the fence.

"All warriors return to behind the fence and take your positions there," he said.

"There are many people on the canoes and we are outnumbered," Ito said estimating the enemies strength. The warriors withdrew. Ito selected the best shots among the troops and ordered them to join him on lookout. They sat atop in anticipation of the swish of arrows — a signal that the others meant war, and therefore the attack must be made.

The Toaripi waited with tense patience. Unlike their fore-fathers who had dwelt in an era of mistrust and suspicion caused by their own fear of a stranger's untold might and fighting potential, these families of Toaripi had chosen to lead a life of peace. Thus they had no reason, either by heritage or mere love of war and blood, to provoke war when they knew the odds were against them. The conviction of the settlers was that the isolation between the main village and settlement, had meant that the quick temperament; the unchecked calls to arms at the sight of any stranger; the very attitude and pugnacity of their mainland counterparts, no longer inspired them. They were at a new village and therefore they were determined to lead a new existence; a peaceful existence. At the same time, they knew how to fight but their skills should only be applied in retaliation. Such were the thoughts of every warrior who stood gazing at the side of the canoe and the skin colour of the people on board, for the vessels had anchored not far from the shore and everyone could see them all.

They were the biggest canoes the Toaripi had ever seen. True, at both Toaripi and Karama, they could make canoes as big as these but they had very little spare time to do so as the protection of welfare and livelihood had become a full time engagement day and

night. The canoes they were them an awesome feeling. beauty drew admiration from who might have otherwise each side, visible to the war large tattered strips of bark were weaved and plaited into canoe bodies by means of framework that covered the canoes. On these sides too, dishes for throwing out water. At each stern stood houses more like lean-to huts but with small openings facing the houses were built on the front were large spaces which were of platforms higher than the canoes. These platforms were them above the levels of the masts, to which the huts were hung two large flies which claws all of a mud crab. The earlier for the 'Elavo'. Hang flies were a myriad of colour material that flew at every wind.

The people on board the gathered on their respective could be easily seen. Their long, straight, dark, rounded faces and giant size sent a stirring among the warriors reigned among them. For taken over. Others stood in mental doldrum, uncertain people were adorned in traditional looking ornaments the Toaripi. The strangers had, while themselves in happy conversation gestured and laughed aloud slightest sign of fear and warriors made no move across the small stretch separated them from the strange people on their shore. There was a long moment was broken intermittently harmless minute waves lapped the shore. This silence was shattered by a voice.

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night. The canoes they were looking at gave them an awesome feeling. Their might and beauty drew admiration from the warriors who might have otherwise begun battle. On each side, visible to the warriors, there hung large tattered strips of banana leaves which were weaved and plaited and fastened to the canoe bodies by means of bamboo framework that covered the length of the canoes. On these sides too, hung bowls and dishes for throwing out water from the inside. At each stern stood houses which looked more like lean-to huts but were fully covered with small openings facing the masts. Similar houses were built on the front. Between them were large spaces which were raised by means of platforms higher than the rest of the canoes. These platforms had shelters over them above the levels of the roofs. On the masts, to which the huts and shelters joined, hung two large flies which resembled the claws all of a mud crab. These were mistaken earlier for the 'Elavo'. Hanging all around the flies were a myriad of coloured pieces of material that flew at every whisper of the wind.

The people on board the three canoes had gathered on their respective front decks and could be easily seen. Their light skin pigment; their long, straight, dark, wavy hair; their rounded faces and giant size of their canoes sent a stirring among the warriors. Confusion reigned among them. For some, fear had taken over. Others stood there in a state of mental doldrum, uncertain of whom these people were adorned in these most precious looking ornaments the Toaripi had ever seen. The strangers had, while gathered, engaged themselves in happy conversation as they gestured and laughed aloud, showing not the slightest sign of fear and trepidation. The warriors made no movements but stared across the small stretch of water that separated them from their land and the strange people on their strange, giant canoes. There was a long moment of silence which was broken intermittently by muffled slaps of harmless minute waves lapping the watery shore. This silence was shattered by an eerie voice.

"They are Saukuru!" said a warrior among the ranks.

"Look! They are Saukuru. See their hair! Look carefully!" he shouted as he broke off from the ranks and fled. He was followed on his heels by more men. Their destination — Toaripi.

The disturbance by the fleeing warriors had caused an emotional rift among the rest — those of courageous mettle, who considered it childish to dash like cowards, and others who had dreaded the strange presence but could not dare show it for fear of being branded cowards for the rest of their lives. On the canoes the strangers had heard the shouts and became alert. As a result, there were movements on board. Some people had begun throwing wooden shields piled on the foredecks to their respective owners. In a moment, all on the canoes stood shielded from just above the shoulder to their ankles. In their minds, however, they were convinced that they were not there to fight anyone or declare war but to offer what they had valued in their community for barter.

They had sailed away from dry, arid land in search of longer lasting edibles. For this search, they had brought their shields and lances for protection and defence only but not to kill other people. They loved peace and not war, and were prepared to sail again if they must. Their canoes had called at a number of ports west where they had found a well established communication link and where they had also seen evidence of the goods they had in store. They had therefore sailed west. Now despite the precautions they had taken, they had judged that they may yet find friendship among those who stood on the shore as no arrow had yet been fired and no spear cast.

In the midst of their pondering a huge figure adorned in every conceivable ornament rose from inside the middle shelter of the nearest canoe and made his way towards the front deck. He had no shield but was accompanied by two others, small in stature, who carried their shields. He found a vantage point readily made and stood there like a piece of driftwood stuck on a sandbar at the

mouth of a river. He swayed with the rhythm of the vessel played by the dwarfed waves.

This man had a beautiful red stripe that ran down from his forehead to his belly button, and down along his cheeks to his shoulders. Strokes of bright red and white lime competed for prominence against the charcoal black lines which radiated from his lips and spread onto his entire face. From his neck down to his chest an assortment of brightly stringed beads danced to his breath. Over his beady chest and imposing itself beyond the limits of his chest, hung a crescent shaped ornament that dazzled the eye in the weak glory of the morning sun. It was the largest piece of shell on his oily body. The entire length of both his arms was draped in countless whitish shells, while below from his knees to his ankles, more shells were fitted. His headgear, however was more impressive and attractive. Various brightened plumes shot up heavenwards from a distinguished red and blue band, and these quivered at every movement of his body.

Upon sighting land at some place east, this paramount chief, named Lohia, whose name and status was synonymous to the Pukari of Karama and Toaripi, had adorned his robe of authority for a supposedly friendly reception which did not eventuate. Instead a hostile welcome through darting arrows had forced him to rush to safety. No one was hurt. But Lohia had decided to remove the head-dress and leave the rest of his ceremonial dress on after the minor chiefs on board had convinced him that another village was on the point far west. These people might be friendlier; if there indeed was a village. He had remained thus partially dressed until this settlement came into sight. He had then mounted the head-dress and positioned himself prominently on the prow in order to attract and achieve peace. Now that it had been established, that no act of hostility had been shown so far, he stood conspicuously against the coloured background and waited to declare his intentions.

Behind Lohia stood another man who was armed with only a conch shell. The rest of the men stood around him with their lance heads

on the canoe floor indicating that these would not be thrown in a counter attack even by force. After a hand signal from Lohia, the conch shell man took a step forward just in front of the chief, and after a deep breath blew with all his might; once, twice and a third time. The blasts were monotonously familiar to the audience but were at the same time fearsome and strange to them due to the larger size of the shell used. Indeed the man who blew it seemed to have been buried on it. In practical reality, the message simply called on everyone at a village to attend a meeting in which all the chiefs would speak on matters of public interest; like welfare and law. On this occasion though, the audience would be those standing on the shore.

The settlers themselves had heard the wails of the conch shell and related it to their own experience of smaller sounds introducing a wedding ceremony. Indeed, only a far older and experienced felt. This would be the case. They therefore stood steadfast in the thought that there would be some kind of a ceremony on the canoe. But the young were uncertain and dubious; they eyed each other; they inquired, through their eyes, of the older warriors and from the man who commanded them.

There was yet no voice from the canoe; no answer. Ito himself stood in suspicious examination of the strange visitors on the canoe. Every moment became tense. Then from the young Toareipi warriors a lone voice decided to breach protocol and took it upon himself to shout.

"Shoot! Throw! Fire!"

Before he had completed the last command, an arrow grazed his upper left arm and carried itself to the seashore where it came to a stop.

"Shut up and return to your mother's womb," Ito shouted down angrily "Destroy your weapons! Now move!"

The young warrior did as he was ordered and broke himself away in shame from the rest of the company. Discipline among even the settlers was strictly observed. There was no leniency for those who ventured too far without proper authority and permission.

"Anyone else who feels what he did," Ito inquired.

Not a word was said. Ito conducted a quick appraisal and was soon satisfied that no further action was warranted. Thus he turned his attention to the bird life once more in subdued tones. He had slight doubts himself about the wails but his view of the situation was still disengaged. The canoe. Nor were they engaged in intense physical exercise. The time was his. He, Ito Lae, leader among the settlers decided to wait.

The morning sun beat down a tolerable heat. The look against the shoreline a recoiling, allowing those in view of the canoes and their occupants. Visible now of round and semi-circular swamped the decks to people on board were passages that wove in rows. Some of the objects but all of them were intricate string works along panels or fixed vessels lengthwise. At fires burned under one through an opening at the outwards.

At one front deck, henchmen stood a lone another tone of order shore. They had learned they had heard had been at the fences. They had the ensuing silence a purposes; meaning the group, had been ordered action they had suspected since anchoring, might

Convinced that he should no longer fear for he had spoken to

"Anyone else who feels the same, then do what he did," Ito inquired in investigation.

Not a word was said. No one moved. Ito conducted a quick appraisal of the situation and was soon satisfied that no further action was warranted. Thus Ito returned his attention to the bird like figure and gazed once more in subdued jealousy. Earlier, he had slight doubts himself over the meaning of the wails but his view on this had changed. He knew there would be no attack as all the lances were still disengaged, facing the floor of the canoe. Nor were the people seen to be engaged in intense preparations for any deadly exercise. The throwers stood in their places. He, Ito Lae, leading Toaripi warrior among the settlers decided to do likewise and wait.

