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04 Taupule, a woman from Tuvalu

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Taupule

This is the story of Taupule told by Johnson Siota. It was recorded by Pita Sharples in the 1960s. It was written in Sikaiana by Priscilla Taulupo and then a rough translation into English was done by me (Bill Donner). Taupule was well-known during my stay on Sikaiana. She was from the Ellice Island and had become pregnant from a European copra trader. She was dropped off on Sikaiana during her pregnancy and had children both from the copra trader and the Sikaiana person with whom she had been left to care for her. Sikaiana people remember that she was Christian and held some form of church services in her house, years before the island's conversion to Christianity in 1929. I was told that she warned that Europeans would change everything.

TALA-TALA IA TAUPULE. (By J. Siota)

Tenei tala-tala ia Piva, a Piva tona vaka eisi. Ehano o sui tume, Gilbat, Elis, Sikaiana i Solomon ma Niu Gini. A Blea is tealiki ote vaka la. Ka temale ote vaka la a Telise. Te mokoa tela a Piva ni hano ai ki Nui, nito tona toka tolu, Takua, a Meapo, Lokea. Ka a Blea tona soa nisi i Nui, soa hahine. Tona male a Taupule. ka hano hano haitama ai a Taupule, haitama ia Blea. Ka a Taupule ku napa haiko pela mae iaia ku haitama, ku haitama itamama. Haiatu ei a Taupule kia Blea la aia ku haitama. Maeko ehe lai ite tupu-tupu o Elis, pela tama ki haitama itamama, haka napa haeko. Haiatu ei a Blea kia Taupule la, laua kiavana.

Ka noho o tali, tevaka eoko tume kuoti, ka taku olo oi, ite ahi-ahi, tuna ite ono. Haiatu la ki tale iho iuta. Ka te manui ehano kiuta. E hanatu kiuta ka koku kake iho ai ei. E hanatu ite vahi te kupu, ite henua la. Ka ehanatu te manui la, kuto akoe, koku hano iho, tatou ku hanaiho tahi ki Solomon nei. Haiatu a Blea kia Taupule la. Noho o tali, noho otoa pela tana toka tolu la elaka ake io matahale la, ka tela ku luwe koe, pela te manui ku kana-kana kia koe, ite vahi te kupu ote henua la. Ka toka toka tolu la eoatu, kuto akoe, koku hanaiho kite vaka tatou ku tel ei. Ka noho ei a Taupule o tali, e tali ki toka tolu tela ni haiake ai a Blea la. Ni toka atu a Taupule la, toka tolu la kulaka ake imatahale, sopo a Taupule sopo tele ei. Tele ei muli o toka tolu la. Ki tele atu, tevaka ku kana-kana mai kiaia ite tuku tai. Ka tona mataa vaka muli ehuli sala kiuta, tona mataa vaka mua ia ehuli ki lalo, sopo a Taupule kite manui, sopo atu toka tolu la hoki, alo ei kite vaka.

Ka kutae kite vaka la, kapatu a Blea to a Taupule, hao ei kitona rumu ite vaka, kapatu loki ei. Ka ite mokoa la temeana i Nui ku olo ome ika itai. Ka ei loa hoki ko eki latou pela tevakala ka tele, etele ite ahi-ahi. Ka ni kini ake la tona tulana ku mao. Ka haka tele-tele ei pela, te vakala tana me eisi kame ite po. O mai ei, o mai kite vaka, o mai he kite ai ei, a Taupule ko kuoti te loki a Blea itona rumu. Ka kapatu a Blea talaki koia te tapa totoka, ka etoka iho a Taupule la, tona tamana kitaha e ealoalo ite manui. Ka eohia la aia ki tala-tala iho ai. Ka a Blea ehe ohia ki tala-tala, poki tele kiuta. Haiatu a Blea la o heai. Ka halo iho koia a Taupule itapa totoka tala-tala iho ai kitona tamana kitaha la. Ka poloaki kuoti, uhu iho oi tevala. hanaiho oi ki Niu Gini.

