

A chief man's daughter was living in the village. She had a boyfriend. At night when there was good moonlight the boys and girls would go down to the beach and play. The boy and girl would sit and talk together while all the rest were playing. They went to bed. Early in the morning the boy went to his own house. The parents woke up, cooked food, gave it to their daughter and all of them ate. After eating the father said, "Daughter I have no betel nut. I want you to come with me and climb that betel nut." At that time her boyfriend came by. He heard that and said, "It's o.k. She can stay back and I'll climb the betel nut." But the father said, "No, I want my daughter to come with me." So the man took his daughter and they went to the betel nut palm. The daughter started to climb. While she was climbing her father came underneath and was staring up. She looked down and saw him there. She said, "Daddy, move away. Don't stand there." But her father said, "Where will I go? I'm staying here. Go up and get the betelnut." She got the betelnut and carried it down. "Here's your betel nut." The father didn't take the betelnut, he held on to her hand. The daughter said, "Daddy, what are you trying to do?" While she said that, her father threw her down and had sex with his daughter.

The girl's boyfriend and the mother were on the verandah at this time. After raping his daughter, the father got up, took the betelnut and came back to the village. The daughter stood there and was crying. She said, "I thought he was my father, but he is going to be my husband. Now I'm going to live with my mother. My father will have two wives." She took her tapa cloth, covered herself and came slowly back to the house. She didn't sit down there; she went straight to bed. While she was sleeping her parents went to the garden. Her boyfriend just sat on his verandah and looked towards his girlfriends house. The girl woke up. The village was really quiet when she came down: all the people had gone to the garden. She went to her house, put her things in her stringbag. At that time her boyfriend had fallen asleep on his veranda, so he didn't see her. The girl filled her stringbag and then she came down. She got bananas too. She looked around the village; no one was there so she went to the beach and then made her way along it. She walked and walked and walked. She left her place and was going to another village. She followed the beach until it was getting dark. She sat down there, made a fire, baked her bananas and chewed betel nut.

The boy was sleeping in the house. He woke up and looked around the village. No one. When he checked the house, there was no one there. So he went to the end of the village. He asked some small children playing there, "Did you see the girl?" "We saw her take her stringbag down to the beach. She didn't come back." The boy went to the back of the house and got some betel nut. Then he got his things and went down to the beach. There he saw the girl's footprints, so he started to follow her. He walked and walked and walked. When he was close he became tired and lay down to sleep there. Meanwhile the girl cooked her bananas and slept there. Oh, why did you sleep there? You should have gone on to meet her!

Both of them slept. Early in the morning while the boy was still asleep the girl got up, cooked her bananas and ate. She made fire and cooked her bananas. After she ate she left the fire burning. The boy slept until after the sun had risen. He woke up and said, "Aree! I'm late. Maybe she is already gone." She he got up and walked, walked, walked, walked. He saw the fire. He thought "Oh, the girl slept here. It was not far. I should have come and we all could sleep here. The girl was walking. There was a heavy rain inland. The big flood carried a large garden as an island down a river. It came towards where the girl was. The boy was running to catch the girl. The girl came to the river and saw the island coming, so she jumped on it. The boy saw this. He came to the river, "You come in and we'll both go!" But she cried, "It's taking me out. I can't!" He couldn't swim because the flood was too strong. So the boy turned back.

He walked slowly to the village. He went behind his house and climbed the coconut there. He climbed and climbed the very tall coconut. From there he watched that island until it went down and disappeared. Then he went to his house, cried and went to bed. While he was sleeping his parents and the girl's parents returned in the afternoon from the garden. His parents cooked food but he said, "I don't want to eat." He said to his younger brothers, "You go to her parents. Tell them to send that bosa that yesterday we were eating. I'll have that one." So they brought that bosa and he ate it. The next morning he again refused his parents' food and sent his small brothers for bosa at the girl's house. They asked, "Is there bosa in the house?" But the parents said, "The girl left this a long time. It is no good." They came and told their brother but he sent them back for it. They brought it and he ate. The next day he did the same thing: he didn't eat his own food; he sent his brothers for that really old bosa. The day after he did the same. But the girl's parents said, "There is no bosa - only this new food we cooked this morning." He said, "Oh, I don't want that. Only the bosa." He didn't eat food and lost weight.

He was sleeping. Early in the morning he woke up. There was no one in the village for they had all gone to the garden. He went down to the sea and saw an old canoe in the grass. So he got his knife, cleared the grass and pulled the canoe down. He was worried that the canoe had holes, but it was a good one with no water coming in. He went up and got a paddle and his yaati. He paddled out. It got dark. Still he paddled, paddled, paddled. Midnight, he paddled. That girl floated down until that island became stuck on a reef. It didn't move; it became a big island. The boy kept on paddling and in the morning when he looked he saw a big island. He said, "What's this? Is it an island?"