The morning sun began to eject flames of tolerable heat. The long cool shadows cast against the shoreline and beyond were also recoiling, allowing those on the shore a better view of the canoes and the belongings of their occupants. Visible now were rows and rows of round and semi-round objects which swamped the decks to the extremities. The people on board were only walking along passages that wove in and out through the rows. Some of the objects were upside down but all of them were neatly bundled in intricate string works and were either hung along panels or fixed on both sides of the vessels lengthwise. At the rear decks steady fires burned under one of these objects, and through an opening at the top, steam spiralled outwards.

At one front deck, Chief Lohia and his henchmen stood a long while after hearing another tone of order from the platform at shore. They had learned by instinct that what they had heard had been directed again down at the fences. They had therefore interpreted the ensuing silence as significant for their purposes; meaning that another rebel, or group, had been ordered away. Otherwise the action they had suspected with mixed feelings since anchoring, might soon take place.

Convinced that he and his tribesmen should no longer fear for their lives, for which he had spoken to them soon after the

incident, Lohia proceeded a step forward and mounted a low platform built on the deck. In doing so, the bright rays of the morning sun exposed him in every detail. He was indeed a very large man; taller than the rest of his kin; with broad shoulders but with a sagging middle as a result of a pot belly. The rest of his body, his arms and legs were proportioned. The iridescent colours of his chiefly rank became bolder and more striking in the morning sun. His well-oiled shells; the necklace, arm ornaments and those on his legs sparkled weakly and dangled at his side at every movement. The quivering plumes on his head-dress, which was the most colourful of his dress, gave the viewers the impression of a man flying above the surface of the water like the flying fish through watery rainbows.

"He is a Pukari!" someone murmured among the older warriors.

"He is a Pukari. His dress explains that," Ito confirmed. "And he is going to speak."

Every eye was focused on Lohia who had at that moment signalled for something to be brought to him. IN compliance, the conch shell man presented him with another shell of a smaller size. Through this, Lohia gave his address in a most unusual but soft appealing language.

"Friends, sharers of this coastland and the wide sea, we ourselves are coastal people too. We depend on the sea for all of our livelihood. I'm sure you use the sea like we do. Your land, your coast, your houses and your very selves have for time untold lain in the greener path and the kind and generous shadow of the mighty north westerlies. She has swept and trodden your land with her mighty watery feet which has caused the mountains and the hills to split and part forever. Through these, her handmade valleys, everlasting waters flow from the depths of the mountains and the hills supply you with ever sweet smelling water. The kindly western wind never forsakes her friends. Indeed you are her children because you dwell directly under her high and moving roofs that she makes during her ceremonial singing of thunder; her cold, lively breath of storm from her singing; her life-giving tear

drops of rain from her sobs and weeping when she is overwhelmed with immeasurable joy and happiness.

"So as part of this privilege and heritage she has made provisions so her children cannot suffer hunger and starvation. Where her tears have joined the rocky and stony waters from beneath the mountains and the hills, and where the life giving sea and its bitter salt battle tirelessly, she has given you abundance — sago. And this, friend, we have come to buy."

On that note Lohia paused. But at a sudden thrust of his conch shell hand forward at which some men, who had been concealed by the display of goods, advanced in a ceremonial manner to the stage in front of the chief's platform where they each held the edges of one of the display rafts. All the objects, it seemed, were packed in this manner. Gently and carefully the raft was lifted from the floor of the canoe and lowered down the side of the canoe by means of a ropework that hung from a pole on the deck. The raft landed with a little splash on the water. It contained the wealth of a dream. On the shore, the few men left, stood agape guessing at what might be on the raft. Others, who had carefully studied the display, knew what they were. None of them, however, knew the slightest thing about the language used in the address, and the motives behind the raft. Under their scrutiny, long poles pushed the raft away from the canoe. It floated slowly westward towards a sand bank left by low tide. Ito whistled a signal at which the best shot among the warriors darted up the platform and stood waiting for orders.

"Bring the raft to shore," Ito ordered.

After taking a long and careful aim, the warrior's spear swished into the air and landed with a thump on one of the main wooden frames of the raft. The tail of the spear had been ingeniously attached to a long coil of rope one end of which was held by warriors on the platform. The warriors pulled and pulled, carefully, cautiously and nervously. At last the raft was beached. At that moment a sigh of intense happiness shot out from every mouth there. Ito made his way

slowly down from the platform. As he stepped out onto the sand, he turned and issued a short but brief command loud enough to be heard by all.

"All stand ready to act in the event that I'm hit. Do not expose your weapons though."

Although Ito could not command an attack he had had to take precautions just in case. He tightened his hands on the main wooden planks on either side and dragged it along the sand as if he had just completed fishing and must put the canoe on dry sand. A make shift gate at the entrance was pulled ajar inward and several hands helped lift the raft into the safety of the fence.

Once the raft was inside the men anxiously gathered around admiring the quality, the size and material from which the vessels were made. They were totally ignorant of how these things were made but they had some idea that mud had been used to make them. As if to conform to that feeling, one warrior ventured to state that both mud and sand were used.

"No," said another warrior, "these things are made from a kind of mud that is commonly found on the side of hills and mountains."

"If you make one with mud and sand, pour water on it, and heat it over a fire, you'll have no pot because it would melt into pieces and put the fire out," he concluded.

No one else said anything because there was nothing more to say. Curiosity took the better of the warriors as they elbowed, stumbled onto each other; stepped over each other's toes in efforts to be the first to see, touch, feel and caress the stringed-up and bundled surfaces of cooking utensils. The smaller pots and other wares were secured in the same manner. It took some time, however, for the wares to be undressed.

Before the warriors then stood cooking pots, dishes, bowls, water pots and scoops of all sizes emitting a slight smell of earthiness and fire. Earlier a messenger had been sent to spread the arrival of the raft to the women and children who had been watching from verandahs and under the houses. The news was received with great caution as the warrior

himself had not yet pro of the bundles. Hasten with excited babbles an fear and surprise, the were allowed to mix where they immediate for the various utensils. sung of beauty; made about the intelligence strange tribesmen who this land. Having estab the things before them excited, and in extr began conversations th men.

"Now, the days of will end. There will be and palms," said an eld

"You have said well "So will the days of th the river even at night eating crocodile."

"Water will alway house for anyone at a elder woman.

Although the conve the remarks expressed the physical difficulties women faced in their wives in order to f members of their ho were no proper conta and for storing water lingually-related villa Toaripi. As far back a quickest and the m cooking was by roasti meat and any other f cooked were always placed in the hot ash u a time of the forgotte turned the lonely habitation, he had bee that one single dilemn for his needs. So far h of coconuts as cups, sj Whatever he had brot of cooking utensils h carelessness and want He had then foun

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himself had not yet properly seen the contents
of the bundles. Hastening towards the scene
with excited babbles and cackles of controlled
fear and surprise, the women and children
were allowed to mix together with the men
where they immediately recognised the uses
for the various utensils. They shouted praises;
praising of beauty; made measured comments
about the intelligence and cleverness of the
strange tribesmen who had brought them to
this land. Having established the usefulness of
the things before them, the women became
excited, and in extremely happy moods,
began conversations that slightly irritated the
men.

"Now, the days of coconut shell utensils
will end. There will be no more burnt fingers
and palms," said an elderly woman.

"You have said well sister," put in another.
"So will the days of those numerous trips to
the river even at night and in fear of the man-
eating crocodile."

"Water will always be available in the
house for anyone at anytime," chorused the
elder woman.

Although the conversation had been brief,
the remarks expressed idiomatically revealed
the physical difficulties and daily hazards that
women faced in their duties as mothers and
wives in order to feed and quench the
members of their households. Indeed there
were no proper containers for cooking food
and for storing water at homes at the two
lingually-related villages — Karama and
Toaripi. As far back as time immemorial, the
quickest and the most urgent method of
cooking was by roasting. Banana, sago, fish,
meat and any other food that needed to be
cooked were always burnt over a fire or
placed in the hot ash under the fire. Indeed in
a time of the forgotten past, when man first
turned the lonely shores into human
habitation, he had been struck and puzzled by
that one single dilemma — how to boil water
for his needs. So far he had utilized the shells
of coconuts as cups, spoons, and even as pots.
Whatever he had brought with him in the way
of cooking utensils had disappeared through
carelessness and wanton breakages.

He had then found that the customs and

traditions with which he had migrated
simultaneously, demanded more from him
even in his new environment. There were
feasts, dancing and other ceremonies and
celebrations that must be preserved. This
demanded bigger and more efficient cooking
pots. The coconut vessels were inadequate.
The number of his tribesmen had been
increasing all the time. In addition he had
discovered that steaming hot water was a
miraculous cure for body ailments apart from
other treatments he knew. To him hot water
was prevention, cure and relief for his health.
So far the existing shell pots left much to be
desired in terms of availability of hot water in
large quantities at any one time. He must
therefore find other means. He embarked on
his first improvisation after the coconut shells
and bamboo utensils. Larger and full grown
bamboos already abundant in his new
environment, were cut in varying sizes
according to his needs and used as pots.

For a while this answered his requirements
comfortably but the population at the village
was growing which meant more and more
bamboo had to be cut. In time, his source had
been exhausted. Therefore life naturally
returned to where it had begun. However, in
the numerous ceaseless ceremonies, bamboo
had been employed as dancing drums. Only
these remained a while. At about this time
population had outgrown the land available
for settlement, and further migration began.
New villages were founded at Karama and at
Toaripi. Towards the end of migration, a
great discovery had been made as a result of a
careful observation. If wood could be carved
into canoes and used as other types of water
craft, then drums could be made in the same
way, and most definitely as pots. This was
their third improvisation as a result of their
search for something bigger to meet their
variety of obligations. So the settlements at
both Karama and Toaripi resorted to
hollowing out wood for pots, drums and
canoes.

