

The tale of Nei Maanga-ni-buka and the origin of the constellation "Ina-n-te-karon"

In Te-bongi-roro lived Nakuaumai, and he was the father of Te-bo-ma-anti; and the wife of Te-bo-ma-anti was Nei Au-meang, and their daughter was Nei Maanga-ni-buka, who was the sister of Kabaki, Te-aroba and Rubel-te-tau.

The habit of these men was to be forever fishing; and when they returned from fishing, they gave their father a stinted portion, and also it seemed (to him) that his share was not of the best. And so he was offended at that ~~time~~.

Presently, he spoke to his daughter, saying, "Woman, go thou to see thy grandsire Nakuaumai". And when she went, she saw that Nakuaumai was on the overside of his rock; and she told her father Te-bo-ma-anti, saying, "I am returned. He whom thou didst ^{lies} name ~~HH~~ on the overside of his rock". And thus said he to her, "Woman, thou knowest now that the sea is calm". And after some time, he called his dauhgter, and said to her, "Woman, come, approach, for I shall teach thee navigation"; and lo, he gave that child of his everything that he knew of navigation.

Presently, her brothers were jealous of her, and they diligently sought a chance to do her to death. So they took her out fishing, and when their canoe was far from land, they cast her into the sea. And she drifted away, and stranded on Nikunau; and she planted her float, which was the branch of a Buka-tree. And as for her, she took to husband a man named Manriki, and her child with him was Te-raaka.

And as for those men who were the brothers of this woman, their business was to be forever trolling for bonito, for they were navigators and knew all the haunts of the bonito, being accustomed to see them. And presently Te-raaka was full grown, and his mother Maanga-ni-buka spoke to him, saying, "Te-raaka, thou shalt go forth to meet thy fathers, to troll for the bonito on the weather side of Maiana".

And Te-raaka went forth; he arrived a long time before his fathers. And ~~their~~ canoe came speeding from the weather side, and they saw his canoe before them, and knew that it had finished trolling the bonito there. And they said, "What a rascally canoe is that"; and they trolled where it had been, but they caught not a fish, so they returned (home).

And Te-raaka came again to his mother, and she asked him saying, "Didst thou meet with thy fathers?" And he said, "Yes". And his mother said, "It is well; but thou shalt go again to meet them tomorrow, for it is the season for bonito on the weather side of Abemama. And if they gibe at thee, thou for thy part shalt say, 'How now, sir? It was a pretty skill I learned from ^{Naka,} my grandfather to overreach my rivals". And when they hear that, they will lead thee away, and thou shalt accompany them to Te-bongi-roro. And when thou comest there, thou shalt take for thine own the bonito hook, which I buried beside the corner post of my hut; and thine also is the oil for anointing the body, which is set between the thatches on the eastern side. And after (thou hast taken these things), thou shalt return again".

And Te-raaka went forth; he arrived at Abemama a long time before his fathers. And their canoe came speeding from the weather side, and they saw his canoe before them, and knew that it had finished trolling the bonito there. And they sailed close beside him, and gibed at him. And Te-raaka for his part remembered his mother's word; he turned to his fathers, and said, "How now, sir? It was a pretty skill I learned from my grandfather Naka to overreach my rivals"

They heard that, and they were amazed; they said, "Sir, whence comest thou?" And Te-raaka answered, "Why, I come from Nikunau, and my mother is Nei Maanga-ni-buka, your sister".

They heard that, and they led him away to their land; he went westward with them to Te-bongi-roro.

He came to that land, and they laid him to sleep in the hut of his mother Nei Maanga-ni-buka. But Te-raaka did not sleep, for he was busied in remembering the word of his mother. He sought for

that bonito hook, and there it was indeed, buried beside the corner post of the hut; and he found also the coconut oil, which was set between the thatches on the eastern side.)

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These things ~~XXXXXXXX~~ Te-raaka, and he went forth, to return to his mother who was at Nikunau.

2. And after that, Te-raaka again had a desire to go fishing; and so he again went fishing. And lo! he met the Mannaba-bird, which was exceeding great and strong. And he and his companions turned their canoe bottom up, and hid themselves within it. And when the bird arrived, he took the keel of the canoe in his beak, and carried it away for his nest in the midst of the ocean.

And lo! the bird slept. And Nei Tituaabine (the spirit) came to Te-raaka, and said to him, "Sir, take the anchor rope of thy canoe and tie therewith the tail-feather of the Mannaba, for his hour of awakening is near". And he went out and tied the tail feather of the Mannaba, and he hid himself again.

And when the bird awoke, he flew away, and his tail feather was pulled out. And Te-raaka and his friend leapt ~~XXXXXXXX~~ ^{to mount} on it, and they (flew) away to fall on the land of Aba-oraora.

And there was a woman who was high chief of that land, and she had gone into seclusion from men, for it was not desired that she should ^{be with child} ~~XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX~~. For the law of that land was, that if a woman was with child, Nei Koro-bibi was called to her, so that her belly might be torn open and the child taken from within it; and the mother died. For it seems that the people of that land were ignorant; they feared the fruit of the pandanus, for they thought it was a spirit; and they could not eat fish that was cooked on the fire, for they thought that the fire also was a spirit.

And lo! Te-raaka indeed went in unto that woman, and lo! she was with child, and she was very heavy hearted. But thus said Te-raaka to her, "Woman, thou shalt not call the midwife, for I will myself deliver thee". And when the season came for her to give birth, she was in sore travail, for she was about to give birth. And Te-raaka delivered her, and their child arrived on earth.

And when the parents of that woman came, they were astonished for their child was alive with her babe. And ^{4.} thus said they, "Woman, how didst thou do it?" And they hastened to disclose her armpits, and to open her mouth, and to look into her ears, for they thought that the child came forth thence; for they were very ignorant folk.

Presently, Te-raaka returned to his land with his wife. And lo! he met (on the way) with his fathers Te-aroba and Kabaki; thus said they to him, "Te-raaka, come, be not in haste to go with that woman!" For it seems they desired to tinaba with her. And they said again a second time, "Does not thy wife desire to eat some fish? Approach, for we will dive for this fish-trap". And they dived for it, but they could not reach it, for the current was very strong. And lo! Te-raaka dived for it, and got a very large karon fish. And Kabaki took it and scaled it; he took ~~it~~ ^{a scale and} threw it away ^(into the sky) and thus said he to his child, "Remember this thing, for it is thy navigating star, and its name is "Scale-of-the-Karon".

This is the true origin of that star.

And presently, Te-raaka went back to his land.