

Tabitoea series.

1. The Darkness and the Cleaving Together.

The First Tree was ~~named~~ ^{the Pandanus, and its name was the} Ancestress Sun (Nui Bakatibu Teai); Auraria was its spirit, and it grew in the West ~~on~~ and the names of the lands whereon that Tree grew were Aba-toa (Aba-the-great) and Aba-iti (Aba-the-little); and the inhabitants of those lands were Te-ba (the rock), Te-atibu (the stone), Te-ati-n-nari (a smooth pebble of white coral), and the two eels Nano-kai and Nano-maaka.

Nano-kai lay with Nano-maaka: their child was Na Areau.

Only when Na Areau was born ~~did the time come for~~ ^{was the time of} the Darkness and the Cleaving Together. At that time were neither things nor men: there was only the giant Na Areau. The work of Na Areau was to seek a manner of separating Heaven from Earth.

(Here follows an account of the lifting of Heaven very similar in all essential details with that already exhibited in the Deru series, first section)

When Heaven stood on high, Riiki the Eel followed it into the heights: it is he who lies across the midst of Heaven and is called the Milky Way (Na Iabu).

Then grew the ~~first land, over~~ ^{lands} Kai-n-tikua-~~aba~~ ^{in the West} ~~grew first~~; and after that grew ~~Tarawa~~ ^{in the East}. The third land was Deru, and the fourth was Takoronga of Tabitoea, and the fifth was Tamoa in the South.

2. The tale of Na Areau and Taburimai.

After that Na Areau went to dwell on Tarawa; but he seems to have been mischievous, for he continually stole the toddy of other folk on Tarawa. So the man Taburi-mai called to him his two Sandnipes, and said to them, "Ye shall go and watch for the man who steals my toddy. When ye see him, remember his name and report it to me". So they went and waited in the crest of Taburi-mai's toddy tree.

When Na Areau ~~came~~ climbed Taburi-mai's tree the Sandnipes saw him, and began to call his name aloud, but behold! he caught them and turned their tongues over, so that they could no longer speak. When they returned to Taburi-mai, they gabbled, and there

was no meaning in their talk. So it is unto this day.

But Taburi-mai was angry when his birds came back to him. He knew that Na Aresu had played him the trick: he told his company that they should do that man to death. They agreed. They gathered together and awaited Na Aresu's coming, and when he appeared they said, "Sir, we wish to set up a new stud in the side of our naneaba. Wilt thou help?" He answered, "I will help. What shall I do?" They said, "Get down into that hole and steady the end of the stud as we lower it (into place)".

Na Aresu knew their hearts. He knew that they desired to cover him with rocks when he was in the hole, so he scooped out a little cave in the side of the hole. Then he said, "Do ye make ready, and I will dig the hole a little deeper". So they went to get their rocks, and when they came back he called to them, "How is this (for depth)?" They shouted, "That is enough", and at the same time they let fall their rocks into the hole. But Na Aresu had already hidden in his little cave.

Then Taburi-mai and his company thought that Na Aresu was killed, and they made a feast all together in the naneaba. While they ate, they derided Na Aresu, saying, "Would that this fine pudding (tanana) might be the food of Na Aresu!" And behold! Na Aresu himself sat on the roof-plate of the naneaba and heard them, for he had changed himself into a spider (naareau) and had run up the stud of the naneaba to the roof-plate while they were eating. When he heard them say, "Would that this fine pudding might be the food of Na Aresu", he answered from above their heads, "Very well, hand it to me". They were astonished at his words, but when they knew that it was he they arose to chase him, so that they might kill him. He fled before them, and as he fled he cast off the pointed hairs (raha) of his stern: they stood on end in the path of those who chased him. And behold! the pointed hairs pricked the feet of Taburi-mai, so that he could not run.

Then Taburi-mai returned to the naneaba, and Na Aresu took his canoe, Te-roro, and sailed away.

3. The tale of Na Arou and Na Utina.

Na Arou came to a man whose name was Na Utina. That man was kind to him, and brought him food, and told his wife to grate coconut so that he might eat as he drank. But while she was busy grating coconut, Na Arou lengthened his penis, and sent it underground, and made it rise from below so that it entered her secret parts. She was taken by surprise, and paused in her work when that thing happened to her. Then Na Utina watched her face, and thus he said to her: "Woman, what is the matter with thee?" She answered not, but Na Arou was convulsed with laughter at that woman, for he was unscrupulous.

After that, Na Arou said to Na Utina, "Na Utina, tell thy wife to light a very great fire". The woman lit the fire. Then said Na Arou to Na Utina, "Sir, thou shalt see my (way of) fishing". He said again, "I shall lie in the fire, and thou and thy wife shall bury me in the midst of it. When ye have done that, leave me".

They did as he had told them, and went to sit at a distance from the fire. And behold! there presently came from the East side of the island a man. It was Na Arou. He said to Na Utina, "The fish is cooked: go, take it from the fire, that we may eat". So the woman went and took the fish from the fire. Na Utina was amazed, for there was a great quantity of fish.

Then Na Utina's wife whispered to him, saying, "Marvellous is the fishing of this man. It were good if thou didst go with him some time to learn his way". The next day, Na Arou said, "Na Utina, I am about to go"; but Na Utina held him, for he had set his heart on that fishing: he said, "Before thou goest, teach me thy (way of) fishing". Na Arou answered, "It is good. Let thy wife light a fire; let her make it very large, for there will be two of us, even thou and I". So the woman made an enormous fire, and when it was ready Na Arou said to her, "Woman, when we lie down in the fire thou shalt cover us vigorously". She answered, "I will".

And behold! Na Arou held the hand of Na Utina, and they lay down in the fire. Na Utina struggled, for he was burned, but his wife

called it by the name of Tamoa-te-ingoa (Tamoa the Namesake), for he remembered the houseplace (lagina) of his mother on Banaba. He begot children on Tamoa in the South.

Then also did Bataku and Au-te-tabanou, the children of Na Aroau, set forth: they voyaged from Tabiteuea and Beru to Tamoa, for they desired to dwell with their grandfather Koruruo. They came to Tamoa and were gathered with their grandfather; they begot children, Te-aro-matang and Kanii. Te-aro-matang and Kanii were the ancestors of the breed of red men, the Breed of Tamoa, and they were Kings on Tamoa. They lived under the Tree Kai-n-tikua-aba.

3. The breaking of the Trees of Tamoa.

But when Auriaria of Banaba heard that Na Aroau's children had left their homes, and were living in Tamoa, he was angered: he arose and went down to Tamoa; he took the children of Na Aroau and flung them Northwards. Bataku fell on Tabiteuea, and Au-te-tabanou fell on Beru.

Then Auriaria planted a second Tree on Tamoa. Out of that Tree sprang men: out of the crest sprang Te-Taake (the Tropic Bird), and Te Ngutu (the Yellow-billed Tropic Bird), and Te Koro (the White-tailed Tropic Bird); and from the roots sprang Te-i-mone; and from a crack in the trunk sprang Koura.

And behold! the people of the Tree's crest made filthy the ground beneath the Tree, and Koura was angered; so he arose and burned the Tree. Then the people of the Tree scattered. They fled. Te-Taake flew with Te Ngutu and Te Koro to Beberiki (Butaritari) and Totoronga (Makin), and Koura voyaged to Beru, where he became a King.