This era of wood lasted sometime at
Toaripi where experiments continued with
wooden pots. Wood was never a fire resistant
material, and despite the inconveniences it

continuously caused, wooden pots were never abandoned. Enthusiasm over its continued usage gathered momentum when it was successfully learnt that flaming hot river pebbles sunk in wooden dishes, heated the water or liquid and provided the much desired hot water for soup and general cooking of vegetables, meat and fish. Above all, hot water could always be made available for the treatment of muscle aches, headaches, fever, snake bites, stings and other complaints.

The Toaripi had become complacent while at Karma experiments were conducted into another element — stone. The Karama too had learnt to use hot stones, but since their settlement had been located near a large coastal cliff face to the west, they had decided to design pots from it. Large slabs were torn out of the cliff face and were laboriously carved out as pots. As a result, for some considerable period of time, wooden containers and stone pots from Karama, vied for the favour of the untiring hands of the coastal women, prior to the arrival of the barter of earthen pots.

Conversations between and among elderly women were often interesting accounts of their personal experiences tinged with ills of the community of their time. In every case, matters of great community interest were debated, and often the discussions were nothing more than tips on correcting weaknesses that they saw within the village. The two elderly women who had spoken earlier had been allowed to feel and speak their minds about the pots. The one who had spoken of the pots as an introduction to relief for every woman, carefully prised out the largest of the pots from its mooring, and held it against her bosom. Overwhelmed by its size and make, she spoke about what everyone there thought in unison. The neck of the pot was slightly higher than her head.

"Sio-o-o," she gasped a sigh of unprecedented relief, almost a yearning for some perfection in the efforts of life. She felt young again because it was at that stage of her life that she was active in cooking. Now it would be different. The one pot she was now

holding would cook everything in the one place. Her thoughts became verbal.

"This is a dream. this pot is not heavy at all. Look!" She took it sideways, and turned it up side down without any obvious effort. "My sisters, women of Toaripi," she continued. "Our ancestors strove to make something like this, but they did not succeed. Instead they had made something out of wood and stone which we have found to be clumsy and intolerable as cooking utensils. The craftsmanship of our ancestors will now be forgotten."

She paused. Tears fell streaming down her eyes and under this strain, she concluded her talk thus. "Put in as much food as you can afford. Rememebrr our tradition and customs demand an unselfish reliance on one another. We have been taught that none among us must suffer. You all know that the result of selfishness is embarrassment, and embarrassment and shame can claim lives. It is my wish that as mothers we shall cook in these pots to serve not only our families but those among us who we know must also share in this new heritage."

Once she had completed, all the women were rummaging through the array of smooth, dully beautiful pots and other utensils, admiring them and silently shared the sentiments and the wisdom expressed by their colleagues. It appealed to the women not to take any of the utensils away.

"We will decide as soon as we learn who these people are. You must all return to your houses now," he said. The women and children dispersed leaving the warriors to wonder at the meaning of the gifts.

On board, chief Lohia and his men were sharing a steaming hot meal, each with a bowl in his hand and ate from it as if demonstrating to the people on the shore the usefulness of the pots. Indeed there were gestures to show that this was the case. Then the conch shell man blew down in his instrument a note shorter than the first. This denoted the continuation of the speech.

Lohia therefore resumed his position after it had been generally agreed upon the canoe through human instinct that the reception of

the gift on the shore had been. Then he described the general and the community life of his people. "While you have the west wind mother, we have the east wind and as a father he is kind but nevertheless is more limited and reserved attitude in providing for our people. Unlike the mother west wind, whenever he wishes and when he brings so much rain and at times it brings the land; to our food gardens and villages. As a result of his reserve does not come for many, many years."

"However, the wet breath of the wind passes over our land and during the dry season we are able to plant root food crops like yams, taros and potatoes as well as other fruit. These are harvested many moons just a short space before the next west wind comes out. Then it is time once more for the dry season. During this long delay we face great hardship in that our food supplies from the harvests become exhausted but we have larger gardens often would have so many would have to struggle."

"The struggle is for food from the sea, however, provides us with food. Scattered along the coast are numerous fish traps which are abundant in fish and shellfish and crayfish and many other foods. We are seafaring people and are able to survive even during droughts. It is for this purpose we decided to seek and open up to the people who share the same coast. What you have just seen are gifts we offer you. We have a great variety of every piece on this canoe to exchange them for sago, betel nut and anything you can offer us. About you are not warriors who have come to fight against you. We love peace. Therefore this journey therefore is peace and friendship."

Lohia concluded his speech with a man satisfied with a successful major address. On shore the warriors had broken through the line and had resumed the positions they

in the one gift on the shore had been favourable.

Then he described the general environment and the community life of his people.

"While you have the west wind as your mother, we have the east wind as our father. As a father he is kind but merciless and

therefore is more limited and reserved in his attitude in providing for our livelihood.

Unlike the mother west wind, he sends rain whenever he wishes and when he does there is

so much rain and at times it brings disasters to the land; to our food gardens and to our

villages. As a result of his reserved nature, rain does not come for many, many moons.

"However, the wet breath of the west wind passes over our land and during this time we

are able to plant root food crops such as yams, taros and potatoes as well as bananas

and other fruit. These are harvested after many moons just a short space of time before

the next west wind comes our way again. Then it is time once more for the east wind.

During this long delay we face great hardships in that our food supplies from previous

harvests become exhausted but those who have larger gardens often would manage but

so many would have to struggle.

"The struggle is for food from the land. The sea, however, provides us with all we need.

Scattered along the coast are numerous reefs which are abundant in fish life including

shellfish and crayfish and many other sea foods. We are seafaring people and therefore

are able to survive even during the worst of droughts. It is for this purpose we have

decided to seek and open up trade with the people who share the same coastline with us.

What you have just seen are what we can offer you. We have a great variety and a large

number of every piece on this canoe. We will exchange them for sago, betel nut and

anything you can offer us. Above all, we are not warriors who have come to wage a war

against you. We love peace. The message of this journey therefore is peace and trade."

Lohia concluded his speech with the air of a man satisfied with a successful delivery of a

major address. On shore the bulk of the warriors had broken through the gate and

had resumed the positions they had been

standing in earlier. They had no idea, not even the slightest about what had been said; what the intention was in speaking to them in a language they could not speak themselves and understand. How could they respond if they had wished? The words sounded beautiful, inspiring and were spoken in tones that contained no threats nor demands. The language was soft and appealing. Indeed, to the Toaripi, Lohia's many gestures were indicative of appeals to them to allow the strangers to visit the village. Everyone had been given the impression that without harshness in the words spoken he meant to be friends — they wanted to be friends.

The warriors knew from their own experience and habits at Toaripi that the enemy could not afford to warn the other of an impending invasion. But only that when the two forces met face to face the stronger and the more powerful survived. But these strangers on their strange canoe had spoken first casting doubt on that great tradition. The speech had been followed by a raft full of presents. A potential enemy had no time and could not exchange presents as such. Under this state of indecision, an elderly man who was one of only three people of similar age who were constant companions of Ito, sought to speak. At that point in time, no Pukari (chief) nor any descendants were there. The settlement had been founded by a group of adventurous warriors (Semese). The warriors wielded the authority and maintained peace at the village, on behalf of the Pukari. This traditional administrative system could not be introduced as yet because ownership of land there was not clear. The entire peninsula had always been under dispute among some clans. Some claimed that the area was merely an extension of their traditional land from where it had become narrower almost at the base. Others disputed this claim and argued that there had once been sea pounding against that land. The peninsula, they had argued, had appeared as a sandbar away from the land, caused by a continuous and consistent accumulation of large drifting logs which had found steady footing on the river bed. These in turn drew sea resistant

vegetation like nipa, beach vines and creepers, coconuts and other quick growing debris. In other words, they claimed no one owned the peninsula. It had been formed by forces unknown to anyone. Anyone could settle there if wished and if they grew anything they would become rightful owners by traditional law. Until the owners were identified, the Pukari administration would not extend that far.

Despite the absence of the system, respect for the elderly was still maintained. Whether an elder had status or not; had a reputation or not; was ignorant or wise; lame, blind or dumb, he was accorded the respect of the entire community including the youth. Age and physical handicaps were no causes to reject or abuse the elderly and their privileges were endowed by law. The elderly man who had asked to speak was a bachelor who possessed the biggest scrotum at the settlement. His face had been scarred and burnt out of shape in a childhood mishap with fire. They called him, 'Kapo Harda' (literally translated means 'big scrotum'). The moment he had asked to speak, there was a gentle murmur among the younger warriors who had merely reflected on their daily jokes about him. But he had made his impression on Ito alone and that was sufficient to give him the opportunity to speak. Ito gestured to him to speak.

"Descendants and beloved sons of the peaceful and gentle Morning Star; relatives and cousins of the sea gull; sons of Moa and Aisa tree, I have only this to suggest. We must give these strangers some food in return. They have shown us kindness and so they deserve our kindness." Kapo stopped his talk.

There was a general approval among the warriors, and Ito requested that those who had food to spare could bring it. A group of young warriors were selected to fetch young coconuts of which only a few were bearing nuts at the time. Another group of men were given the task of preparing a single outrigger canoe in which to send the food and coconuts. In a short time, the food was there but not much; five coconut sacks of sago, a few bunches of betelnut and bananas, pumpkins,

tapiocao, and an amount of yams and a lot of young coconuts. It was decided that Ito, his assistant and one of the older people should deliver the food and that they should be unarmed.

Up to now, fear had been dissipated and the feeling of everyone had been transformed into one of dealing with people who had been known to be friends of the Toaripi before. The canoe with its load was put into the water and Ito, the older man and the second in command, took their positions at the front, middle and the rear respectively. There were only a few churns of water by the paddle before the Toaripi outrigger was alongside its giant wooden colleague. Bravely Ito stood up and Lohia extended his hands and shortly Ito was on board. the older man and the warrior were also helped to board the canoe. The three were seated on the same platform that Lohia had used. Lohia and two others too sat with them. It was a most difficult meeting. Only smiles were exchanged. Then Lohia began some introductions.

