

The people lived in a big village. Everyday, after they returned from the garden, they would decorate themselves and dance from the afternoon to daybreak. Then they would sleep. They were always doing this. A young man got married and had two boys. He was always dancing. He would come home, take off his things and try to sleep. Now his wife's mother really wanted to sleep with him and would come close by every time he lay down. But he didn't want her and sent her away.

One day when the boy was gone to the garden, his mother-in-law took his decorations and tapa, folded them neatly and put them under the mat. He daughter demanded, "What are you doing? These are my husband's things!" "You keep quiet. I am his in-law and I wish to help him." That old woman did that all the time. They argued and argued. This went on until finally she thought, "What will I do to this young man?" She wanted to kill him.

It went on. When the man brought back his things from the dance, his wife didn't get them. Her mother-in-law would clean them and put them away. She would try to lie with him, but he sent her away. He said to his wife, "Why don't you tell your mother not to do these things?" She did and there were always arguments. The old woman said, "I am not doing wrong. I am his mother-in-law and I want to help him."

The next day there was to be a big party. The women went to the garden for food and the men went fishing. That afternoon as the women cooked, the men began to dance. They danced for 3 nights without sleeping. After that time the men were very tired. That young man took off his decorations but he did not go up to the house; he lay down on the verandah to sleep. At that time his wife was in the garden with his children. Only the old lady was there. She thought that he would come into the house. When he didn't she went out and saw him fast asleep on the verandah. She said, "Oh lucky! (*maiyeti*)" She went back to the house, got a mat and put it beside him. The young man rolled over onto the mat. Then she went down and got strings. Wrapping the mat up with the floor boards, she tied up the bundle. The man didn't feel it because he was so tired. Then she got a yam and tied it onto the head of the mat.

She carried down the mat and put it on to a canoe. Then she began to paddle away. She paddled paddled paddled. She came to where it was very deep and then tipped the man off the platform. Then she returned to the village.

She left the man floating around. The wind would blow him one way and then another. He kept floating like this until he washed up on a beach. There was a big tree called *utei*. When high tide came it left him on the beach. He was lying down there. He was not dead but he was still sleeping.

All the sand washed up until he was buried. The yam plant began to grow up.

There was a village nearby. All the boys and girls decided to have a feast on the beach. So they brought food and fish, ate it and swam near where the man was buried. Two girls were cousins and two boys were also cousins. They went together. The two girls went to get shell fish. When they came back they saw that the boys were playing with other girls. They got cross about this and so headed back to their own village. When they were going some girls called out, "We came for a picnic why are you going back? Stay here." The two boys saw them going so they left the other girls and ran after them. The girls refused to talk to them. Finally one girl said, "Why are you following us? You stay and eat and swim with those other girls. We're going home." The girls refused to turn back so one boy ran up to a girl with his knife and cut her stringbag so that it fell down. She got up and scolded the boy. "You should stay with those girls. Why did you cut my stringbag?"

So the boys were really sad and returned to the picnic place. The one girl said, "You wait here and I'll cut a string to fix my bag." So she went towards the bush, along the beach, looking for

some string. There was no string so she followed the beach until she came to the *utei* tree. There she cut a string. She saw the yam. When she returned she said to her cousin, "We will return tomorrow and dig up this yam." She fixed her bag and then they went home. Later the rest of the boys and girls came back.

Early the next morning those two girls took down their knives and stringbags and went to where the yam was. They took out their knives and cleaned the area. One said, "What will we do?" "We will dig and see what is underground." So they took their knives and began to dig down. When one cousin looked down she saw the *yavaran*. "Cousin I can see a floor board!" "Ayai! I really want to know so we will remove these boards and see what is inside." So they began to remove the boards. After they pulled all the *yavaran* out they saw the mat. One girl was scared, "Maybe there is a dead man inside." "We will open it and see." So they cut the strings and opened the mat. When they did this they saw the young man who was still sleeping. He still had on his tapa and necklaces - he had removed only his flowers. They woke him up.

He got up and sat by the *utei* tree. They gave him drink and food and then they took him back to their village. When they came the cousins stood on either side of the man as they came into the village. One cousin said, "You take him to your house and I'll go home." "No, we'll both take him to my house and stay." As they came up to the house one ran up, put down a mat and the man sat down with a girl on either side. When it was in the night one cousin said, "O.k. I will go home to sleep." "No, we will put a mat down and sleep here." So they went up and put mats. The man slept between the two girls. In the morning he sat between them again. They cooked food and ate.

That morning all the people came to see the young man. They sat and made fun. All the girls stood around and watched him. They really wanted a girl to marry that man, but not one of the cousins. They said, "Yesterday these two girls left the picnic. They must have found this man and came back." The two boy cousins heard this and were very unhappy. They didn't want to see the man so they stayed in their houses.

That young man married the two cousins and they all stayed together. The two boys said, "Those two girls got married and so I wish to go. I cut the stringbag so I will go to another village and you stay here." But the other cousin said, "I won't stay. I want to go to another place." So the two boys went to the garden, got food and betel nut. They returned to the village and filled their *yati* with betel nut. Then they decorated themselves and went to the other village.

They walked and walked and walked. They came to the village in the afternoon when it was empty except for the old woman. She was sitting on the verandah. They saw her, "No one is in the village but that old woman." "Let's visit her." So they went up and she spread a mat for them. Together they chewed betel nut and told stories. She asked, "Where are you going?" "We came to see this place." As they chewed the old woman went up to the house, got some taro and began cooking for the boys.

The chief's daughter was sick in the house. She saw the boys and so helped the old woman cook the food. Then she stayed with the two boys. Then the girl said, "I will lie down in my house because I am sick." Later that afternoon the people came in from the garden. When they saw the boys, they asked the old lady, "Where did these boys come from who are with you?" "They just came to visit this place." So all the boys and girls cooked food. The boys danced and enjoyed themselves. In the middle of the night the boys went up and got some sleep.

The chief's daughter was lying down. His mother saw her and said, "What are you doing here. All the girls are with those boys. One might marry one. You better go down." So she went and was having fun with her friends.

One of the boys married the chief's daughter and the other married another girl. They were making gardens with their wives. They stayed for a long time. The old woman said, "You have been here a long time so tomorrow we will take you and your wives back to your village and leave you there." So all the people went for food, fish and pig and they made a very big feast for those boys. They took all the banana and taro to the canoe. The boys and wives came out and they sailed

out. They paddled and paddled. In the afternoon one village man came down to the beach and saw the big canoe approaching. He called the people and they all gathered there as the canoe with the boys and their wives came up to shore.

When they tried to call in the old woman said to each one, "If they make a feast you greet those two girls and their husband." She said the same to the wives. So they came up. The people put down a mat and they made a very big feast for the visitors. After the feast they did what the woman said. They shook hands with the girls and with their husband. Then they came back to their own houses. They stayed there - went to the gardens and filled the canoe with food. They took the old woman back to her place and then returned to their own place. Then they returned to their own place, made gardens and enjoyed themselves (*mara wawe*). They made good friends with the two girls and their husband, never fighting or quarreling.

Recorded by John Barker

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