Ka tana hanaiho ana tevaka ki Niu Gini, hehe lai tematani te mahi. Hano hano fati fati na lakau ote vakala, te latou vaka. Ka telatou vaka ka apulu

koia. Sopo atu a Blea kina la matana naihi kini-kinitia eia, sae sae ko lia eia. Mahani muli ei tevaka kiana. Ka telatou manau ku motu, kuheai tevaka ku tahea. Ka ite mokoa la kuheai pela mona he kuru hakati pela mona hetama hekau ki hekau ite vaka, a Blea koia hokoia. Hekau ite po hano hano malama, hano hano taeiho ki Niu Gini. Ka heai pela malatou ni kai, heai malatou he vai telatou tae ana ki Niu Gini. O ake kiuta i Niu Gini, sjui alatou kai, to telatou vai ka isi ei alatou kai ite vaka. Ka ite mokoa la, oake kato ei a Blea ma Piva kite vaka. A Blea hoki ko kuavana ia Taupule ite mokoa la.

Ite mokoa la a Blea ku lavea ite maki. Heia ai a Blea ite vaka, ni heia ku luwe ia pela aia ku mate ei koia. Poiko nilono tona huaitino ku ha kino-kino. Kapatu tata ai tana laumea. Tata, ni tata penei ehano pela anau ku mate, tevaka nei kihuli muli ki Nui, o haka noho a Takua, a Meapo ko Lokea. A Taupule hoki kihuli muli ki Nui. Ka kuoti la, olo temeana ite vakala otanu a Blea iuta. Ka hano a Piva ia kite ite laumea ite moena o Blea. Pau pau ia kuoti, haiatu kia Taupule la koe hele vaka koki hano muli ki Nui, tatou enoho koia. Tatou ehano tahi koia. Haiatu ei a Taupule la o heai, ni haiake a Blea la heme aia emate ei, latou eolo muli ki Nui o haka noho akilatou. Haiatu a Piva la heai, tatou enoho koia ite vaka. Tatou eolo kite henua hoko tahi eisi tona stoa. Haiatu ei a Taupule la o elaoi, tela oiho oi.

Oiho tae iho ki Gela, olo tahi ei ki Sikaiana. Ka ite mokoa la a Taupule ona malama ku ono. Ka haiatu la aia ehano o haka noho akoe ite tama etoka-toka itona stoa, aia ku hano ei o hekau, tele sui tume. Ka olo tae ei ki Sikaiana. Haiatu a Piva kia Taupule la kihe matakū hakati. Haiatu la aia ki hano o haka noho akoe, poki mela temeana enoho i Sikaiana la etala-tala poi akoe. Ka olo tae ki Sikaiana, haka noho ai a Taupule ia Teate, tama tela etoka-toka ite stoa la. Ka hano tahi tevaka ia, uhu muli tevaka hano oi ki Elis ma Gilbat hano tahi ki Australia.

Ka noho noho oia a Taupule, hanau ei tana tama. Hanau te hahine, tona male a Sisilia. Ka tona male ia Piva ia a million. Ni tapa-tapa kia million laia maeko te kele-kele a Piva nito ite kiona hoko tahi, ni ao ite kiona hoko tahi, hano tauī tela e million ite pound. Ka tela tapa-tapa ai a Piva a Sisilia kia million.

Ka noho ei a Taupule ia. Noho, haitama ei ia Teate, ni hihai ko kia Teate, ka haitama ei a Taupule ia Teate. Ka ite mokoa tela a Piva ku au ai, a Teate ni matakū haeko ai. Matakū pela a Taupule ko ku haitama iaia. Haiatu ei a Taupule la kihe matakū, e au a Piva laku tala-tala ei haka laoi. Ka a Teate ia ku matakū, tona matakū ku hetau pela aia poki taia. A Teate tona taina a Laleo, haiatu kia Laleo la latou kita koia a Piva. Ka a Laleo niohia hoki ei, pe latou kita. Hano a Laleo haiake kite meana i Salupe, pela kia

Lepa ma Kavaia, ona taina ki taha. Haiatu la eau tama nei, a Piva tatou kuta. Ka temeana i Salupe ni ohia ai, ni ohia pe latou kita, ni soi ko. Soi kia ni hakano kina tala-tala a Laleo.