"Lau Lohia," he said.

"Lau Lohia," Ito repeated.

"Lasi. Lau, Tau Lohia," Lohia pointed at himself.

"Lasi. Lau, Tau Lohia," Ito said pointing at himself.

This went on for some time and Lohia decided to change slightly the wording.

"Oi" he said pointing at Ito, and "Lau," pointing at himself.

Several times Lohia tried and several times Ito repeated it virtually the same. Lohia realized that communication had reached a dead end and he changed his tactic. He gestured to one of his men to bring a bag of sago, one banana and a coconut. The goods were put between the two groups of men. Then Lohia stood up. Lifting the bag of sago he said, "Rabia."

"Lapia," Ito repeated but he suddenly realized what it was and said, "Poi."

Laughter shattered the silence of deep concentration; or lack of it.

"Poi," said Lohia shaking the bag.

"Niu," said Lohia holding the coconut.

"Lui . . . La," the other responded.

"Biku."

"Piku . . . meae."

"Poi, la, meae," Lohia w again while the other nodd

"Lapia, Liu, Piku," Ito running his fingers over food.

Lohia frowned. He did with the way his friend had 'b' in rabia and in biku, and was being replaced by 'l'. efforts to correct his frie were the same. The fault c in the way Ito spoke nor v manipulate his tongue to 'n' and 'd' sounds. It was th spoke did not have those since settlements had begu the Karama had no need f language they spoke con consisted of the f a,e,f,h,u,k,l,m,o,p,r,s,t,u,v. Ito therefore to pronounce 'niu' to the satisfaction a new found friend, Chief L

Despite this conversatio eager to find out from travellers had come. Ito and gesture he knew ho about the name of their v was located. At first wi gesture he asked whether t the peninsula — the land after that point. Lohia no way. But in an afterthou two words.

"Laea laea."

To Lohia it was app friends had no contact wi His impression of the siz the way his friend, Ito, ha meant that the village ha recently. He and his fe expected to see a great which a large river flowed. banks stood countless pa food for which this jour His people had heard a from travellers scattered village was called Toari

"Biku."

"Piku . . . meae."

"Poi, la, meae," Lohia went over the names again while the other nodded.

"Lapia, Liu, Piku," Ito did the same while running his fingers over the three items of food.

Lohia frowned. He did not seem satisfied with the way his friend had been omitting the 'b' in rabia and in biku, and 'n' in niu which was being replaced by 'l'. He made several efforts to correct his friend but the results were the same. The fault could not be found in the way Ito spoke nor was it his failure to manipulate his tongue to achieve the throaty 'n' and 'd' sounds. It was that the language he spoke did not have those letters in it. Indeed since settlements had begun the Toaripi and the Karama had no need for such letters. The language they spoke contained words that consisted of the following letters; a, e, f, h, u, k, l, m, o, p, r, s, t, u, v. It was difficult for Ito therefore to pronounce 'rabia', 'biku', and 'niu' to the satisfaction and pleasure of his new found friend, Chief Lohia.

Despite this conversational setback Ito was eager to find out from where Lohia and his travellers had come. Ito applied every sign and gesture he knew how in his enquiries about the name of their village and where it was located. At first with an appropriate gesture he asked whether they had come from the peninsula — the land of the Sepoe — or after that point. Lohia nodded in a negative way. But in an afterthought he uttered just two words.

"Laea laea."

To Lohia it was apparent that his new friends had no contact with his people at all. His impression of the size of the village and the way his friend, Ito, had shown ignorance meant that the village had only been settled recently. He and his fellow travellers had expected to see a great big village behind which a large river flowed. On either side of its banks stood countless palms of sago — the food for which this journey was being made. His people had heard about such a village from travellers scattered over in time. The village was called Toaripi. Lohia therefore

decided it would be best if he mentioned the name of the village to Ito and gauge reactions from there whether they were too far west. After gesturing to Ito, he said, "Toaripi."

This surprised the warrior very much, and he responded, "Aha." Turning to his two friends, Ito said these people probably had heard Toaripi and most likely knew something about it as well. "Lalae!" Ito repeated what he heard from Lohia earlier thinking it must be the name of their village. Lohia, for his part responded rather hesitantly with a nod, knowing that the actual name he had stated was Laea laea or Lealea. After making this progress, the two men began realizing that contact had been made somehow earlier before their time as each seemed to acknowledge certain feelings by the mere fact of mentioning the names of the villages. It seemed the Lalae were making the journey based on that information. The older man who had gone with Ito on board recalled that the name Lalae had been spread at Toaripi once upon a time but had since been forgotten because that was a long time ago. The old man said he had been a child when some people came to Toaripi village with pots that looked the same as those standing on the canoe. The Toaripi had been unable to undertake sea going trips because of the dangers that sea monsters posed in the water between Toaripi and Lalae. In addition, such journeys had not been warranted because every man had been required to defend the village against the Heaeamora or assist the Karama against the Kukukuku.

Commander Ito had indicated some knowledge when Lohia surprised him by asking whether the village at which the canoe had anchored was in fact Toaripi. Taking the hint, Ito made almost a circle with his right hand around the peninsula and let it stay still pointing at the back of the settlement. Then Lohia realized that his suspicions were confirmed; this was indeed a new village; Toaripi proper was some distance inland and to reach it canoes must sail around the peninsula.

It was mid afternoon. By means of numerous sign languages and gestures, Ito

and Lohia agreed that the Lalae should spend the night at the settlement and leave at dawn for Toaripi. For it would take almost an entire day or night to either sail or paddle around the long jutting land overgrown with beachwood trees and creepers. Countless numbers of driftwood and coconut palms scattered the landscape of the previously lonely, uninhabited and haunted land. The Toaripi believed the ghosts of their enemies over time immemorial inhabited the peninsula, and waited to avenge their deaths. At night their presence could be seen in the mysterious flames which glowed and flickered at parts of the point. Occasionally, dauntless warriors scored the parts in the evenings in the hope of identifying the lights. Each time, however, no traces could be found not even traces of human travellers who might have been in transit to some unknown destination. The warriors who had started the settlement had defied the mysterious elements and began building houses, determined to displace the sources of the lights if it was practically possible. Under those circumstances Lae and other settlers felt that the presence of the Lalae strangers may provoke the unexpected, whatever it was, which forced its presence also on this beach land.

Another reason was that the Toaripi, even the settlers, had not sailed around the point due to rough seas and the fact that it was so far out to sea that any help required may not come in time. In order to avoid this, they had had to drag their canoes along a narrow strip between the river and the seashore. In their explanation to Lohia, the mysterious presence on the beach land could not be emphasised enough due to difficulties in finding the appropriate signs and language and that Lohia indicated contentment in spending the night there. After the understanding had been established, Lae called to those waiting on the shore to bring all the available canoes to collect the Lalae who wished to go ashore. Shortly, several canoes hung along the sides of the three large vessels like piglets sucking from a sow.

Meanwhile the men who had earlier to warn the rest of the Toaripi of the strange

visitors had been forced to abandon their communication because of the absence of men at the village together with the Pukari. The reason for the absence was that the night before a report had been received that the Heaeamola had sent a fleet of warriors to negotiate a final solution to an area of sago swamp and garden land on the Tauri river a short distance west of the Lahehamu. In response, a fleet of Toaripi warriors had left earlier that morning to the place of rendezvous. The fleet had returned to Toaripi at about the time that Lae and Lohia had mutually agreed to allow the Lalae to spend the night at the peninsula village. The impatient settlers could not stop at the village and had stooped at the back of the village where the fleet would berth and disembark.

The first canoe with the Pukari arrived and the timid men told their story of the landing of the Saukuru, and how the settlers had become dumb and speechless caused by the power of the Saukuru. The Pukari numbering about the fingers on two hands listened intently in the knowledge that when a man was overwhelmed with fear, he was able to exhaust his imagination with all kinds of visions which encouraged exaggeration beyond factual truths in order that support, sympathy and love may be rallied. However, the Pukari who were knowledgeable in the life and habits of their people inquired closely about the size of the canoes, sails and oars, and the kind of people on board. The men in reply explained how the people had long hair, lighter coloured skin and wore all kinds of beautiful ornaments. They said the canoes were rugged looking, strongly built with equally strong sails and had houses at both ends. The Pukari knew that if they showed any interest in the story, and seemingly supported the sentiments either in their remarks or gestures the result would be disastrous. The entire community particularly the women and children would be unduly and unnecessarily alarmed. In essence it meant that the community would become totally demoralised with the result that, any war declared at that time would be difficult and the losses would be great. This was because

the Pukari, and because of their decisions, had tolerated support.

While the reports were being spread, the Pukari and the rank warriors had gathered behind, and uncertainty. The Pukari felt any emotions. They were worried. But one of them named Mautu felt some emotion. He was the Pukari. He recollected that he was long dead, had told him that he had skinned people who were dead. He spoke a language called Mautu, spoke aloud.

"My in-law told me of a marriage that he had made on an expedition to Oroko. I had learnt a few words from him. I have since forgotten. They made the expedition to the south easterly (Mautu) beautiful pots and ornaments, betel nut, and coconut.

The Pukari insisted that he should go but his memory had failed him. He stopped. Even when he was talking there was a murmur of warriors which became a roar. Some of the stories of the Oroko were rekindled. They reflected on similar adventures of their grandfathers. These stories of the language used confirmed the views that the Pukari were now satisfied that they were none other than the expedition as their last. Mautu. The Pukari warrior leaders to the seashore settlement so accompanied to the north. The Pukari further instructed that it was dangerous to sail on the peninsula at night. They received the news of excitement that there about the negotiation day.

Back at the settle

the Pukari, and backbone of all wise decisions, had tolerated a lie and had offered support.