On the island the girl built a big house. It was a large garden full of ripe banana and taro. She was sleeping in the big house. He paddling. It got dark. He paddled and it was the middle of the night. When he got to the island, he didn't pull in, he floated there. The house was right above the water so his canoe would bump against the posts when the waves came in. By the middle of the night the girl heard the noise. "Where did this log come from. It is hitting my post and the house might fall down." The boy kept bumping against the post. The boy was very hungry and sick. he had lost weight and his face had changed. The girl still heard the noise. She opened the door and saw the canoe. She saw the boy sitting down. She said, "Whether it is good or bad I will help this boy. Even though I don't know where he came from." She didn't recognise him as her boyfriend.

The girl went down, pulled up the canoe and asked, "Who are you?" The boy said, "Oh, it's me. You left our village. When you did that I was sad and ate no food. I took this canoe and paddled down. When I saw this canoe I pulled in. Is it you?" "It's me. Is it really you?" "It's me." She said, "It is not you. You are tricking me. Telling lies. You are a different boy." She took him up to the house and looked at him, "Is it you?" "Yes, I ate no food, didn't cut my hair and my face changed." Then she recognised the boy. "Is it you!" "Yes." So she boiled hot water and she washed the boy. She gave him a new tapa cloth, cut his hair, combed it, scraped coconut and put it on his body and put a new mat. Then she cooked food. But the boy ate only one taro. She asked, "How much did you eat." "Just one piece." "Why?" "I'm not feeling well." So the girl said, "O.k., you stay here. I'll go to the point and come back." So she went down and speared plenty of fish at the point and brought them back. She cooked them with taro and baked the rest. She took down the cooked food and gave it to the boy. She said, "Eat these fish." This time the boy ate all the fish, ate plenty of taro and drank the soup. In the afternoon the girl cooked food with fish and dished them out. They both ate. That girl did that - caught fish and cooked food - until the boy was well and his arms and legs were strong. The boy said, "Oh, you left our place so I became sick. My arms and legs

were weak and I lost weight. I came here by canoe and you gave me food. So I am strong and my body is well now."

The boy married the girl and they stayed there. They were working together. They would go to the garden. The boy would go fishing. They cooked food and ate together. They slept together. The man's wife became pregnant and gave birth to a boy. That man got good fish and gave them to his wife to eat. She ate the good fish and fed the baby and so the baby grew up. When the boy was big, the mother was pregnant again and gave birth to a girl. The mother fed her and she grew up. They stayed with their parents. They played together. That boy was saying, "Mother where are your parents? Where are my uncles?" His mother said, "I was staying in an inland village. One day your grandfather did something bad to me. I came down and saw this island. I was staying on the island alone. Your father was sad and not eating food. So he came to this island by canoe. I took him up and fed him till he was strong. They we stayed and worked on this island and your sister and you were born." The boy said, "I want to know how I will see my uncles and my grannies." The mtoher asked, "But how will you go?" The small son really wanted to go, but his mother didn't want him to leave. "How will you find the place?" But the boy said, "I will go."

They stayed there, working together. The father went in and cut a tree down and made a kairegga for his son. When the father finished tying the canoe. The small boy said, "I will take this to see my uncles." At first the parents tried to talk him out of it, but he insisted and at last they relented. They advised him, "Keep going until you see land. When you see tall coconuts you will know that is the village where your uncles are. So just keep going until you see those coconuts." The mother said, "When you see those coconuts, pull up the canoe. Your uncles won't know you and they'll take you up to the house." The boy said, "But they might kill me because they don't know me." She said, "No they won't. When they take you up they will ask about you and you will just mention my name." So they got food and cooked food for him. They put the bosa, raw food and his things on the canoe.

The boy paddled...paddled...paddled. He went all night. In the morning he saw land and then the coconut trees. At last he saw the houses. So he pulled the canoe up on the beach. Children were playing and saw him. They ran up to their parents and said, "We were playing and saw a strange boy on a canoe. He is not from here." When they heard that all of the people rushed down to pull up the canoe. They took the boy and his things up to the house. They put a mat and gave him food to eat. Then they asked, "Where do you come from?" "I come from an island down there. I have a mother and father and sister." He mentioned their names. "My grandfather did something to my mother. So she came down and saw the island coming along the river. She jumped on. Later my father paddled to join her. She told me that you people are living here." The people said, "That is true. Your father and mother are from this place. We thought that they were killed, but they are living on an island." So the boy lived with his uncles. He didn't go back quickly. He stayed a very long time - too long. He had to go. So they got food, made a big party for him and took him down to the canoe.