Ka kusula tevaka la, olo oi kite vaka. Kuoti tala-tala iuta hakati pela a Tealepa ma Kavaia ko Teate eomai ma Piva kiuta. Ka a Laleo ni hano hoki kite vaka. Olo kite vaka, tomai ei a Piva kiuta. Alo mai ei maki latou. Ka kuoti tala-tala pela latou e hakatu atu te tepakele ite popolani la tela a Piva ku mate. Ka tahi temeana ku olo kite vaka hoki, ku sosoa pela tama tona soa, tama tona soa, tama tona soa ite meana ite vaka. Ka noho oi o toka mai koia pela kiuta, hano pe te haka matino la e hakatu ake la, ka tela latou kuta ei tevaka. O mai a Kavaia ma Tealepa ko Teate kiuta, heki taeake ia kiuta, e alo mai koia kiuta. Alo mai, alo mai ia, kutae ake kite puna tela, te puna i Tahola, hikapulu tevaka ikila, kahe kahe lemo ai a Piva. Ka e solo-solo ia a Kavaia tona vae kilalo ka sopo tono kopu, sopo iho a Tealepa o hakapi tona vae. Ka hano hano oia ku mate, toake ei kiuta. Ka tela koi alo mai kiuta laia a Taupule eha-haele ma Sisilia, tela ko etapa kia million ko, etapa la million million. Ka tela ta ikila a Piva mate ei a Piva. Ku mate a Piva la, olo muli ei a Kavaia ma Teate kite popolani, hakatu tepakele, tai temeana i Sikaiana te tevaka la. Tatata oti hakati, kapatu kina taramu keresini lini iana ote vaka, tutu ei tevaka. Hake lako katia tevaka la o tona pola malama.

Ka ite mokoia tela a Piva kahano ai ki Sikaiana, ni hilavei laua ma Matona, tehi latama hoki e tele sui tume hoki. Haiatu a Piva la aia kahano ki Sikaiana. Ka tela iloa ei a Matona pela a Piva kuai i Sikaiana. Noho oi o tali, ni tali la ku mao tona tulana. Hano oi a Matona ki Sikaiana, hano haiake la tehe a Piva, haiatu ei te temeana i Sikaiana la ae a Piva ni heau kinei, heki tae mai. Haiatu o heai, laua ni tala-tala eau. Haiatu temeana i Sikaiana la heai. Haiatu a Matona la o eluwe ia, a Piva ku mate. Kapatu a Matona sae ei tona kalemate. Tona haka tele-tele pela a Piva ku mate ikinei. Ka a Matona hoki ko kuoti la taia a Matona i Sikaiana.

Ka tela tama a Taupule tana tama muai ni tupu tela a Sisilia. Tupu a Sisilia tana tama a Hanamea. Tupu a Hanamea tana tama tenei anau a Siota e tala-tala nei. Ka ite avana ana a Taupule ia Teate ia. Tupu a Taupule tana tama tela a Polo. Tupu a Polo tana tama a Teai. Tupu a Teai tana tama a Peleti. Tela a Peleti taina o Elisoni ma Katava. Ka tena a Peleti koi noho ai.

Inaia tenei ku laka e tolu, a Teai ni hano ki Nui, ni hano o se la emaoni koia tala-tala tenei ia Taupule. Ka ni hano noho oi i Nui, noho i Nui tona ia hoko tahi, tona ia hoko tahi poi ona malama e ono, tana noho ana i Nui.