While the reports were being delivered, the Pukari and the rank and file warriors who had gathered behind, listened with interest and uncertainty. The Pukari could not show any emotions. They were not supposed to. But one of them named Meafeareka showed some emotion. He was the oldest among the Pukari. He recollected from his father-in-law long dead, had told him about a certain light-skinned people who were called Lalae. They spoke a language called Motu. Meafeareka spoke aloud.

"My in-law told me at the time of my marriage that he had met such people during an expedition to Orokolo a long time before. I had learnt a few words from my in-law but have since forgotten. These Lalae people had made the expedition to Orokolo at the time of the south easterly (Mauta) and had traded beautiful pots and other utensils for sago, betel nut, and coconuts."

The Pukari insisted that he tell them more but his memory had dimmed somewhat and he stopped. Even as Meafeareka stopped talking there was a murmur from among the warriors which became distinctly louder when some of the stories about the Lalae at Orokolo were rekindled and each person reflected on similar tales from their grandfathers. These stories told in the richness of the language used at the time had confirmed the views that Meafeareka held. The Pukari were now satisfied that the travellers were none other than the Lalae on a similar expedition as their landing was in the midst of Mauta. The Pukari then instructed the warrior leaders to despatch troops to the seashore settlement so that the Lalae could be accompanied to the main village at dawn. The Pukari further instructed that it would be dangerous to sail or paddle around the peninsula at night. The women and children received the news of the landing with such excitement that there were no questions asked about the negotiations with Heaeamola that day.

Back at the settlement, families were free

that night to make fires around the travellers and listen to their singing or celebrate with the visitors, while from each house flowed endless dishes of roast sago, coconuts, fish and other food that were available to feed the visitors who had brought with them such untold blessings as cooking pots, water pots, vases and other vessels of a great variety. The Lalae men sang their own songs accompanied by their booming drums while their Toaripi counterparts joined in with zest and enthusiasm.

Back on the mainland, after being persuaded by the Pukari, some of the warriors became restless and over excited. They pushed back several vessels and were soon on their way to join the dancing and singing groups across the river. Their excitement dissipated their fear of the mysterious lights that seemed to appear during that time of the evening. Sometime later in the midst of the merriment, the entire peninsula echoed with the rhythm of the drums and throbbed under the dancing feet of the warriors who appeared to be celebrating a great victory. Indeed, it was a victory over fear of the unknown; the fear of darkness and all it represented; and above all the fear of strangers who could not speak or understand their language let alone the fear to speak the language of the arrow with strangers.

In the morning just before the first light of dawn, more warriors had arrived. Among the new arrivals were two men with powers to communicate with either friendly or unfriendly spirits. They had inherited these from their ancestors. The communication began when contact with the spirits took the form of a mild tremor on the body of the recipient. The recipient in turn would identify the spirit through an exhaustive application of a variety of plants, leaves, bark and lime. These were orally applied. All antidotes would be chewed and spat into the air. Its effectiveness was the stench that vaporised into the air and by and large the spirits would be kept at bay. This spit treatment proved quite effective in warding off attacks on infants by either wild or unfriendly spirits. Thus if parents had gone gardening and a

sleeping child had been bedded down in a string bag after ravenous feeding by its mother, and if it was suddenly disturbed shortly after, it meant the presence of a spirit. The mother would rush to its aid; very soon the entire atmosphere would be flooded with the sweet or bitter smell of a bark drug. The subsequent sleep of the infant would not be disturbed.

Similarly in the village at night, if no bark was available, the mother would plait a knotted coir from a strong textured flammable bark of which one end was burnt. The smoke had the same effect as the spit. Engrossed in such beliefs, the two spit men were employed and honoured with being placed in the same lead canoe with Ito and Lohia. The huge Lalae canoes overshadowed the smaller craft like the latter when it passed under the bulkiness of a giant flowering sago palm, as the fleet headed out westward towards the farthest point on the peninsula. The sun was overhead when that point was reached. There were no incidents on that side of the peninsula. However, what seemed to have been the constant companions in the water along side the canoes were two medium sized shark-like fish with rather blunt and abrupt faces speeding past the fleet and returning at equal speed to resume their trips again.

When they had first appeared, the spit men on the first canoe with Ito, Lohia and the others spat out their juices but these seemed to have no effect in restraining them from their play. The Toaripi believed that this type of fish was the fore runner of the Ma Sevese before the dreaded monster made its appearance. A warrior who was ready to shoot at them was stopped by a signal from Lohia. Then Lohia swept his right hand across the general direction of their sailing in a way to explain that those fish were good omens, and symbolised good sailing and calm seas. Ito's message was confused but he passed it on. The two magicians were most concerned.

"If the monster appears now and holds up the smooth sailing," they argued, "we won't be responsible."

Ito said nothing but he had hoped to have the Lalae belief discredited. The Ma Sevese never appeared. The Toaripi were left in a dilemma they had not experienced before. Who had the truth? They or the Lalae? As they passed a little bend at the foremost tip of the peninsula, the fleet rendezvoused with an armada of the mighty Toaripi. At a little inlet just before the width of the Lahehamu opened out to the sea, the largest fleet of canoes the Toaripi ever paddled were berthed. True to its reputation, all sizes of vessels in countless numbers lay bobbing in the current rebounding from the banks. Equally countless numbers of warriors sat on each canoe looking anxiously on at the three Lalae vessels approaching them. They muttered among themselves as to why the warriors had expressed fear when speaking yesterday about the canoes belonging to the Saukuru. Their very sizes, they said, would have also shuddered their very souls if they themselves had seen the canoes first. They exchanged these thoughts among themselves.

The Toaripi canoes suddenly surrounded the three Lakatoi in a ceremonial welcome. Then they escorted the visiting vessels towards the village. Just after the tip, a little wind murmured favourably and the huge elavo-like flies were hoisted. As last when shadows could not be seen because the sun was too low, the fleet swung west into a smaller tributary and landed at the same place where the warriors had been given the news of the arrival the evening before.

The anchorage was filled with people; women and children; the elderly and even animals that had been domesticated were there to greet the strangers. After the Lalae had disembarked, they were taken to the centre of the village where they were entertained with some of the delicacies of Toaripi dishes served in wooden and coconut shell bowls. Indeed the Toaripi had dishes several of which were preferred by the visitors during their stay at the village. In addition to the tasteless roast of sago, banana, yam and other staples, other delights were common throughout the coastal area. One of the commonest recipes was known as likiliki

for which the ingredients were a considerable amount of banana of a good size, the required amount brought to the boil, squeezed and strained. The result was that the sago dropped in the size of a pea in order to maintain the consistency. It had to be stirred constantly until it had turned reddish brown. The fish or meat already screened into the pot, the despositing of peeled coconut cream mixed with water was poured into some scappings. An amount of salt was added to taste. Some of the salt was not necessary. What was left was a mass of jelly-like substance for several people dependent on the cooking vessel. It was hot to keep the flavour. It was a family dish. It was cooked in the afternoon or as dinner.

Another was just sago. Ripe or green banana, others cooked in coconut cream. A favourite dish also for special dishes for feasts. The most common was p... sago. Balls of sago known as poikari were dropped into a container of water. The sago balls were hard and the outcome was that provided on the stick. These could be eaten. Poikari was consumed far as take away food. They were among the visiting Lalae traders and Toaripi.

After the welcome among the Pukari throughout the message of yesterday his message was that making similar experience they had learnt

to have a Sevese left in a before. alae? As ost tip of l with an t a little ahehamu fleet of ed were sizes of bbing in banks. rs sat on the three i. They why the speaking g to the l, would s if they st. They mselves, rounded welcome. towards the wind favo-like ws could low, the tary and warriors rival the

for which the ingredients included water, a sizable amount of sago, ripened eating banana of a good size and fish or meat. After the required amount of water had been brought to the boil, a palm full of sago was squeezed and strained through the fingers. The result was that only the desired size of sago dropped in the sizzling, boiling water. In order to maintain the balls of sago, the pot had to be stirred continuously until the sago had turned reddish brown. In the same way, fish or meat already cooked was carefully screened into the pot. This was followed by the despositing of peeled ripe bananas. Then coconut cream mixed with a small amount of water was poured into the pot together with some scappings. An amount of salt water was added to taste. Sometimes this additive was not necessary. What was in the pot therefore was a mass of jelly-like soup which was served to several people depending on the size of the cooking vessel. It was best when consumed hot to keep the flavour. The likiliki was a family dish. It was cooked and served in mid afternoon or as dinner.

Another was just sago and coconut cream only. Ripe or green bananas, yams, taros and others cooked in coconut cream was another favourite dish also for the family. There were special dishes for feasts and cremonies. The most common was poikari — boiled balls of sago. Balls of sago kneaded to the size of a fist were dropped into boiling water. After the sago balls were hardened they were emptied into a container of coconut scrappings. The outcome was that coconut was already provided on the sticky, slimy sago balls and these could be eaten days afterwards. This poikari was consumed largely at feasts or as far as take away food was concerned. These were among the dishes presented to the visiting Lalae traders during the reception at Toaripi.

After the welcome feast, Lohia stood among the Pukari with whom he had sat throughout the meals and repeated his message of yesterday. The new information in his message was that the Lalae had been making similar expeditions to Orokolo where they had learnt about the existence of

Toaripi as another sago producing village. It lay almost half-way between Lalae and Orokolo. It had plenty of sago and other foods. If they wished they could go to Toaripi as well. The trip would take half as long as the journey to Orokolo.

