

~~SECRET~~ 277

TOPIC: PUBERTY (BOY)
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PLACE: NAILAGA, BA
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SUBJECT: A YOUNG BOY'S CIRCUMCISION

I will be talking on the subject of circumcision or in Fijian we say CURU BURE. When a couple wants their son to be circumcised the little boy's father will take some yaqona and go up to the home of the specialist who has the skill of circumcising. The elder will present his yaqona to the specialist and inform him of the purpose of his visit, that is he would like him to circumcise his son. The specialist agrees to the old man's request and he will accompany the boy's father down to his home. When the specialist and the boy's father arrive home they will call the little boy and they will make their way down to a river. Before they leave for the river the specialist will be taking a sharp piece of bamboo with him. At the river the little boy will have a thorough bath, a nice wash, before the specialist starts his job.

When the little boy is ready for the circumcision then the specialist will take the piece of bamboo and push it up between the penis and the foreskin than he will pull the foreskin down. The foreskin will be pulled right down until it is tight and then using a piece of sharp bamboo as a dissecting instrument he will cut the foreskin and away comes the foreskin.

When this is done the specialist squeezes some herbs between his palms and oils the wound. Then he will use Kumi to bandage the wound. The squeezed herbs is also used to patch the wound before it is bandaged.

The little boys' mother prepares a beautiful bedding for her son to await his return from the river. When the little boy's relatives hears of the boy's circumcision they will start coming to the little boys home with food crops etc. to see the little boy. The boy will be kept home for four nights. During this time chicken and fish will be cooked for the little boy's meals. The boys family will start counting the nights from when the little boy is circumcised on the fourth night a feast will be held. If the little boy's father owns a pig, then a pig will be killed for the fourth night feast. On the fourth night feast a gift is given to the specialist as a token of thanks from the little boys parents.

During the four days and four nights the little boy lies on the specially made bed prepared by his mother. At the head of the bed there is a cup of medicine for the little boy. When the wound aches the little boy will take this medicine to finish the pain. At other times the wound is ointed with chewed cigars.

On the fourth night feast, before the feast the little boy is taken down to the river for a bath. People come to see the little bringing with them mats, masi, kumi and tabua as gifts.

When the wound is healed then the bandage will be taken off.

- How old is the little boy during his circumcision?

Some little boys are circumcised when they are only ten, others when they are twelve and some when they are fifteen but he will always go down to the river with his father.

- How is the little boy positioned when he sits for circumcision?

If the specialist knows that the little boy will yell or shout during the circumcision he will ask the little boy to bite a piece of wood that he gives to the boy, so that he would not be able to yell since he has got the piece of wood between his teeth.

- In this method of circumcision the foreskin is not really cut off from the penis?

No, when the foreskin is cut it will not be thrown away since it will be just milked down to the stem. The top part of the mans organ will be thick since the foreskin is pushed up there.

- Will the foreskin be pulled a little before the presentation of the yaqona?

When it is sharpen, you will have to wash the white substance found there, called the moroka.

- What happens when the penis gets stiff and tough after the foreskin had been pulled?

The penis will not get very tough, it will not be very

painful, a stick is pushed up between the penis and the foreskin and then the specialist will again pull the foreskin bringing it right down. The foreskin is pulled down and the sides hangs like a beard.

- What part of the bamboo is used for this work?

The bamboo sides is cut out so that it is still very sharp, to avoid any mishap that might occur during the operation. At times 3 pieces of bamboos are used in the circumcision, this is if the foreskin is thick or tough. But if the little boy's foreskin is light than only one piece of bamboo is used. The specialist comes prepared for the circumcision. He brings his pieces of sharp bamboo with him. The outside part of the bamboo is used not the soft or the inner side of the bamboo.

- I heard that it is important that no one comes to where the circumcision istaking place, what happens if someone comes?

The circumcision of any child is performed in a secluded area of the river where people will not see what ever is taking place. Only three peope will be at the river, the little boy, his father and the specialist. When the boy is circumcised his father will take him home to where the little boy's mother had prepared a special bedding for her son and this is where the little boy will sleep during the four nights.

- What herbs are used for ointment on the little boy's wound?

A plant known as the ROI-NI-SIGA. This plant is hairy and

and has small seeds. This is used for the wound and it stops the wound from bleeding. Many herbs is used for this purpose. Coconut leaves is chewed and is used to patch the wound. After patching the wound with this than it is bandaged with a masi. As the child grows his organ erects and so it will again be ointed and the penis will be soft again. The masi bandaged will be changed every now and than so that is does not stick to the wound. If the bandage sticks on the wound, it will be soaked with water, and changed. The bandaged is changed twice daily so tha the bandage does not stick to the wound. When the bandage is to be changed, water is poured on the bandage to soften the bandage so that it could be peeled quickly. The specialist will stay in the little boy's house for 4 nights. During this time he will be incharge of the changing of the little boys' bandage. The specialist is well fed during his stay. He eats chicken, fish and he is also well looked after.

- Who is responsible for preparing the mats etc. that will be given as a gift to the circumcised boy?

The little boys relatives will come and visit the boy when they have heard that he is circumcised. Neighbours and friends will also come to see the boy abut his relatives from his father and his mothers side will be there, especially his aunties,mothers sisters.

- How is the message taken to the boys relatives?

In a village when a small news is heard they pass it on to another until it comes to the little boy's relatives. The little boy is allowed to go outside but he will walk slowly on his way out and his coming in.

- Is there anything done to the boy from the first night to the fourth night?

There will be meke in the house where the boy lies. There will be entertainment in the hut for the little boy. There will also be yaqona drinking held from the first night to the fourth night.

- Does that mean that the specialist will also be well looked after just as the little boy?

Yes, the specialist will be treated well because he is the one who is looking after the boy during the first 4 nights after the circumcision. If the specialists house is not near the little boys house that he will stay at the little boys hut until the boy is o.k. and can walk around. Only when the little boy is well can the specialist go back to his house.

- Could you talk more on the feast that is held on the fourth night?

On the fourth night the little boy's father prepares a magiti. In his speech presenting the magiti he will inform the people present that he has prepared a small magiti for the little boy and the specialist. Other relatives will also come on this feast with food for the feast. When the food is ready

and when everybody are present then they will go to the little boy's sleeping hut and inform them of the prepared magiti.

A portion of the prepared magiti is kept apart for the specialist to take home. Mats, kumi and Tabua will also be given to him. After the feast on the fourth night than the specialist returns to his home.