Ka haka tele ki tupu-tupu o Taupule, hano hano e maoni koia. Ka tematou kano hale i Nui koi noho iho ai, tamaki haeko, a matou keli ku isi. Ka tematou kanohale tela i Nui tela ia Taupule kuiloa hoki ekilatou aki matou pela matou enoho atu i Sikaiana. Ku iloa ikilatou pela matou etoka hia. Ka tela emaoni koia pela tala-tala tenei ia Taupule, pela a Piva, taia o Piva tana hano ana tela a Taitus ki Nui. Ka ni tae iho a Taitus i Nui, lono hakati kimatou pela emaoni te noho o Taupule tono kanohale, tekau tupu-tupu kato o Nui iloa hakati eia, tana tae iho ana. Ka tenei matou ku tunaki pela eoti la matou ku olo ki Nui. Tematou kanohale tela i Nui.

In this rough translation, I tried to follow the flow of the story and keep with sentences and paragraph.

This is the story of Piva, he had a ship. He went buying copra, to the Gilberts (Kiribati), Ellice (Tuvalu), Sikaiana in the Solomon Islands and New Guinea. Blair (Blea) was the captain of that boat. And the name of that boat was TeLisa. The one time that Piva went to Nui, he took his three (men) Takua, Maepo, Lokea. Now, Blair had a lover on Nui, a woman. Her name was Taupule. After a while, Taupule became pregnant, pregnant from Blair. Now Taupule was very ashamed that she was pregnant, pregnant from a white man. Taupule told Blair that she was pregnant. Because it is not good in the customs of Ellice to be pregnant from a white man, it was very shameful. Blair told Taupule that they would be married.

They waited, the boat collected copra, they would go in the evening, about six. He said that she should wait ashore. The canoe will come ashore and (she should) climb inside. Blair told Taupule, wait and stay watching for his three men to go past the front of the house, then you will know, that the canoe is prepared for you, on the south side of the island. Then the three men will take you so you can go to the boat and we will sail. So Taupule sat and waited, waited for the three that Blair talked about. Taupule watched, the three passed in front of her house, Taupule stood up and ran. She ran behind those three. She ran, the boat was prepared for her by the seashore. But the front of the boat was facing the wrong way, towards the land, the front of the boat was turned down, Taupule jumped to the canoe, the three men jumped as well and they paddled to the boat.

So they reached the boat there, Blair came and took Taupule, and put her into a room in the boat, and took a lock for the room. Now at that time, the people of Nui were fishing. And they also knew that the ship was going to sail, sail in the evening. They knew that its time was long. But they thought that the boat would leave in the night. They came, they came to the boat, they did not see that Taupule was locked in Blair's room. Now Blair came and opened the small window, and Taupule looked down, her uncle was paddling in a canoe. She wanted to talk with him. But Blair did not want her to talk, lest she run back ashore. Blair said no. But Taupule could peep out the small window to her uncle. After the goodbye, the ship left and went to New Guinea.

Now in the journey to New Guinea, there was a very strong wind. And after a while, the sail of the boat split and their boat was about to sink. Blair jumped up and with his knife cut the sail. Their boat raised back up. Their canoe was broken and the boat was drifting. But at that time there was no crew at all to work on the boat. Only Blair by himself. He worked in the night, and then to morning, and after a while arrived at New Guinea. But they did not have any food, or any water in their arrival in New Guinea. They went ashore and bought the water and food for their boat. Blair and Piva went to the boat. Blair married Taupule at that time.

At that time Blair caught a disease. Blair was sick in the boat and he knew that he was about to die. He could feel his body was terrible. He wrote in his book. He wrote that if he died, the boat

should go back to Nui to leave Takua, Meapo, and Lokea. Taupula also should return to Nui. All to live there. Afterwards, the people of the boat took Blair and buried him ashore. Piva went and saw the book on Blair's bed. He read the book, he said to Taupule that she would not be able to go to Nui, they would stay instead. They will go on course. Taupule said, No, Blair told me that if he died they would go back to Nui to live. Piva replied, No we will stay on the boat. We will go to the island where he had a store. Taupule said, that is good, and so they went.

They went to Gela, and then straight to Sikaiana. At that time, Taupule was six months pregnant. Then, he (Piva) said I will leave you with the person who oversees my store, and he (Piva) will go on to his work, trading copra. So, they went to reach Sikaiana. Piva told Taupule not to have any fear at all. He said he would leave her because the people of Sikaiana speak a language similar to yours. So he went to Sikaiana, and left Taupule with Teate, the Sikaiana man who oversaw the store. Then the boat went, departed for the Eliice Islands, the Gilberts and then to Australia.