During his visit to Orokolo, Mefeareka had heard and learnt some of the Lalae language called Motu. He now had the most difficult task of translating Lohia's speech. Mefeareka knew that the west wind in Motu was called Lahara and the east wind was Mirigini. While he stood wondering how to begin his reply, Ito moved to his side and gave clues on lapia and piku. But in the Toaripi society, older people were generally wiser and Mefeareka proved to be no exception. So that between those thoughts and ideas he was able to piece together an exaggerated narrative that was almost factual and close to the purpose of the Lalae trip. His background tale of the Orokolo visit lent weight to his interpretation and he was lauded by all. To the Toaripi the message had been clear. They were at once sympathetic and kindly. The next day this emotive feeling was displayed when each Pukari or Semese approached each of the visitors, shook hands and made presentations signifying that they were friends, and that each would be responsible for the needs of their respective visitors. The Lalae then unloaded their canoes. As a result the centre of the village was lined with several rows of pots, bowls, ornaments, beads and shells. Those Toaripi who had made friends, selected the choicest pieces for themselves and allowed their relatives to collect what had been left over.

In order to ensure how many vessels had been taken by each Toaripi, a counting system was devised whereby the Toaripi had to break broomsticks according to the number of pots and other vessels and ornaments they had collected. The other halves of the coconut broomsticks were given to the Lalae for their records for the time the barter trade would be concluded.

The Toaripi kept their pieces and produced the same number of bags of sago. At the presentation, both the Toaripi and the

Lalae produced their respective broom pieces. As each bag was counted the reciprocal broomstick was thrown away. The Lalae, however, had a more advanced counting system but it was not applicable because the Toaripi system was based on the number of fingers and toes. Despite the differences, the use of the broomstick proved but one point — no one was cheated either way. The ceremony at which all debts were formally paid, was followed soon after by the biggest celebration ever held at Toaripi. The dancing and singing continued to the time of farewell.

The Toaripi were great composers, singers and dancers. The compositions were generally known as Evore and were sung in a poetic rhyme, unique to the language used in every day communication. They were expressions with idiomatic meanings that depicted a life of eternal happiness, joy and pleasantness. They reflected individual dead or living human experiences, ordeals, encounters and endeavours. But the songs transcended the normal human life activities, and occurred among fictional beings named after clan gods of birds and animals, trees and distant peoples. There was much imagery and imagination. The songs about distant peoples were an attempt to compare and contrast the life of the Toaripi and their problems and troubles to those whose life was better than theirs. There were occasional songs about love and beauty; of platonic affairs; treachery; of fishing and hunting successes or failures; or sacred objects and of places and imagined activities.

In order to identify distinctly the clan member being sung about, each clan had adopted the name of its god and this clan always located itself appropriately in the village so that its identity was retained even at new settlements. For instance, the clan named Melareipi always chose to settle at the western portion of the village. This allowed them a closer kinship with their god — the seagull. The seagull always flew from the west to the east. So that the name Melare (seagull) ipi (origin or home) clearly explained what the clan stood for i.e.; Melareipi means the home or origin of the gull to the west. There

were two distinct types of seagulls. The white one was called Siou and the other black gull was named Melare.

To the Melareipi clan, Siou was a wanderer flying to and from wherever food was abundant upon the great sea. This availability seemed to guide its very sense of direction. It seemed dissatisfied with every catch it made and its hunger caused it to be restless and aggressive in its search for food. Siou was always after a full stomach and satisfaction, while Melare had a great sense of direction. It was always migrating from west to east, and always flying to its destination east. It never swerved from its course. However, it only dived when it required food and water. It flew all day with determination, patience, perserverance and hard flying even into the strongest of winds. At night it would rest at some cranny or pinnacle along rocky coasts, and resume the next day with zest and new strength. The clan loved it, praised it, sympathised with its efforts and shared its determination to reach its destination. Above all Melare represented all things good. The clan worshipped it.

Melare and Siou therefore were the symbols of two distinct groups in the community; the good and the bad; the fair and the foul; the greedy and the kind; the lazy and the strong; the bigheads and the humble and other human traits, characteristics and attitudes. The traditional philosophical moral drawn from the symbol was that black was the good and white represented all evils. These differences had existed in the community but in practical reality, people were not regarded as Melare and Siou as such with the inference they drew from being called those names. Rather, the differences were merely an understanding among, within and outside the Melareipi clan. It meant that anyone, particularly men and young boys, would be called Melare and Siou without their considering it as an insult. It was, moreover, a greeting or welcome and farewell address. In the Melareipi clan therefore, all men and boys were called Melare or Siou along with other words that expressed the concept of being west, or coming from the west. For example

the two common greet and boys were; "Melare" "Melare Tivai Sove Ma" to older men and the was thus: Melare — b western origin relating white seagull, Moa — g second referred to you Melare, Tivai, Sove — emphasised youthfulness

In the same way, w with words that were "Hovoa Sisa Faro", Ea west, Hovo — western Faro — fair, emphasisi in the Melare clan of no distinction among t the clan as there was an in the male population women were addressed greetings meant more t the traditional rules of if a Eua greeted a Me than just words expres of the clan. What Eau "Welcome my brother happy to see you. Ple where we will have chew, and then you ca to go". An Eau's hus even if he wished to be accepted. Often the pe wanted to ask a favo result of personal sho the other clans at identification calls, g phrases.

The practical appl prevented marriage b a Melare were to mar a bitter battle betwee there was a mutua marriage was practi battle had to be fough people were taught childhood that the Ea respect and regard th sister. Blood had to b this respect and unde unique rules which

the two common greetings applied to men and boys were; "Melare Tivai Siou Mao" and "Melare Tivai Sove Maru". The first referred to older men and the possible explanation was thus: Melare — black seagull, Tivai — western origin relating to the west, Siou — white seagull, Moa — grey for emphasis. The second referred to younger men and boys. Melare, Tivai, Sove — young gull, Maru — emphasised youthfulness and male beauty.

In the same way, women were addressed with words that were more feminine; "Eau Hovoa Sisa Faro", Eau — woman from the west, Hovo — western origin, Sisa — beauty, Faro — fair, emphasising beauty. It was clear in the Melare clan of Toaripi that there was no distinction among the female members of the clan as there was among Melare and Siou in the male population. Both young and old women were addressed in the same way. The greetings meant more than a compliance with the traditional rules of the day. For instance, if a Eua greeted a Melare she implied more than just words expressed for a male member of the clan. What Eau had actually said was, "Welcome my brother, welcome. I am very happy to see you. Please come to my house where we will have something to eat and chew, and then you can go to where you want to go". An Eau's husband could not object even if he wished to because it was universally accepted. Often the person greeting the other wanted to ask a favour from the other as a result of personal shortage. In the same way the other clans at the villages had their identification calls, greetings and welcome phrases.

The practical application of this concept prevented marriage between the same clan. If a Melare were to marry a Eua there would be a bitter battle between the two families until there was a mutual agreement that the marriage was practically impossible. This battle had to be fought because the two young people were taught respectively from their childhood that the Eau, Melare or Siou must respect and regard themselves as brother and sister. Blood had to be shed in order to restore this respect and understanding. Each clan had unique rules which must be binding on

everyone. Marriages between clans only must be encouraged.

In the Toaripi as well as the Karama communities, the greeting which personalised the abstract, like the son or daughter of the seagull or child of the Morning Star (Oa Malara), fostered deep faith in these living and dead objects. These objects were worshipped discreetly. Complete abstinence was observed to a greater extent and practised as far as the consumption of animal deities was concerned. For instance in the Melareipi clan, unscrupulous killing of the Melare was an unpardonable crime which could only result in the application of severe discipline; like going without food for a number of days. If the birds were killed in the presence of the elders, no one would be allowed to eat them. Rather they would be buried and traditionally honoured with mourning and feasting.

Other clans, particularly the one which revered the Morning Star and claimed it as their ancestral god, treated the Moa tree which is also called Aisa, as personal property. In the course of clearing virgin land for gardening, this tree was isolated and was not harmed in any way. Alternatively, if this tree littered the proposed garden site, they were allowed to remain standing even though the land was badly needed for planting.

Other clans reserved other trees. Some of these trees provided the clans with antidotes for various ailments and medicinal treatment and cures. By this inherited association with things of nature, all Toaripi and Karama lyrics and sayings did not particularly name any person. The addresses and identification therefore were impersonal and indirect. This meant that the Toaripi and Karama used two separate languages for normal conversation and for songs and lyrics respectively. These acronyms were known by many people so much so that if a completely new song was sung by one who had composed or copied it from another, everyone would join in without hesitation. In songs in particular, for example Melare and Tivai alternated as opposites in verses but the singers knew who was being sung about. In the same way, the Eau and Hovoa alternated

in their verses. For the clan which gave allegiance to Oa Malara, it would be Moa and Aisa or Oa Malara and Kave.

There were two sources from which these songs originated. One of these was an inspiration resulting from a dream. During the dream contact was made with dead ancestors of close relatives particularly as a result of continuous love and yearning by a father of a brother for a lost daughter or sister. In the dream the soul of the dead would meet the soul of the living. Sometimes the song would be imparted when the listener was still conscious in his sleep. In such a case the listener would rise from his semi-sleep and make a mental note of it. Then he would sing the new song over and over again until the wording and the meaning was firmly established in his mind. Many of these dream songs, either sung aloud or uttered under the breath, possessed extraordinary magical powers. For example a song learned during a dream or semi-dream environment which referred to the shore and the little shore birds that lived there caused high tides when sung. These tides were disastrous to both villages and land. In every case these types of dream songs were never sung in public and were subjected to family heritage and therefore were restricted and sacred. If a member of this family desired the sea to become destructive, he would sing or utter this song. While another family may have the antidote to make the surf subside. There were many others handed down from generation to generation obtained through spiritual contacts between the living and the dead.

There were songs and lyrics for successful hunting and fishing; for obtaining the largest crops; for creating snakes and sand flies; for leeches; for successful delivery and healthy childhood; for successful battles; for finding the most suitable lover and for farewelling the dead and pleading with them to return. The other group of songs sung by the Toareipi and the Karama were composed as a result of careful observation and from either personal or other people's experiences. The former were composed in memory of dead relatives. It was almost a biographical note on his life

and achievement or it served as a reminder of that person. It was typical of this society to sing only about men. The females, for instance Eau and Hovoa, played a secondary role in songs featuring males. The latter were songs about male chauvinism; his travels; his admiration for women other than those from within his village. Many of them were wishful thinking. For example, in the Toaripi dream and wishful thinking, the women in villages beyond Sepoe and including waima or Maiva villages were seen in the eye of the song. In other words, the composer could see in his mind's eye the beauty of their women even though it may have been only his wishful thinking, or from scant tales he had heard from some lucky traveller. According to these concepts, the women of those villages were prettier looking than their counterparts in the inland Tati.

