

BABARUDO Nita Keru 3/8/82 #71

10:17-18

Tape 39 - #5

Cf.

There once lived a man called Babarudo. He was a great fighter so sometimes he used to go out raiding. When he came back after fighting, he would make a garden or go and kill a pig and share it among the people.

Whenever his wife cooked she would put the taro and pig in the pot, cover them with a banana leaf and then put the taro skins on and cover the whole pot before putting it on the fire. When she dished out the food, she took the taro skins to her father-in-law. He did not eat them. He just threw them in the house. This happened many times.

One day Babarudo went and greeted his father from the outside. His father replied, "Why can't you come up on my verandah to greet me?" So she went up and was told the whole story. Babarudo said, "I feel ashamed (amamasi) in your presence. I cannot hit my wife because she is of these people. So here is what I'll do -- I'll go and be killed."* So he went into his house and put on his feathers. He put all of his ornaments on. Then he got his spear and went out. His sister was married into another village made up of his enemies. So he went to their garden road and saw that all of the people had gone to their gardens. He went to the place where the women fetched water, climbed into a tree and waited there.

Some of the women came to fetch water. As they went back, his sister came up. As she tried to clear the dirt off the surface of the water before getting some, he threw a betelnut into her pot. So she said, "Where is this bird who threw a betelnut into my pot?" Another one came down and she looked up to see her brother. So Babarudo went down and told his sister what had happened. His sister told him to go back. But he said, "I have come to die." His sister showed him where her house was. He went there during the night. She hid him in the house and started to weep.

Babarudo's brother-in-law sat with some other men. They were planning to kill Babarudo. When he came back to his house, the brother-in-law saw Babarudo. So the man said to his wife, "Why have you hidden my brother-in-law in the house where he must be very hot? Put the mat out here and we will sit together." They did that. Then the brother-in-law said, "I left my limepot over at that shelter where we were telling stories. I am going over to get it." When he went across he spread the word around that Babarudo was in his house. Then the man went back to his house to get his spears. As he started into his house his son took a spear and shot him. He said, "You will die and my mother's brother will die."

The next morning, people went and surrounded the house. Babarudo went up on the roof and they started fighting. While they were fighting his sister wept under the house. They were fighting. One man climbed on the coconut where Babarudo could not see him and so he was speared in the back and died.

Before they started fighting, he told his sister's son that once he was killed they would cut up his body and share it. He should take the intestines and clear it of excreta. This was what was done. The boy also collected all of the ornaments. The boy went and told his mother that it was best to return to her father's village to see their relatives there. So they went.

They began to mourn. They took the woman down, did her kisevi and she married another man.

Notes:

** Babarudo lived in his own village. He didn't hit his wife because he respected his in-laws. He killed himself to shame his wife.

-- the last two sentences are ambiguous. Not clear whether it is the sister or the wife who is in mourning. Perhaps this is intentional, but I did not ask at the time, unfortunately.