At this time each morning his parents would go down to the sea and look for any trace of their son. One day they saw a small canoe and said, "Oh, maybe that is our son coming back. He went and saw his uncles and grannies. Now he is coming back." The uncle felt that it was no good that the small boy went alone so they all got on to a big canoe and came with him. When the parents looked out they saw this big canoe and said, "Oh, he is coming with his uncles!" They went and pulled the canoe up. All the brothers and sisters were falling on the sand and crying. They kissed the man and his wife all over their bodies. Then they pulled up the canoes and took the things up to the house.

When they were at the house the man and his wife said, "This is no one's island. Everything is free here. You can spear fish or get food from the garden. You can climb coconut." So some people climbed betelnut and coconuts. They drank and chewed. They told their people, "We can't get food for you people. Get anything you want from the garden while your husbands fish. Cook all the food and eat." While their wives went to the garden, the men caught plenty of fish and brought them back. The wives brought taro, potato, bananas, sugar cane. They cooked all the food, baked the fish and ate together. They told the people, "If you feel hungry, use everything. If you want to go back to your place, you can go back." They said to the husbands, "They can catch fish and eat together. When they want to go back to their place, they can go."

They were staying and the men said, "We have stayed long enough. We must go back to our place." The husband said, "That's o.k. You can go. Myself and my wife can't get food for you. You must go to the garden and fish. Then we will say goodbye." When they said that all the men went fishing. They smoked the fish. The wives went and got all the taro, potatoes, sugarcane, yams and sago. The next morning they pulled their canoe down. They loaded all the fish and food. They all cried as they said farewell. Then they started paddling back to their village. All the people came back to their place. They took all the food and fish up to their place. They told all the people in the village, "Tomorrow no one will hunt, fish or go to the garden. We will cook all this food and eat and drink together." In the morning the people came together. They shared all the food and started to eat them. They ate all the food. When it got dark they went to their houses.

Back on the island the boy grew up big. He said, "I will go and see my uncles. His parents said, "That's good. You are big now so you can go." So he paddled all the way. His uncles were in the garden and found him sitting at the house when they returned. They said, "That boy from the island was small before, now he is big." Some asked, "Did he come with his parents?" "No, he came by himself." Some said, "His uncles are here so he used to go up and come down." He was staying with his uncles. There was a girl who really wanted the boy. She would send messages and he went to sleep with her. His uncles found out and said, "What will we do? We'll take this girl in the night to his place? Or should he hide in the bush with this girl?" Some say, "If he takes her away in the night her parents might find out and paddle after him. If they catch him they will kill him. That is not good so he shouldn't do that." Some of the uncles said, "He will take her in the night and keep her with one of us. Then when her parents come they can take her or leave her here. So it's good way." So they told their son to do that.

When it was getting dark the boy met the girl and said, "My uncles want me to take you so I've come to do it." The girl said, "That's right. I was waiting for you." "We'll go to my uncle's house. If your people want to take you that's good or bad. I'll keep you in the house." The girl said, "It's o.k. We can go." He took the girl up to the uncle's house. They slept there. The next morning the girl's parents were looking for her. All the village boys were o.k. Then they thought, "Maybe that island boy?" They asked the uncles and they said, "That's all right. They slept here last night." At first they said, "That's all right." but they thought about it again after they returned to their place, "If he takes her away who will look after us. He is not from here and will take her away. So we'll take the girl back. He will return without her." So the parents' people got their spears and came to take their daughter. Someone warned the uncles, "These people are coming to take the girl back." One uncle said, "My son already married this girl and she is staying in the house. She can't go back. No one is going to take her." The girl's parents stood in the varo and said, "We don't want that boy to marry our daughter so we will take her back. We don't want you to marry her because you are not from this place, you are from the island. You will take her back and so you won't work for us or help us. We are going to take our daughter back." When the girl's parents said that an uncle said,

"You can't take her. She came to our house. Our son already married her." All of the uncles said the same thing, "He has already married her. She won't go back. This boy is from this place, not the island. Her parents are from this place. His grandfather did something bad to his mother. But he is from this place. This is his place too. He can stay here and look after her. Yesterday the boy wanted to take the girl during the night. We told him not to do this because you people might hit him and take the girl back. So she came to this house. She is already married and can't go back." The girl's people said, "No, we'll take our daughter back because he is not from this place and he won't help us."