The Toaripi and Karama acronym for these women for the purpose of songs was Ovaro Maito Mauta Pupui. Ovaro — older sister from the east, Maito — younger sister from the east, Mauta — east wind meaning daughters of the east wind, Pupui — unspoilt beauty of face; virgin retaining the looks even after marriage and childbirth. In the Toaripi and Karama concept, however, there were widespread clans who used this greeting. The acronym had an extended and expanded meaning which was significant only to those clans. While Ovaro and Maito, in the widest context, referred to women from the east, they had their local application and meaning. For example personified daughters of Oa Malara (Morning Star of Father Star). Oa Malare defied was Malara Harai. A smaller star which always accompanied the Morning Star was called Kave and its deity name was Kave Muka. As gods they were father and son. So that the masculine form of Ovaro Maito Maito Mauta Pupui was Malara Harai Kave Muka. Malara — child descendant of Oa Malara, Harai — referred to terrestrial objects in theory only but had the cultural explanation of being from the east; the direction of the Morning Star. Kave — brother of Oa Melare and son of Malara Harai, Muka — emphasised youth but bore

the same meaning as in the situation, however, they were opposing the Tati (inland) as they were slightly elevated in origin as the sky was the mountain. In essence, Maito had this kinship of brother of Ovaro and Muka.

The Toaripi composed in one direction only — the east — took into account the land of Maito from the only way — the east including the land — the eye the composers saw the difference between the Ovaro and Waima villages and the presence of the the Lalae confirmed, for their people's reality. Furthermore, the the Lalae men they had and pretty of face, they must be beyond comparison of some repute they observation and from the translate what they saw

One of the observations the Maiva women was on their entire body. The and affection lay in the they had yearned to be blood concealed by the sharp in their language yearning, however, had as they studied the Lalae their theme slightly from Maiva women to Lalae farewell feasting at the Lalae men, they were the tattooed eyes, thighs and bellies. Above all, hinted at the tattoo veil productive organ; how public hair. Their transformed by this pig coupled with their desire woman and their voice view. They sang beautiful and best because they be heard and not under

the same meaning as Harai. In a real life situation, however, they were considered to be opposing the Tati (inland mountain people) as they were slightly elevated; their heavenly origin as the sky was higher than the mountain. In essence, Malara Harai therefore had this kinship of being the father and brother of Ovaro and Maito and Kave Muka.

The Toaripi composers looked at one direction only — the east. In their songs they took into account the beauty of Ovaro and Maito from the only world known to them — the east including the Lalae. In their mind's eye the composers saw the striking similarities between the Ovaro and Maito of Maiva or Waima villages and those at Malae. The presence of the Lalae men at Toaripi confirmed, for their purposes this practical reality. Furthermore, they concluded that if the Lalae men they had seen were handsome and pretty of face, they beauty of their women must be beyond comparison. As composers of some repute they had the gift of observation and from this they were able to translate what they saw into verses and songs.

One of the observations they had made of the Maiva women was that they had tattoos on their entire body. They felt that warmth and affection lay in these designs, and at first they had yearned to embrace and taste the blood concealed by the tattoo. They were sharp in their language expressing this. This yearning, however, had become a real desire as they studied the Lalae men, and altered their theme slightly from singing about the Maiva women to Lalae women. In the farewell feasting at Toaripi given for the Lalae men, they were already singing about the tattooed eyes, thighs, faces, arms, breasts and bellies. Above all, their songs cautiously hinted at the tattoo veiling the Lalae women's productive organ; how it looked among their public hair. Their very character was transformed by this picturesque imagination coupled with their desire to hold one such woman and their voices shared this inner view. They sang beautifully at their loudest and best because they knew they could only be heard and not understood. That night the

Lalae had acclaimed them and even joined in with the dancing. The Lalae showed genuine and kindly interest but unknown to them, the songs had been sung about their women. The Toareipi sung their hearts out in yearning in departure, some of the younger Toaripi men with the Lalae women if the only had the chance to do so. Indeed at the time of departure, some of the younger Toareipi men well versed in those songs, packed their own belongings and beckoned to be taken on board. But the Lalae discouraged them and through means of signs, indicated that the three vessels were overloaded and that any additional weight would be risky for the return trip.

Lohia was wise. In order to maintain and continue the relationship he explained that they were impressed with the Toaripi or as the Lalae called them, the Elema or Motumotu hospitality. They would certainly return again about the same time. Lohia, however, realised the frustration and the disappointment caused by his men's refusal and pledged an assurance that next time there would be an additional canoe to take on anyone willing to visit Laea Laea. Eligible bachelors prepared for the time and men who were ready to marry refused matrimony and indulged in composing songs; exchanging ideas; thinking about the long haired tattooed women at Laea Laea.

The three Lalae canoes filled to capacity and with overloaded decks, hosted sails. Slowly like large snails they rounded the peninsula and eventually disappeared in the morning scattered shadows of the peninsula's beachwood stands and shrubs. A very long wait was before them before they were to see them again. It would be as long as moons numbering about one man's fingers and two.

In the aftermath of the visit, one thing remained certain at Toaripi; the peace that had been breathed out of those sails was inhaled with their disappearance.

CHAPTER TWO

The rays pierced the silent stream clear eastern sky with ease forcing young palms to

cast hideous long, dark, unproportionate shadows along the equally black sandy shores, like the preying hands of a food-starved octopus. The long silent shadows extended beyond the foam of laughter from minute waves. The shades were bent momentarily as if the waves were merry-making, teasing the sun. The eastern wind, however, would soon irritate them into mournful ripples which would rise up into angry surf.

In this scene of nature at play were two figures walking casually and unconsciously over the shadows, along the dampened, dark sand. They were father and son. They seemed disappointed that the sun should hide itself behind the soft clouds and appear only intermittently at will as if it was deliberately avoiding any assistance to them for the purpose for which they set out early this morning. Their ancestors had never worshipped the sun; neither had they and their future generations would carry on that tradition.

To the Toaripi and Karama, the sun was a spirit object which could not assume human form because of its heat. But it had always fulfilled its rightful role by providing much needed light and heat. It could not be considered a diety like other objects which were physically real to humans. The sun was an eternal enemy which carried a relentless and merciless flame of fire that cooked and scorched weak food plants and cracked garden lands. It destroyed rather than created. When it wanted fish, it just drained dry, fresh water and salt water lakes that were abounding in fish and marine life. This character and nature of the sun prompted the Toaripi and the Karama not to consider it as a phenomenon and therefore were not obliged to fear or worship it as they did the mountains, trees, ancestors, ghosts and others which their eyes could see, or not see, and not understand.

"It is going to be a rather sick sun for us today father!" The son pointed eastward.

"No son, it will be a very nice day. Look!" The father pointed in the same direction.

As if to disprove the son, the killer of

darkness made a sudden break through in the clouds and shot its vengeful glory against the two who had spoken about it with such disrespect. At once there were no more shadows. The sun began beating down on them.

"I want you to peel your eyes across the eastern horizon and see if there is anything moving."

"I can't see anything father!"

"We'll have to continue walking eastward and keep looking."

Hahari Oaharo was a descendant of the Kairi clan of Karama that had scattered as a result of an internal tribal conflict that had ripped and severed his kinship and allegiance to his tribe. He was the brother of the legendary Karama woman, Maisa. The fighting had erupted because of her and that endowed her tribe with a windfall in traditional wealth. Maisa had returned to Karama in the not too distant past equipped with, among other things, the bridal gifts given to her, a sacred tribal fighting weapon that claimed ownership to a large slab of fertile land in the Karama hinterland. She had been married to the chief of the owners, the mountain Kukukuku tribe.

Upon her return to Karama after making an escape from the Kukukuku country, she was assaulted near her own village, and was robbed and stripped of all the ornaments presented to her as brideprice. She had told her sad story and her brothers waited patiently a long time before his assailant had shown up adorned in the very ornaments that had once belonged to her by right of marriage. In a community that made and broke the rules it had made, the fury of her brothers witnessing this courageous man wearing what did not belong to him, could not be restrained. Hahari had jumped at him like an injured wild pig, wrenched the stolen weapon from his grip and with it had split open his skull at the speed of a shooting star. The Hura therefore had avenged its own and once more fell into the possession of its rightful owners.

Soon after slaying Iaki, the fight was traditionally taken up. Further fighting broke

out between Kairi and Iaki. At such times everyone else was choosing which side to support. The blood relationship and the distribution of land were factors. Karama echoed with the swishing of weapons; the twanging of bows; abuse of all Karama blood spilled. The survival of the fittest reigned supreme. Under the heat from burning crept out through a hole the eastern side of the security was written determined to cover much distance in time. They zig-zagged in the darkest possible shadow to see whether or not followed. Still zigzagged numerous tributaries, strewn bushes much of which had crocodiles. Cautiously, deep through muddy intricately aerated mangrove could be easily mistaken fully clad in fighting gear spirits that awaited their sprung ready to strike at such sights, the two brothers until their eyes familiarized their surroundings before their destination — Toaripi.