So, Taupule stayed on Sikaiana, and she had her child born. She had a girl, her name was Sisilia. But her name from Piva was "Million." She was called "Million" because Piva had taken land in a certain place, they dug the soil and sold it for a million pounds. For that reason, Piva called Sisilia "Million" ((the story I heard on Sikaiana is that Piva hoped to find an island with guano soil that was very valuable)).

So, Taupule lived on Sikaiana. She stayed there and became pregnant from Teate, she desired Teate, and so Taupule became pregnant from Teate. And at the time when Piva arrived, Teate was very afraid. He was afraid because Taupule was pregnant. Taupule said, Don't be afraid, when Piva comes she will speak with him to make things good. But Teate was afraid, he feared so much that he might be killed. Teate spoke to his brother Laleo, that they would kill Piva. And Laleo agreed, that they should kill him. Laleo went to the people from Salupe (one of the Sikaiana descent groups), to his cousins, Lepa and Kavaia. He said that when Piva came, they would kill him. And the people of Salupe agreed to kill him, to help their relatives. They helped from listening to the speech of Laleo.

So, when Piva's boat appeared, they went to the boat. They had already discussed ashore that Tealepa, with Kavaia and Teate would come ashore with Piva. And Laleo also went to the boat. They went to the boat and brought Piva to shore. They paddled together. They had already agreed that they would set up a coconut frond on the reef when Piva was dead. And a large number of people also went to the boat, and each picked a person on the boat (to kill). They waited, looking towards shore for when the sign was given that they should kill the people on the boat. Kavaia with Tealepa and Teate came towards shore, not quite reaching the shore, they paddled towards shore. They paddled and paddled, and they reached a coral formation, the coral rock of Tahola, they sank the canoe there, and began to drown Piva. Kavaia dragged down his leg below, his breath was lost, and Teate jumped down and held his other leg. Just before, as they were paddling ashore, Taupule and Sisilia were walking, and then Piva(?) called out to Million, "Million, Million, Million." And there Piva died. Piva was dead and Kavaia and Teate went to the reef and stood up the coconut frond, the people of Sikaiana killed all the people on

the boat. Killing the crew members, they took drums of kerosene from the boat and poured it over the boat, set fire to the boat. The boat burned from night to the morning.

At the time that Piva was about to go to Sikaiana, he met with Matona (Martin?), another person who was also sailing to trade copra. Piva told him that he was going to Sikaiaa. So Matona knew that Piva was on Sikaiana. He waited and waited for Piva, for a long time. Matona went to Sikaiana, he asked where is Piva, and the people of Sikaiana said that Piva did not come there, he had not arrived yet. Matona said that Piva told him he would come. The people of Sikaiana said, No. Then Matona said he knew that Piva was dead. Matona's eyes started to tear. He thought that Piva had died there. And Matona was also finished there, killed on Sikaiana.

So, there was another child from Taupule. Her first born child was Sisilia. Sisilia had a child, Hanamea. Hanamea had a child, me, Siota who is talking. And from her marriage to Teate, she had a child Polo. Polo had a child Teai. Teai had a child, Peleti. Peleti is the brother of Elison and Katava. Peleti still lives.

Over three years ago, Teai went to Nui, to see if the story of Taupule is true. And he lived on Nui. He lived there for a year and six months, on Nui. And he learned that the story of Taupule was really true. So our family in Nui is still there, many people, and we have land there. And our family in Nui from Taulupo knows that we are living on Sikaiana. They know that we are watching. So it is really true this story about Taupule, Piva and the killing of Piva, and Titus' (Taitus Teai?) trip to Nui. So Titus arrived in Nui, he really learned for us, that Taupule's family still lives, and he learned the customs of Nui in reaching there. So we trust that we can go to Nui. We have family living on Nui.