

A man was a very great fighter.² There were two girls. One got married to an ordinary man. The other one got married to the fighter. The girl who married the warrior gave birth to a girl. They named her Saravitti Susuki.³ While the mother fed her, the father went fighting with the other village people. All morning he fought. He killed all the village people. The other people got angry and they killed him. The other husband told the daughter, "Your father is dead. You go and tell your mother to come. We will wait until the people have gone to the gardens and then we will bury your father." So the girl told her mother and they came. They were waiting when everybody went to the garden. They took him and buried him. The widow got up and said to the man, "My husband is dead. I cannot look after this little girl myself. Will it be all right if I stay in your house?" The man said, "I have many children. You stay in your house and I will give you food." So she went and stayed in her house. The man and his wife gave her food. She fed her daughter and the daughter grew.

One day the mother got sick. She said, "Go and tell your mother. She must look after you properly. I will no longer look after you. I am going to die." So the girl looked after her sick mother until she died. The other lady came with the husband and they buried Saravitti Susuki's mother. They took Saravitti Susuki with them. She stayed with them. When the mother goes to the garden and brings sugar cane, the husband says, "Give the bad ones to the girl and the good ones to my son." The girl said to the mother, "You are kind but your husband is not good. He doesn't treat me properly. So I won't stay with you. I will go back to the old house and stay there and you can give me food." So she went to the old house and stayed there. The mother gave her food.

One day Saravitti Susuki was staying in the house. The dead father said to his wife, "Go and see our daughter. You tell me whether she is staying with her mother and they are treating her properly." So the mother started walking. She walked and walked and walked. At last she came to the house where they lived. She called, "Saravitti Susuki!" She was calling but Saravitti Susuki thought that it was her live mother. She answered her. Then she heard her voice and said, "Oh, that is my dead mother. If I open the door she might hit me." The dead mother said, "Saravitti Susuki! Open the door." So she went and opened the door. The mother came in. The girl was very frightened as her mother came and sat beside her. She said, "Does your mother give you food?" "Yes, she does." The mother said, "All right then. I won't go. I will sleep with you. The next morning I am going back. I will wait in the old garden where I planted *babaga* flowers. I will wait there and you must come." So she went the next morning and was waiting. The girl was frightened, so she did not go. When her daughter did not come, the mother went back to the dead people's village.

When she arrived in the village her husband said, "Did you do what I asked?" "Yes, I did. I told her to come. I was waiting and she didn't come, so I returned." So the husband said, "All right, when it gets dark I am going to go." So when it got dark, he took his spear and started running. He was running and he came to the house. He called out, "Saravitti Susuki! Saravitti Susuki!" She said, "What? Oh, it is my father." The father told her to open the door. She was frightened and the father said, "What are you doing? Come and open the door." She went and opened the door and her father came in. He put his spears down and went and sat down. He said, "*Kutaukeyin!* Does your mother give you food to eat?" She replied, "Yes." "What did you do the next morning?" She said, "I was sick so I didn't go." "Now, I am telling you: tomorrow morning you must come." The

¹ *Saravitti* – a tree that grows in the bush. Girls used to chew its sap (tasteless). When the flowers come out people know that the taro is about ready. This is in March or April and the taro is ready in May and June. Its leaves are sometimes also used for medicine.

² *Isoro fafusi*

³ This is a type of tree.

next morning the father went and was waiting under the *babaga* flowers. When the girl woke up she was frightened of her father so she did not go. The father waited and then went back to his village. His wife asked, "What happened?" He said, "I was waiting but she did not come, so I came back." The wife said, "All right. When it gets dark both of us will go."

When it got dark, the man and his wife started to walk. They walked and walked. They came to the *babaga* flowers. They stood there. The husband said, "Which way will we face?" The wife said, "We will face towards the bush." So the husband and his wife faced the bush. They were sitting down and a garden appeared with sugar cane, bananas and taro. After doing that, they turned around and faced the sea. While they were sitting down, a house with coconuts and betelnuts around appeared. When this was finished they began to walk to their daughter's house. They walked and walked until they came to the house. The husband said, "See if she is in the house." The wife said, "She is sleeping." So they both went up to the house. They took a mat down, got the girl and put her on the mat. They carried her and went to the new *wa'ki*. Once there in the new village they put her into the new house. Then they went away.