Although the total distance of two villages could be walked, considering the narrow way, their route a little taken, their four sun rises being discovered. Hahari only with the Hura. Its white with dried red stains into white; the remains of the ornaments and decorations. Oaharo had no wish to be called such. He was a thief and a coward. Onwards the Hura was property and his heritage.

between Kairi and Iaki's clansmen. At such times everyone else took part after choosing which side to support, depending on blood relationship and ties resulting from distribution of land wealth. Once more Karama echoed with the clatter of wooden weapons; the swishing of flying arrows and twanging of bows; abuse in anger and above all Karama blood spilled and the rule, the survival of the fittest and the strongest, signed supreme. Under the haze of smoke and the heat from burning houses, two figures crept out through a hole they had made in the eastern side of the security fence. On their faces was written determination, not fear, to cover much distance in the shortest possible time. They zig-zigged inland, searching out the darkest possible shade, and checked back to see whether or not they were being followed. Still zigzagging they crossed numerous tributaries, streams, prickly swamp bushes much of which had been infested with crocodiles. Cautiously, they sloshed waist deep through muddy sloughs, through intricately aerated mangrove root stilts that could be easily mistaken for enemy warriors fully clad in fighting gear, or skeletoned evil spirits that awaited them with bony hands sprung ready to strike their living flesh. At such sights, the two brothers would pause until their eyes familiarised themselves with their surroundings before proceeding east to their destination — Toaripi.

Although the total distance between the two villages could be walked in two days each way, considering the number of outlets to be crossed, their route a little further inland had taken them four sun rises. They could not risk being discovered. Hahari Oaharo was armed only with the Hura. Its surface was littered with dried red stains interspersed with blots of white; the remains of the dead man's brains. Under his left armpit hung a heavy tapa bag of ornaments and decorative items. Hahari Oaharo had no wish to wash off the stains because the murder he had committed could not be called such. He had struck the man who was a thief and a coward. From this day onwards the Hura would be his personal property and his heritage which he would

pass on from generation to generation of Kairi people. The Hura would therefore be like one of his limbs. Where he slept there it would sleep also; wherever he went there it would go also. To Hahari the Hura represented more than just the stolen property of his sister. It meant more than the passing glory of his killing of a man at the very first single below. The Hura, or Mahoro as the Karama called it, was the price paid for a bride in a union unique in its implications but significant in its possession. It had enhanced a relationship that was thought to be impossible between two completely strange people who had been engaged since time began for them in bloodletting and the quenching of one's thirst in another's blood.

Above all else, however, the Hura held the only practical evidence of confirmation of the occasion of the marriage and secondly, evidence of ownership of a vast fertile land in the Karama hinterland. This consideration alone had prompted Hahari to flee from Karama lest the weapon fell into the wrong hands and this heritage would not be his or his generations. This was why it had taken him and his brother four days to arrive at Toaripi and seek refuge.

At twilight of the fourth day, the two brothers emerged from hiding only after ensuring that they had not been followed at all and found themselves unsuspectingly being surveyed outside the main gate of the great village. As each of their Toaripi contemporaries walked past, they identified them easily as the Kaipi Koru (Karema people).

"There are two of them," the Kaipi Koru said and spread the news of their arrival.

Hahari and Oaharo sat listening silently to what was being said and there was nothing about the fighting at Karama, and nothing about a man being killed there. The news of their arrival was not unusual. Toaripi village for sometime now had been the destination east for refugees from far west as Lavau (Orokolo). There were a number of them already there with grown up children. These people had assimilated well considering the reasons for which they had fled from their

ancestral homes. Many of them made their departure a permanent one because of personal differences with their wives or next of kin. These newest arrivals at Toaripi in realisation of the fact that they were in a new place, new environment and amongst new people, sat pondering over their future. At least, Hahari being the older of the two churned the questions over in his mind.

"Here we stay. Here we die. But Oaharo, how will we return to the land of the Hura?" He paused. "Oaharo, are you too young to think?" Harari prodded his brother. There was no response.

His concern to return was great but he felt the issue should be best left alone and that he had Oaharo should do their best to learn about life at Toaripi before making a definite decision. For the time being he decided to let the past take care of itself. But he assured himself that one day he would return to Karama after his crime had been forgotten, and when he did he would appoint guardians over the land; in fact all over their land at Karama.

Hahari and Oaharo were warriors in the real sense. They were both well built, tall and muscular. The older brother was slightly taller and had a slight edge over his younger brother in physical strength. Only a few men at Toaripi had similar physiques and temperament. Indeed they were true sons of the Kairi clan. All Kairi men were giants and as such were leading warriors and were respected and trusted in the Karama community. Here at Toaripi they sat outside, homeless and waited patiently. Later in the evening a small, calm and friendly voice welcomed them. After a very scarce meal, as it was late already, the two brothers laid their bodies to a much required rest but not before Hahari had made a comfortable head holder of the Hura. That night in a vision, Harari returned to Karama and discovered that although the fighting was continuing, the defence of the Kairi clan had not been penetrated. The next day when the two brothers were alone on the beach, Harari gave an interpretation of the dream.

"You see we won the fighting. Iaki's clan

only showed anger at the sight of their own blood being shed. But they could not continue the fighting as they are people who do not know how to fight like our professional Kairi. They are like the yellow ants which build nests along coconut fronds and leaves of beachwood. When they are disturbed they rush like piglets which have seen the sow lie down ready to offer food. Or they are like the waves. When there is no storm, they lie like undulating land but when the storm kicks them in the rear, they make a rush and look like mountains, not hills with their sly, slurring, sneering, drowning snarls. To the strong, the surging water is harmless because it can be mounted and ridden down."

"So!" Oaharo replied.

"So what?" Harari retorted aware of the unpleasantness in his brother's voice.

"So you can return to Karama. I'm staying here," Oaharo jeered.

"Hey! I am only telling you what I think is the meaning of the dream. I am not deciding whether or not we split up here." Hahari was angry at this deliberate misunderstanding of his brother. "Say one thing more and I'll drive these into where they will hurt the most," Hahari warned his brother as he showed him his balled fists.

"You were talking about returning to..." Before the sentence was completed Hahari's huge open right palm swamped the youthful face. There was no further conversation. The elder brother left the younger one reeling and feeling his face. Hahari could not show sympathy nor could he have shown patience and understanding towards the views of his brother. He took the first sign of objection to mean a challenge and a challenge either big or small according to the Kairi law, must be realized physically and immediately. Hahari's action typified the kind of relationship they would share at their new environment; love and hate. It was in their blood; written in their looks and in their general relationship with the Toaripi community.

Following the incident, Oaharo packed his few belongings and shifted to another house in the neighbourhood after their quarrel had been discovered. Much later, Oaharo

returned to live in the... It had been a long time from the home of the... Oaharo had grown to for the eyes of equally... and they were always among the female... gossip, which was a character of the two... by right of their be... were members of th... Oaharo was seen as... lazy, impatient, quick of little significance; jokes to the extent... and lacking common laughter and being pastimes.

Oaharo believed himself, but how to know. As a joker he rhetoric with which... had made many... female. When extreme raised regarding wife only shrug and c... personal philosophy leave tomorrow to called him Kakare, of direction, no price was a descendant of endowed with the p... heritage of all Kairi indeed a Kairi warrior to live up to the name of the Kairi.

His brother... possessing the character of the Kairi, had an observation and a capacity to store which he assessed direction. He was a the demarcation m... land at Karama. F himself had made them. He hated ras the people who er those kinds of prac the two brothers. I

returned to live in the same house as Hahari. It had been a long time since their departure from the home of the Kairi. Both Hahari and Oaharo had grown to be men of stature vying for the eyes of equally pretty Toaripi women, and they were always the centre of gossip among the female population. Much of the gossip, which was actually factual, was the character of the two men from Karama who by right of their being residents as Toaripi were members of the community at large. Oaharo was seen as a young man who was hasty, impatient, quick with words and actions of little significance; given much to practical jokes to the extent of being branded stupid and lacking common sense; always following laughter and being laughed at were his pastimes.

Oaharo believed in obtaining wealth for himself, but how to accumulate it he did not know. As a joker he had his own form of rhetoric with which, and through which, he had made many friends both male and female. When extremely serious issues were raised regarding wife and his future, he could only shrug and crack another joke. His personal philosophy was to live for today but leave tomorrow to look after itself. They called him Kakare, meaning he had no sense of direction, no priorities — a loafer. Still he was a descendant of Kairi and as such he was endowed with the property that was common heritage of all Kairi — strength. Oaharo was indeed a Kairi warrior who was failing so far to live up to the name, reputation and image of the Kairi.

His brother Hahari in addition to possessing the characteristics and the qualities of the Kairi, had acquired skills through sheer observation and assessment. He had the capacity to store details and information which he assessed to find guiding light and direction. He was a keen listener. He knew all the demarcation marks of each family or clan land at Karama. He knew them because he himself had made genuine efforts to know them. He hated rash decisions and he disliked the people who entertained themselves with those kinds of practices. He was the wiser of the two brothers. His reaction to Oaharo on

the beach on the first day at Toaripi was clear.

Throughout those long and many moons that he and his brother had been at Toaripi, he listened with extreme care to what the people had said and tried to understand their behaviour; their attitudes and how they lived; their aspirations and ambitions. In his assessment he found that they were one and the same people but the one barrier that divided them was the difference in the dialects the people of the two villages spoke. He had also observed that Toaripi, a peninsula village like Karama, was subjected to heavy pounding by mountainous waves and therefore sooner or later must be shifted to another site already located. The Toaripi, he had found, were a people who firmly believed that any stranger of any other colour or skin pigmentation was none other than an ancestor returning physically from the dead. Hahari had found the existence of a belief which was eventually disbanded. This was a cult practised by a small group of people. In addition to the worshipping of ancestors, which was a common practice throughout the villages along the coast including Karama, the people gathered at one place at a given time of the night, and called on their ancestors by name for things that would make them fly; enable them to travel along water faster than canoes; enable them to have access to food and items that could not be grown or made at Toaripi. Hahari found that this belief was instituted to counteract the power of the powerful Uiri men who could transform themselves from humans into animals and reptiles in order to obtain things that they had no access to as normal human beings.

He had concluded this belief was only suited to people like Oaharo who could not be bothered to produce those necessities through their own human efforts and sweat. Hahari could not subscribe to such practices which were thought up by lazy, insolent people who wasted time in thinking and believing in goods and services being delivered to them by a miracle.

He found that the Toaripi community at large was fascinated by the undulating hilly