

A Story about Taburimai

unattributed

Taburimai was a man, the son of Bakoa and Nei Unikai. His brother was Teanoi. Taburimai left Tamoa where he was one of those people who lived under the Tree Kaintikuaba. Before he left Tamoa, a whale was stranded on the beach and all the people of the Tree fell upon it. But Taburimai was not among them and was not included in the distribution of food. The king, Namakaina, received the head of the whale.

When Taburimai arrived, the others said to him, 'There's nothing left for you. Go away and ask Namakaina to share with you'. He went to the king and asked him, 'Namakaina, may I have some of your share'. He was given some.

Some time later, a puffer-fish was stranded not far from Taburimai. 'Leave it alone!', he cried out, 'I'm going to divide up this one'. They left him and he took the gall-bladder and squeezed it over the flesh. Then he called out, 'Come here all of you and take your share'. They came, ate the flesh and they all sank to the ground unconscious. Taburimai revived them and then ravaged Tamoa with fire. The people of the Tree, Kaintikuaba, fled for their lives from Tamoa. Taburiki went with Tetake who lived in the top of the Tree and Taburimai fled with them.

When they reached Bome, the bird flew off and perched high above the beach. Taburimai followed and tried to throw her down but he only succeeded in striking her nest which fell to the ground. This event was called <sup>(beats of the Tropic Bird)</sup> Tewintakez and the name of the nest that fell was Rumbao.

The Bird flew off, Taburimai chased her and again let fly. But he only hit another nest

which also fell to the ground. It was called Te Ngao a Take, (nest of the Tropic Bird).

Taburimai stayed in the Umananti (manacaba of anti) in that place and it happened that he was stricken with severe stomach pains. When his bowels opened, a man called Nabutaem came forth. In due course, he left Benu for Tarawa and married with Teamein-Tarawa and their child was called Burabura.

One day, Nautatubi's canoe, Tebukinibwetwe, sailed in to Benu from Tarawa. The crew were Nautatubi, Bakae, Mei Katoka and Ua. There had been a fifth member of the crew, Mei Burabura; she had been cast overboard but she had reached Benu before them. The place she landed was Naniburabura. When the canoe came in, Mei Katoka went ashore to fetch water and saw that someone was already there. 'Do you have any water you can let me have?' she asked. 'No', replied Mei Burabura, so Mei Katoka returned to the canoe. 'Did you find any water?' demanded her companions. 'No', said Mei Katoka crossly, 'There was a woman there and she wouldn't tell me where the well was.' Her companions then decided to cast a spell and send her back again to ask for water. When the spell was complete, they told Mei Katoka to wrap her skirt around her shoulders and sent her, wading, back ashore. On shore, she met Mei Burabura who beckoned her, 'Here's the well, come and draw your water.' Mei Katoka dipped her bowl into the well but, long as she might, the water would not flow into it. That place is called Teriba.

After this, Burabura stood up and ran off to the north, to the place called Tebini. She ran on a little, stopped and blew on her conch-shell at the place called Katanga-te-Bu. She next was seen just off the shore at Atai and the spot she stood in was called Mei Kamang because she squinted in the sunlight there. Then she went farther to the north where she met Koniken

who asked her for drinking water. 'Wait here', she answered him 'I'll go and get you some'. When she had gone a little way, Iohie made a circle with her arm at the place called Teikeri and a huge pool appeared. Still farther north she met Tanentoa and, because she did not know how to pass him, she went back south over the shallows. On her journey, she met Aunio Teneneu whom she charged with looking after everything. Continuing south, Burabura came to the eastern shore opposite Buaitau; she then turned west towards her Kainga at Iumanteang where she met a man who had before him a large mat of coconut leaves with food laid out on it. He saw her and drew lots and ruled that it was the right of Burabura to distribute food in the maneaba.