The girl was still sleeping. The next morning she woke up. She found that she was in a different house. She said, "Oh, my parents wanted to do this but I was frightened." The husband and wife went to their own village. The next morning the husband said to his wife, "You go and see Saravitti Susuki." So the wife went. She was walking and she came to the new village. She called out, "Saravitti Susuki! Open the door." She opened the door and her mother came in. She said, "*Kutaukeyin!*" "*Atauke!*" "All right, tomorrow morning you go back to the village. Go up to the house and get stone flakes⁴ and some other things in the old house."

She went away. The next morning the girl did not want to go. She stayed. "I will pray⁵ and my mother⁶ will bring them for me." The next morning when the husband said, "Let's go to the garden." His wife replied, "I don't want to go. I want to sleep." So when the husband left, she was sleeping on the verandah. Saravitti Susuki appeared in her dream telling her to go to the house and get the *fifitan*, armllets, tapa and other things for decorating and bring them. She would be waiting under the *babaga* flowers. After dreaming, the mother woke up. She got her stringbag and went to the old house. She got everything that Saravitti Susuki wanted. She put them in her stringbag and carried them. She walk and walked. She was walking when she saw the house. She saw Saravitti Susuki sitting on the verandah. She when up and stood behind her. And Saravitti Susuki turned around and saw her. She said, "My mother!" She went up and they sat together on the verandah. The girl said, "We won't stay here too long. You get your stringbag and go to the garden. You get anything in the garden: sugarcane, taro, bananas." She got her stringbag and went to the garden. The mother went to the garden. She got taro, bananas, sugarcane. She put them in her stringbag and she walked home.

A boy had seen Saravitti Susuki and he wanted to marry her. This was about the time they took her to the new village. He was looking for her. One day a man told the village that everyone must go to where they were making a big garden. "The men with dogs will go hunting. The men with nets will go fishing. Everybody else must be there in the new garden." So everybody went to the garden or hunting or fishing. But that boy stayed back. He scraped coconut, had his wash, combed his hair and followed the road where the lady had carried the things. He followed the road and came o the garden. He walked a little further. When he looked he saw Saravitti Susuki sitting on the verandah. The boy came and the girl asked him, "Where are you going?" "I was looking for you and followed

⁴*Fifitan* – Rock chips from Goodenough or Fergusson used for shaving beard or hair. Used to be brought to Bogaboga where the Maisin would trade tapa, betel and food for it and for *kerefun*.

⁵*Barei anei*

⁶Her mother's sister – the live one.

this road. I found you here.” They were staying. The boy said, “I will sleep with you here and go tomorrow.” So he slept with the girl in her house. The boy said, “Tomorrow I will go back and go to the garden. The next day I will come and get you.”

The next morning the boy went away. That night the dead mother came back. When she was going inside the house she said, “Hmm, hummm, hummm, hummm.. Saravitti Susuki, what did you do?”

She said, “I am in trouble.⁷ A young boy from the village came here and slept with me then went back. He said he would go to the garden today. Tomorrow he would come and take me.” The dead mother said, “No, you are not going.” She was cross with Saravitti Susuki. She said, “You won’t get married to that boy. Your living mother is all right. But your father is not good. He’s going to eat the food from your garden so I don’t want this. You won’t get married to that boy.” She said that and then she returned to her husband. The husband and wife sat together and they talked about it.

They told one of the dead boys⁸, “Tonight you must get your spear and club. Go to Saravitti Susuki’s village, kill her, bring her and marry her.”

He came and called out, “Saravitti Susuki! Open the door!” She went and opened the door. She said, “Aree! Who is this coming?” He came in. When she turned around to walk inside the house he hit her with the club. She died. He went down and buried her. He married her and took her to the dead people’s village.

⁷ *da inei*

⁸ *waa teiti* – “ghost boy”