

There was once a man who cleared some land, left the brush to dry and then set fire to it. He worked very hard, clearing a very large garden. Soon the crops started to appear. Thinking his work done, that man began to just hang about the village. His wife got the taro, leaving the taro tops to be planted, but they rotted away. She said, "My husband, I put down the taro tops and they are rotting." He paid little attention and soon forgot her words. Early each morning he'd get up, sling his string bag and wander off to another village. While he was doing this, his wife finished off the taro in the garden. "I just finished the garden," she told her husband. And so they were left without food. The man paid no attention to his wife. He continued to sleep, get up early, sling his string bag and wander off to the village. One day the woman said to her children, "We'll all go off this afternoon and look for sago remnants. We'll get some and bring it back. This afternoon we will feel alert and good again and then we can sleep." So off they went together. They found a place where a man had been working the sago. The woman told her children to wait while she looked for the man's prying stick. She went into the bush to where the top of the sago tree lay. She changed her body and became a grunting pig. Her children also became pigs and came grunting up behind their mother. Their mother called out to them and they followed her into the jungle.

Notes:

yaba yaba: very big garden in which the taro is almost ready and while the taro is being taken out. (yabu yabu?)

20: at bottom - idea is that the man thought he had planted enough food so he just walked about from village to village.

21: Kari yen Kora - just listened, but didn't do anything.

baya dehi: the end of sago left after pounding.

matati tisira: when there is no food you are tired; she is saying that they will be awake and feeling well. (eyes they opened).

yaau: stick used for removing hard outer shell from the sago pith.

gambun: end of the sago where leaves are.

funa ka iwattavisi: changed herself (into a pig).

The husband didn't look after them or treat them well. Or it could be that she knew they would be short of food, so she turned herself into a pig.

- W. never heard of people turning themselves into animals.