The girl's parents came forward but the uncles stopped them. They kept arguing. The girl's parents said, "O.k. If he takes our daughter what will he give to us? He has no pigs - he lives on the island." The uncles said, "You people must know that it is an island so there is no pig. But it is a good place for food and fish. When they were doing that, the uncles told two boys to go to the island and tell the parents what was going on. So the boys got into a canoe and went. The boys parents came out and asked, "Where is our son?" "He got married. The girl's parents wanted to take her back. They said, "He will not look after us. We want a boy from this place to marry her and she will look after us." But the uncles don't want her to go back. They were arguing. The uncles said she won't go. The girl's side said, "it's o.k. But he won't give pig." The uncles said that the island had lots of food and fish. That the grandfather had driven out the mother." The parents said, "This place is good for food but we have no pig. If our son married that girl, I won't pay the bride price because I did not pay for my wife. His uncles will pay the bride price." When those 2 boys were about to go back, the parents filled the canoe with food.

They paddled back to the village and took all that food up. They put all the food in the house. The people were still arguing. It went on a long time until finally the girl's parents said, "It's o.k. he can marry her." So they said, "We must go hunting and make a big party for the boy and girl." So in the morning some people went hunting and some went fishing. They got plenty of pig and fish and smoked them. Next morning there was a big party. All the girl's people and the boy's uncles cooked the pig and fish together. That morning they took the girl to her parents. Towards the afternoon they said, "Now we must take the girl with her pots and brooms and take her to her husband before it gets dark." So they decorated the girl, got all her pots and mats, all the raw and cooked food. The girl stood up, they took all the things and walked to the girl's village. When they came to the boy's place, 2 uncles got up and said, "Ton ton!" Then they took the girl and left her in the house.

(3 Dec '82)

They got the girl and left her. The next day the uncles paid the bride price. They sent 4 boys down to the island to tell the parents that they paid the bride price. They told them and the man said, "O.k. This time I'll pay my wife's bride price when I have everything ready." Those boys came back. They came up and told the wife's people that they men would come up and paid. But his parents said, "He won't do it alone. We'll help." When the man was ready he went to the garden, cut all the sugar cane, taro and bananas and filled up the big canoe. He took his things down and his wife and he went off. The village people saw and said, "Oh, he is coming to pay the bride price." The village people pulled up his canoe. They took all the food up to the man's parents house. The boy and his wife went up to the verandah; they put a mat and the people greeted him. He said, "I got everything ready and I will pay the bride price myself." He uncles and parents said, "Oh, you can't do it yourself. We'll help you. We'll go hunting, get food and we'll give everything to your wife's people." The wives and husbands came back from the garden and hunting. "We'll take this this afternoon." The man's father and his uncle each tied up a village pig under their houses.

They were trying to bring the food. They took cooked and raw food and two pigs. The wife's people were also cooking. They left the food at the woman's parent's house. The men said, "This son found and married the girl on the island. It is not good that he pays the bride price alone so we are helping him with food, tapa and pots. So we helped him and got all these things. It's up to him whether they stay here or they go back to their island."

The wife's brother got up and said, "We didn't chase her to that island. The wife's father did something wrong and she left. So they can stay here if the man wishes; we didn't chase them." The man got up and said, "I won't stay here, I'll go to my island." So they said, "That's o.k." So his in-laws made sago for him. The next day they pulled down the canoe and put all the sago on it. He and his wife paddled paddled paddled until they came to their island. They took all the sago to the house, returned and pulled the big canoe up. They started eating that sago with fish - it was an island with no pigs - so they finished it.

They were staying. One day the husband said, "What will we do? Will we stay here or go to our village? I can't say because you were the first to come here. This is what I'm thinking. You gave birth to a son and a girl. Our son married and paid the bride price. So it is up to you whether we go or stay. I might say we'll go to the village and you might say, but I came here first. Why are leaving? So you must decide." The wife thought and said, "It's true that my father did something wrong to me. I was shamed and I walked until I got on the island at the river and it floated here. You followed me. Both of us stayed here till our boy and girl were born. We came made big gardens and big house. Our boy married and the girl is big. So we'll not go back; we'll stay here." The husband said, "O.k. I wanted to find out. We'll already planted our betelnut, coconut, big garden. It's good for fishing, but not for hunting. We'll stay."

They said to the son, "Tell your uncles that we won't come back, we'll stay on the island." So he went and told his uncles, "That's o.k. They found the island so they will stay there." Then the boy returned to the island. All of them stayed there, they didn't come back.